

The 48 Laws of Power

by: Robert Greene

The Mindset Warrior Summary Guide



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MW Summary Guide Disclaimer

This summary guide is in no way associated with, and endorsed by Robert Greene. This publication is not intended to replace the original work. This publication is a unique summary guide of the original book, and is intended for informational purposes only. It includes some the main ideas, and quotes from the book along with unique commentary. All quotes from the book are properly referenced.

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Introduction

In the Mindset Warrior Summary Guides, we cover the main topics discussed in “The 48 Laws of Power”. This book is intended to supplement your reading and be an easy reference guide. You are encouraged to purchase the original book, if you have not already.

The difference between this guide, and the actual book is we don't go into the lengthy historical stories and repetition that most books often do. Instead we share each law, explain its meaning, and we provide advice on how you can apply each law.

As I always say: The original books are great to read as they provide lots of examples, and repetition can help to embed the lessons into your psyche. With that being said; stripping these lessons down to their core substance will help you to focus on the things that really matter. Time is also very valuable, and I am all about maximizing time.

TheMindsetWarrior summaries are here to support your journey toward a resilient mindset. [**www.mindsetwarrior.com**](http://www.mindsetwarrior.com)

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This document is geared towards providing information in regards to the topic and issue covered. The publication is sold with the understanding that this publication is a commentary, educational summary, comparison, and analysis on some of the original books main ideas and concepts.

- From a Declaration of Principles which was accepted and approved equally by a Committee of the American Bar Association and a Committee of Publishers and Associations.

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Section 1 – The Theory Behind The Laws

In “The 48 Laws of Power”, Robert Greene covers 48 Laws that are believed to be necessary to acquire and maintain power. The evidence of his claim, comes from real historical accounts of powerful people, or people who fell out of power.

In the book he discusses each law separately. Other than the historical accounts that support each law, he also provides historical stories that went against each law, and he covers what resulted. He also covers the keys to each law, and what makes them work from a psychological standpoint.

Robert asserts that some of these laws are not to be used just for acquiring power, but as well, to understand others who seek power.

Some of the laws may cause you to cringe. I urge you to try not to view them from a “right or wrong” standpoint, but to find the application in each one.

We have an exciting ride ahead of us. Let us begin...

Section 2 – The 48 Laws of Power

LAW 1: Never Outshine The Master

Meaning: Make the people above you feel comfortable in their authority. Trying to impress them to gain recognition or “kudo points” won't help you. If anything it may harm you. Making them feel comfortable assures you do not raise their insecurities.

How to Apply: You find out your boss is wrong regarding assigning a specific task to you. Approach him and inform him that you **may** have found an error. Tell him that you know he's been busy and wanted to make sure x assignment was actually suppose to be completed.

When to Disobey: In the situation that the person in power is surely declining in his power; then outshining him may give you the power to be his predecessor.

LAW 2: Never Put Too Much Trust In Friends: Learn How To

Use Enemies

Meaning: Friends are more apt to be envious. They are familiar with your strengths and weaknesses, so they are in a better position to manipulate you. They are often spoiled, and become comfortable with you, so employing them is more apt to lead to problems; whereas an enemy is more likely to help you out, because they have more to prove to you.

This **African Proverb** was mentioned inside “The 48 Laws of Power” and effectively highlights an example of this law: The Farmer, The Snake, & The Heron

Quotes from The Book:

“Men are more ready to repay an injury than a benefit, because gratitude is a burden and revenge a pleasure.” - *Tacitus, c A.D 55-120*

“The key to power, then, is the ability to judge who is best able to further your interests in all situations. Keep friends for friendship, but work with the skilled and competent.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 566-567). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 3: Conceal Your Intentions

Meaning: Don't share your intentions with others. They may try to sabotage, deter, or interfere with your plans; often subconsciously. They may bring their own negativity into your life, and possibly cause you to develop insecurities of your own. Not sharing your intentions also helps to maintain mystery around your persona. This also helps maintain other peoples respect for you. We often respect the unknown. “Familiarity breeds contempt”

Quotes from the Book:

“Honesty is actually a blunt instrument, which bloodies more than it cuts. Your honesty is likely to offend people. It is much more prudent to tailor your words,

telling people what they want to hear rather than the coarse and ugly truth of what you feel or think. More important, by being unabashedly open you make yourself so predictable and familiar that it is almost impossible to respect or fear you, and power will not accrue to a person who cannot inspire such emotions.”

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 710-713). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 4: Always Say Less Than Necessary

Meaning: Similar to the previous law; in saying too much, you risk saying something that discredits you, or causes others to feel they have a grasp on you. When others feel they have a grasp of how/who you are, it takes away the mystery, and they respect you less.

How to Apply: You are in a situation where another person or group of people are asking you about how or why you do something. Simply tell them the basics, and do not go into detail of your thought processes, your fears, concerns, etc, about their question, simply answer in as few words as possible.

How Not to Apply: In the same situation you respond to their question by informing them of the “how” and “why” behind your behaviors, and you go further into informing them of the psychological rhyme and reason behind your behaviors. Now they feel they have a better grasp of you. In a way they do; now they understand some reasoning behind your behavior, which takes away mystery and intrigue.

When to Disobey: In the situation where you need to lessen defenses; sharing a lot of information, some of which seemingly private, will help lower other peoples suspicions, and make you appear common.

Quotes from The Book:

By saying less than necessary you create the appearance of meaning and power. Also, the less you say, the less risk you run of saying something foolish, even dangerous.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 1050-1051). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 5: So Much Depends on Reputation – Guard It With Your Life

Meaning: Reputation can make people respect you, and be intimidated by you. When it slips though, you lose those benefits, and it is hard; if not impossible to re-build it.

Quotes from The Book:

As they say, your reputation inevitably precedes you, and if it inspires respect, a lot of your work is done for you before you arrive on the scene, or utter a single word.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 1198-1199). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Since we must live in society and must depend on the opinions of others, there is nothing to be gained by neglecting your reputation. By not caring how you are perceived, you let others decide this for you. Be the master of your fate, and also of your reputation.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 1240-1241). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 6: Court Attention At All Cost

Meaning: We are all judge by appearances, and if we can't see something it holds no importance in our mind. With this in mind, it is important for us to find ways to stand out so that we appear more important, and garner more respect.

When to Disobey: Appearing too needy for attention often translates into insecurity, so be careful not to exaggerate your courting of attention.

This **Indian Fable** was mentioned inside “The 48 Laws of Power” and effectively highlights an example of this law: The Wasp & The Prince

Quotes in The Book:

At the start of your career , you must attach your name and reputation to a quality, an image, that sets you apart from other people . This image can be something like a characteristic style of dress, or a personality quirk that amuses people and gets talked about. Once the image is established, you have an appearance, a place in the sky for your star.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 1327-1330). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Be ostentatious and be seen.... What is not seen is as though it did not exist.... It was light that first caused all creation to shine forth. Display fills up many blanks, covers up deficiencies , and gives everything a second life, especially when it is backed by genuine merit. (Baltasar Gracián, 1601-1658)

LAW 7: Get Others to Do the Work for You; But Always Take The Credit

Meaning: Use human resources to conserve your energy, and allow you to get more done, and appear greater than you are. It will make you appear more efficient and powerful.

When to Disobey: If you're power is not established, it may be more effective to share the credit with others, otherwise you may appear deceptive.

This **Zairean Fable** was mentioned inside “The 48 Laws of Power” and effectively highlights an example of this law: [The Tortoise, The Elephant and The Hippopotamus](#)

LAW 8: Make Other People Come to You – Use Bait If Necessary

Meaning: Making other people act, puts you in a position of power. You can more easily manipulate them; rather than the other way around.

When to Disobey: In the case that you need your “way” to be accepted; unexpectedly approaching your opponent in their territory, may take them off guard and more easily susceptible to accepting your “way”.

Quotes from the Book:

For negotiations or meetings, it is always wise to lure others into your territory, or the territory of your choice . You have your bearings, while they see nothing familiar and are subtly placed on the defensive.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 1700-1701). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Manipulation is a dangerous game. Once someone suspects he is being manipulated, it becomes harder and harder to control him. But when you make your opponent come to you, you create the illusion that he is controlling the situation. He does not feel the strings that pull him, just as Napoleon imagined that he himself was the master of his daring escape and return to power.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 1703-1704). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 9: Win Through Your Actions; Never Through Argument

Meaning: Trying to convince someone that your way is the right way will only raise defenses and cause them to hold stronger to there stance; as they have to protect their ego from being bruised. This may also cause them to seek ways to harm you in return for the hurt you caused them by bruising their ego.

When to Disobey: In the case that you need to relieve suspicion. Arguing makes you appear emotional, and unsteady.

Quotes from The Book:

Understand this: Words are a dime a dozen. Everyone knows that in the heat of an argument, we will all say anything to support our cause. We will quote the Bible, refer to unverifiable statistics. Who can be persuaded by bags of air like that? Action and demonstration are much more powerful and meaningful.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 1839-1841). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

The power of demonstrating your idea is that your opponents do not get defensive, and are therefore more open to persuasion. Making them literally and physically feel your meaning is infinitely more powerful than argument.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 1853-1854). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Never argue. In society nothing must be discussed; give only results. (*Benjamin Disraeli, 1804-1881*)

LAW 10: Infection: Avoid The Unhappy & Unlucky

Meaning: Oftentimes other people don't realize that they are the cause of their unhappiness and unluckiness. Their unhappiness can be contagious. This is dangerous, as it may put those “victim-like” thoughts into your mind, and influence your behaviors and outlook.

Quotes from The Book:

Never associate with those who share your defects— they will reinforce everything that holds you back. Only create associations with positive affinities. Make this a rule of life and you will benefit more than from all the therapy in the world. Authority: Recognize the fortunate so that you may choose their company, and the unfortunate so that you may avoid them. Misfortune is usually the crime of folly, and among those who suffer from it there is no malady more contagious: Never open your door to the least of misfortunes, for, if you do, many others will follow in its train.... Do not die of another's misery. (Baltasar Gracián, 1601-1658)

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 2041-2044). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 11: Learn to Keep People Dependent on You

Meaning: By having people dependent on; you have control over you're relationship. They respect you more, and often feel an indebtedness to you. This gives you the freedom to act as you wish, without excessive rebuttal.

Quotes from the Book:

The ultimate power is the power to get people to do as you wish. When you can do this without having to force people or hurt them, when they willingly grant you what you desire, then your power is untouchable. The best way to achieve this position is to create a relationship of dependence.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 2130-2132). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

If you can arrange such a position for yourself, getting rid of you becomes dangerous— all sorts of interdependencies will unravel. Still, the intensive form of power provides more freedom than the extensive, because those who have it depend on no particular master , or particular position of power, for their security.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 2180-2182). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 12: Use Selective Honesty and Generosity to Disarm Your

Victim

Meaning: Appearing honest holds a great power to be able to cover deception. Being honest helps other people put their guards down; and gives you the opportunity to manipulate them.

NOTE: Deception = distraction

When to Disobey: If you have a reputation of deceitfulness; then trying to be honest may cause even further suspicion.

Quotes from the Book:

Selective honesty is best employed on your first encounter with someone. We are all creatures of habit, and our first impressions last a long time. If someone

believes you are honest at the start of your relationship it takes a lot to convince them otherwise. This gives you room to maneuver.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 2263-2265). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 13: When Asking for Help, Appeal to People's Self Interest, Never to Mercy or Gratitude

Meaning: People don't easily respond to requests out of indebtedness; but rather we all look out for our self interest. Convincing someone that they owe you; may only cause resentment. Appealing to people self interest increases the likelihood that they will follow through.

When to Disobey: In the case that the other person is obsessed with seeking charity; allowing them to feel superiority by your needing of their help, may aid you by putting you in a position of power by disarming their suspicions.

This **Aesops Fable** was mentioned inside “The 48 Laws of Power” and effectively highlights an example of this law: [The Peasant & The Apple Tree](#)

Quotes from The Book:

Most men are so thoroughly subjective that nothing really interests them but themselves. They always think of their own case as soon as ever any remark is made, and their whole attention is engrossed and absorbed by the merest chance reference to anything which affects them personally, be it never so remote.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER, 1788-1860

Self Interest is the lever that will move people. Once you make them see how you can in some way meet their needs or advance their cause, their resistance to your requests for help will magically fall away. At each step on the way to acquiring power, you must train yourself to think your way inside the other person's mind, to see their needs and interests, to get rid of the screen of your own feelings that obscure the truth. Master this art and there will be no limits to what you can accomplish.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 2443-2445). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

The shortest and best way to make your fortune is to let people see clearly that it is in their interests to promote yours. (*Jean de La Bruyère, 1645-1696*)

LAW 14: Pose as a Friend, Work as a Spy

Meaning: By finding out peoples intentions and weaknesses you know how to manipulate them in the future if necessary.

How to Obey: Ask people questions. Appear very interested in them. They might mistake your interest in them for friendship, and further let their guard down.

LAW 15: Crush Your Enemy Totally

Meaning: There is more harm in leaving your enemy "mid-battle". Instead completely annihilate your enemy so that they won't have an opportunity to seek revenge.

Quotes from The Book:

But the moment Hsiang made it clear that he intended to do away with Liu, yet failed to accomplish it, he sealed his own doom. Liu would not suffer the same hesitation once the tables were turned. This is the fate that faces all of us when we sympathize with our enemies, when pity, or the hope of reconciliation, makes us pull back from doing away with them. We only strengthen their fear and hatred of us. We beaten them, and they are humiliated; yet we nurture these resentful vipers who will one day kill us.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 2639-2640). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

For it must be noted, that men must either be caressed or else annihilated; they will revenge themselves for small injuries , but cannot do so for great ones; the injury therefore that we do to a man must be such that we need not fear his vengeance. *(Niccolò Machiavelli, 1469-1527)*

LAW 16: Use Absence to Create Respect & Honor

Meaning: The more familiar and common you appear to people, the less respect they will have for you. By leaving, you create desire, and admiration. It goes back to the marketing principle of creating value by being or appearing scarce.

When to Disobey: If you leave too early, people may forget you.

Quotes from The Book:

What withdraws, what becomes scarce, suddenly seems to deserve our respect and honor. What stays too long, inundating us with its presence, makes us disdain it.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 2800-2801). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Everything in the world depends on absence and presence. A strong presence will draw power and attention to you— you shine more brightly than those around you. But a point is inevitably reached where too much presence creates the opposite effect: The more you are seen and heard from, the more your value degrades. You become a habit. No matter how hard you try to be different, subtly, without your knowing why, people respect you less and less. At the right moment you must learn to withdraw yourself before they unconsciously push you away. It is a game of hide-and-seek.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 2847-2850). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Extend the law of scarcity to your own skills. Make what you are offering the world rare and hard to find, and you instantly increase its value. There always comes a moment when those in power overstay their welcome. We have grown tired of them, lost respect for them; we see them as no different from the rest of mankind, which is to say that we see them as rather worse, since we inevitably compare their current status in our eyes to their former one. There is an art to

knowing when to retire. If it is done right, you regain the respect you had lost, and retain a part of your power.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 2878-2879). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 17: Keep Others in Suspended Terror: Cultivate An Air of Unpredictability

Meaning: Being predictable gives people a sense of control over you. You do not appear superior because you are familiar. Inconsistency cause discomfort in others. They will try to figure you out; to make you predictable, but they won't be able to.

When to Disobey: In the situation that you need to alleviate suspicion; appearing predictable will give you the upper-hand, as now you will not be of concern, because they believe they have a grasp of you, and your behaviors. Now you can manipulate when necessary.

In the situation that you are dealing with superiors; appearing unpredictable may also make you appear indecisive; which is often looked at as weakness.

LAW 18: Do Not Build Fortresses to Protect Yourself – Isolation Is Dangerous

Meaning: Isolating yourself makes you an easy target. It keeps you from learning valuable information. When you surround yourself with allies you are protected from enemies.

Quotes from The Book:

The more you are in contact with others, the more graceful and at ease you become. Isolation, on the other hand, engenders an awkwardness in your gestures, and leads to further isolation, as people start avoiding you.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 3152). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Since power is a human creation, it is inevitably increased by contact with other people.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 3171-3172). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 19: Know Who You Are Dealing With - Do Not Offend The Wrong Person.

Meaning: Everyone is different. Some people are deceptive themselves; and will see right through your manipulative tactics. It is important to change your strategy depending on who you are dealing with.

Quotes from The Book:

Never trust appearances. Anyone with a serpent's heart can use a show of kindness to cloak it; a person who is blustery on the outside is often really a coward. Learn to see through appearances and their contradictions. Never trust the version that people give of themselves— it is utterly unreliable.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 3354-3356). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 20: Do Not Commit To Anyone

Meaning: Unstable people rush to take sides. Remain independent and you will maintain power. If a person feels they have one you over; you lose power.

When to Disobey: If you keep your distance too long, people may lose interest, or they may become suspicious.

This **Indian Fable** was mentioned inside “The 48 Laws of Power” and effectively highlights an example of this law: [The Kites, The Crow & The Fox](#)

Quotes from The Book:

Since power depends greatly on appearances, you must learn the tricks that will enhance your image. Refusing to commit to a person or group is one of these. When you hold yourself back, you incur not anger but a kind of respect. You instantly seem powerful because you make yourself ungraspable, rather than succumbing to the group, or to the relationship, as most people do. This aura of power only grows with time: As your reputation for independence grows, more and more people will come to desire you, wanting to be the one who gets you to commit. Desire is like a virus: If we see that someone is desired by other people, we tend to find this person desirable too.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 3413-3417). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

People who rush to the support of others tend to gain little respect in the process , for their help is so easily obtained, while those who stand back find themselves besieged with supplicants. Their aloofness is powerful, and everyone wants them on their side.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 3444-3445). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Slowness to pick up your weapons can be a weapon itself, especially if you let other people exhaust themselves fighting, then take advantage of their exhaustion.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 3575-3576). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 21: Play a Sucker to Catch a Sucker – Seem Dumber Than Your Mark

Meaning: Make your victims feel validated and supported. “[Toot their horn](#)”, if you will. People like to feel intellectually superior. This will disarm them, and they will not hold suspicion that you have other plans in mind.

Quotes from The Book: Know how to make use of stupidity: The wisest man plays this card at times. There are occasions when the highest wisdom consists in appearing not to know—you must not be ignorant but capable of playing it.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 3739-3741). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 22: Use The Surrender Tactic: Transform Weakness Into Power

Meaning: Surrendering in a situation where you are weaker, gives you power. Surrendering, rather than allowing yourself to be defeated helps maintain your control. You took control of the situation, rather than being a victim of it.

Quote of the Week:

This is the essence of the surrender tactic: Inwardly you stay firm, but outwardly you bend. Deprived of a reason to get angry, your opponents will often be bewildered instead. And they are unlikely to react with more violence, which would demand a reaction from you. Instead you are allowed the time and space to plot the countermoves that will bring them down.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 3866-3868). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 23: Concentrate Your Forces

Meaning: Focus on one thing, and grow it. Concentrated efforts usually equals a stronger impact/force.

When to Disobey: In certain situations it is best to diversify your forces. This is to protect you in the case that one thing diminishes, and inadvertently results in you falling out of power.

Quotes from The Book:

Single-mindedness of purpose, total concentration on the goal, and the use of these qualities against people less focused, people in a state of distraction— such an arrow will find its mark every time and overwhelm the enemy.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 4010-4011). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Prize intensity more than extensity. Perfection resides in quality, not quantity. Extent alone never rises above mediocrity, and it is the misfortune of men with wide general interests that while they would like to have their finger in every pie, they have one in none. Intensity gives eminence, and rises to the heroic in matters sublime. (Baltasar Gracián, 1601-1658)

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 4038-4040). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 24: Play the Perfect Courtier

Meaning: Keep yourself in good company. Hold yourself strong. Flatter people, and yield to your superiors.

Quotes from the Book:

Courtiers are like magicians: They deceptively play with appearances, only letting those around them see what they want them to see. With so much deception and manipulation afoot, it is essential to keep people from seeing your tricks and glimpsing your sleight of hand.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 4340-4342). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Great courtiers throughout history have mastered the science of manipulating people. They make the king feel more kingly; they make everyone else fear their power. They are magicians of appearance, knowing that most things at court are judged by how they seem. Great courtiers are gracious and polite; their aggression is veiled and indirect. Masters of the word, they never say more than necessary, getting the most out of a compliment or hidden insult. They are magnets of pleasure— people want to be around them because they know how to

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 4071-4075). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 25: Recreate Yourself

Meaning: Whenever necessary, re-create your identity. If one identity bores you; feel free to create another. If you fall out of power; change your identity and you can regain it.

Quotes from the Book:

Remake yourself into a character of power. Working on yourself like clay should be one of your greatest and most pleasurable life tasks. It makes you in essence an artist— an artist creating yourself.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 4449-4450). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

The first step in the process of self-creation is self-consciousness— being aware of yourself as an actor and taking control of your appearance and emotions. As Diderot said , the bad actor is the one who is always sincere. People who wear their hearts on their sleeves out in society are tiresome and embarrassing. Their sincerity notwithstanding, it is hard to take them seriously. Those who cry in public may temporarily elicit sympathy , but sympathy soon turns to scorn and irritation at their self obsessiveness— they are crying to get attention, we feel, and a malicious part of us wants to deny them the satisfaction.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 4464-4468). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Learn to play many roles, to be whatever the moment requires. Adapt your mask to the situation— be protean in the faces you wear. Bismarck played this game to perfection: To a liberal he was a liberal, to a hawk he was a hawk. He could not be grasped, and what cannot be grasped cannot be consumed.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 4509-4510). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 26: Keep Your Hands Clean

Meaning: Never blow your cover. Remain inconspicuous. Appear civil at all times. If necessary use a scapegoat to cover your own tracks.

Quote from The Book:

Our good name and reputation depend more on what we conceal than on what we reveal.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 4526). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 27: Play on Peoples Need to Believe to form a Cultlike

Following

Meaning: Work on peoples desire to believe in something.

How to Obey: Speak promises; but keep your words vague. Make them enthusiastic and work off that energy rather than logic. Set up an us vs. them dynamic. This will create a team of loyalty; and therefore give you more power.

Quotes from the Book:

Our tendency to doubt, the distance that allows us to reason, is broken down when we join a group.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 5183). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 28: Enter Action With Boldness

Meaning: Enter action confidently. Timidness never gets us far. When timid we often bring our insecurity into our actions and it often affects our performance negatively.

When to Disobey: In certain situations, it is best to not act boldly, if it will cause extra suspicion.

This **Aesops Fable** was mentioned inside “The 48 Laws of Power” and effectively highlights an example of this law: [The Boy & The Nettle](#)

Quotes from the Book:

Boldness Strikes Fear; Fear Creates Authority.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 5241). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Hesitation Creates Gaps, Boldness Obliterates Them. When you take time to think , to hem and haw, you create a gap that allows others time to think as well. Your timidity infects people with awkward energy, elicits embarrassment. Doubt springs up on all sides.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 5247-5248). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Most of us are timid. We want to avoid tension and conflict and we want to be liked by all. We may contemplate a bold action but we rarely bring it to life. We are terrified of the consequences, of what others might think of us, of the hostility we will stir up if we dare go beyond our usual place. Although we may disguise our timidity as a concern for others, a desire not to hurt or offend them, in fact it is the opposite— we are really self-absorbed, worried about ourselves and how

others perceive us. Boldness, on the other hand, is outer-directed, and often makes people feel more at ease, since it is less self-conscious and less repressed.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 5379-5384). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 29: Plan All The Way To The End

Meaning: Planning helps to alleviate surprise. If you know what to expect, you can precede forward boldly. You'll also know when to stop; and how far you've gone.

When to Disobey: Relying on plans can be a disadvantage because it lessens your ability to respond to spontaneity. Have alternative routes, and be adaptable.

Quote from the Book:

Most men are ruled by the heart, not the head. Their plans are vague, and when they meet obstacles they improvise. But improvisation will only bring you as far as the next crisis, and is never a substitute for thinking several steps ahead and planning to the end.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 5516-5518). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Experience shows that, if one foresees from far away the designs to be undertaken, one can act with speed when the moment comes to execute them.

Cardinal Richelieu, 1585-1642

It is the power of being able to overcome the natural human tendency to react to things as they happen, and instead to train oneself to step back, imagining the larger things taking shape beyond one's immediate vision.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 5577-5578). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 30: Make Your Accomplishments Seem Effortless

Meaning: Make your actions seem like you did not work hard to do achieve them. The ease of your actions will bring an air of power.

When to Disobey: Concealing the effort put into something should be done with ease. To appear blatantly paranoid about concealing information may lead you to truly become paranoid; and allow others to view you as weak.

Quote from The Book:

Nature does not reveal its tricks, and what imitates nature by appearing effortless approximates nature's power.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 5695). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Keep the extent of your abilities unknown. The wise man does not allow his knowledge and abilities to be sounded to the bottom, if he desires to be honored by all. He allows you to know them but not to comprehend them. No one must know the extent of his abilities, lest he be disappointed. No one ever has an opportunity of fathoming him entirely. For guesses and doubts about the extent

of his talents arouse more veneration than accurate knowledge of them, be they ever so great. BALTASAR GRACIÁN. 1601-1658

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 5737-5741). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

As a person of power, you must research and practice endlessly before appearing in public, onstage or anywhere else. Never expose the sweat and labor behind your poise. Some think such exposure will demonstrate their diligence and honesty, but it actually just makes them look weaker—as if anyone who practiced and worked at it could do what they had done, or as if they weren't really up to the job. Keep your effort and your tricks to yourself and you seem to have the grace and ease of a god. One never sees the source of a god's power revealed; one only sees its effects.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 5756-5760). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

We have the same response when we watch performers who put too much effort into their act: Seeing them trying so hard breaks the illusion. It also makes us uncomfortable. Calm, graceful performers, on the other hand, set us at ease, creating the illusion that they are not acting but being natural and themselves, even when everything they are doing involves labor and practice. The idea of sprezzatura is relevant to all forms of power, for power depends vitally on appearances and the illusions you create.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 5784-5788). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 31: Control the Options. Get Others to Play with The Cards

You Deal

Meaning: Help people dwindle down options to a few of your choosing. Ones that will allow you to still win. Make them believe they have choices, but yet any option they choose, you will still win.

When to Disobey: In a situation where you need to gather information about an opponent, it is best to allow them free-will, because it helps you to gather information & analyze behavior they wouldn't otherwise engage in, if you had chose the option for them.

Quotes from the Book:

Withdrawal and disappearance are classic ways of controlling the options. You give people a sense of how things will fall apart without you, and you offer them a “choice”: I stay away and you suffer the consequences, or I return under circumstances that I dictate. In this method of controlling people’s options, they choose the option that gives you power because the alternative is just too unpleasant. You force their hand, but indirectly: They seem to have a choice. Whenever people feel they have a choice, they walk into your trap that much more easily.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 5870-5874). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 32: Play to Peoples Fantasies

Meaning: By acting out fantasy, more people flock to you, than if you were to act out reality and honesty. Fantasy pleases the mind; whereas reality can be hard to cope with.

When to Disobey: Keep the fantasy play light. Never allow it to get to a point where you are expected to produce real results.

Quotes from the Book:

To gain power, you must be a source of pleasure for those around you— and pleasure comes from playing to people's fantasies .

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6097-6098). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Fantasy can never operate alone. It requires the backdrop of the humdrum and the mundane. It is the oppressiveness of reality that allows fantasy to take root and bloom.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6105-6106). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Remember: The key to fantasy is distance. The distant has allure and promise, seems simple and problem free. What you are offering, then, should be ungraspable. Never let it become oppressively familiar; it is the mirage in the distance, withdrawing as the sucker approaches. Never be too direct in describing the fantasy— keep it vague. As a forger of fantasies, let your victim come close

enough to see and be tempted, but keep him far away enough that he stays dreaming and desiring.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6157-6160). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Should you play with such a fantasy, you too must carefully cultivate distance and not allow your “common” persona to become too familiar or it will not project as fantasy.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6185-6186). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 33: Discover Each Mans Thumbscrew

Meaning: Knowing what makes someone tick can act in your favor, because you can activate it if necessary; putting the power in your hands.

How to Obey: Pay attention to others peoples gestures, and unconscious behavior. Find what makes each persons inner child respond. Look for the contrast between what someone says, and how they respond. Fill the void.

When to Disobey: Know your subject; otherwise you may trigger a reaction you won't be able to handle.

Quotes from the Book:

Fill the Void. The two main emotional voids to fill are insecurity and unhappiness. The insecure are suckers for any kind of social validation; as for the

chronically unhappy , look for the roots of their unhappiness. The insecure and the unhappy are the people least able to disguise their weaknesses.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6238-6240). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

People's need for validation and recognition, their need to feel important, is the best kind of weakness to exploit . First , it is almost universal; second, exploiting it is so very easy. All you have to do is find ways to make people feel better about their taste, their social standing , their intelligence.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6430-6432). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 34: Be Royal In Your Own Fashion. Act Like A King in

Order to Be Treated Like One

Meaning: Appearing vulgar may often cause people to dislike you. By acting confident and fair, you impress others by your coolness.

When to Disobey: Some crowds require you to behave confident but yet common. Appearing bigger than those around you can often lead to envy and make you a target.

Quote from The Book:

With all great deceivers there is a noteworthy occurrence to which they owe their power. In the actual act of deception they are overcome by belief in themselves: it

is this which then speaks so miraculously and compellingly to those around them.

Friedrich Nietzsche, 1844-1900

If we believe we are destined for great things, our belief will radiate outward, just as a crown creates an aura around a king. This outward radiance will infect the people around us, who will think we must have reasons to feel so confident. People who wear crowns seem to feel no inner sense of the limits to what they can ask for or what they can accomplish.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6611-6613). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Be overcome by your self-belief. Even while you know you are practicing a kind of deception on yourself, act like a king. You are likely to be treated as one. The crown may separate you from other people, but it is up to you to make that separation real: You have to act differently, demonstrating your distance from those around you. One way to emphasize your difference is to always act with dignity, no matter the circumstance . Louis-Philippe gave no sense of being different from other people— he was the banker king.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6618-6622). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Dignity, in fact, is invariably the mask to assume under difficult circumstances: It is as if nothing can affect you, and you have all the time in the world to respond. This is an extremely powerful pose.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 6636). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Remember: It is up to you to set your own price. Ask for less and that is just what you will get. Ask for more, however, and you send a signal that you are worth a king's ransom. Even those who turn you down respect you for your confidence, and that respect will eventually pay off in ways you cannot imagine.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6651-6653). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 35: Master The Art of Timing

Meaning: Know when to act, and when not to. Always appear patient and under control. In this way you give off an air of invincibility.

Quote from the Book:

The truth is that a steady continuous effort is irresistible, for this is the way in which Time captures and subdues the greatest powers on earth. Now Time, you should remember, is a good friend and ally to those who use their intelligence to choose the right moment, but a most dangerous enemy to those who rush into action at the wrong one." LIFE OF SERTORIUS, PLUTARCH, C.A.D. 46-120

You do not deliberately slow time down to live longer, or to take more pleasure in the moment, but the better to play the game of power. First, when your mind is uncluttered by constant emergencies you will see further into the future. Second, you will be able to resist the baits that people dangle in front of you , and will

keep yourself from becoming another impatient sucker. Third, you will have more room to be flexible.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6835-6838). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

The trick in forcing time is to upset the timing of others— to make them hurry, to make them wait, to make them abandon their own pace, to distort their perception of time. By upsetting the timing of your opponent while you stay patient, you open up time for yourself, which is half the game.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 6846). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Your mastery of timing can really only be judged by how you work with end time — how you quickly change the pace and bring things to a swift and definitive conclusion.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 6882-6883). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 36: Disdain Things You Cannot Have: Ignoring them is the Best Revenge

Meaning: The less interest you appear to have the more power you appear to have. The more attention you pay something, the stronger you make it. It is sometimes best to leave things alone.

NOTE: This is also called [Cognitive Dissonance](#); something most of us typically do to avoid the pain of having two contradictions in mind.

When to Disobey: This law must be enforced with care, as it may make someone resentful, and cause them to gain power in order to seek revenge.

Quotes from the Book:

When you pay attention to a person, the two of you become partners of sorts, each moving in step to the actions and reactions of the other. In the process you lose your initiative. It is a dynamic of all interactions: By acknowledging other people, even if only to fight with them, you open yourself to their influence. Had

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7003-7005). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Desire often creates paradoxical effects: The more you want something, the more you chase after it, the more it eludes you. The more interest you show, the more you repel the object of your desire. This is because your interest is too strong— it makes people awkward, even fearful. Uncontrollable desire makes you seem weak, unworthy, pathetic. You need to turn your back on what you want, show your contempt and disdain. This is the kind of powerful response that will drive your targets crazy. They will respond with a desire of their own, which is simply to have an effect on you— perhaps to possess you, perhaps to hurt you. If they want to possess you, you have successfully completed the first step of seduction . If they want to hurt you, you have unsettled them and made them play by your rules

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7037-7039). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

When you are attacked by an inferior, deflect people's attention by making it clear that the attack has not even registered. Look away, or answer sweetly, showing how little the attack concerns you. Similarly, when you yourself have committed a blunder, the best response is often to make less of your mistake by treating it lightly.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7080-7083). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 37: Create Compelling Spectacles

Meaning: Being symbolic and confident in your gestures will give you an aura of power; because it heightens people's desire to be entertained by fantasy.

Quotes from the Book:

Understand: Words put you on the defensive. If you have to explain yourself your power is already in question. The image, on the other hand, imposes itself as a given.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7243-7244). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Using words to plead your case is risky business: Words are dangerous instruments, and often go astray. The words people use to persuade us virtually invite us to reflect on them with words of our own; we mull them over, and often

end up believing the opposite of what they say. (That is part of our perverse nature.) It also happens that words offend us, stirring up associations unintended by the speaker.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7235-7238). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

The best way to use images and symbols is to organize them into a grand spectacle that awes people and distracts them from unpleasant realities. This is easy to do: People love what is grand, spectacular, and larger than life. Appeal to their emotions and they will flock to your spectacle in hordes. The visual is the easiest route to their hearts.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7293-7295). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 38: Think as You Like; But Behave Like Others

Meaning: Appearing unconventional may raise peoples resentments of you; because it indirectly causes them to feel inferior. They may try to act out these resentments by bringing you down in some way.

When to Disobey: It is acceptable to stand out when you are already acknowledged for being powerful. Standing out may heighten your perceived power; as it create more perceive distance between you and your inferiors.

Quotes from the Book:

We all tell lies and hide our true feelings, for complete free expression is a social impossibility. From an early age we learn to conceal our thoughts, telling the prickly and insecure what we know they want to hear, watching carefully lest we offend them. For most of us this is natural— there are ideas and values that most people accept, and it is pointless to argue. We believe what we want to, then, but on the outside we wear a mask. There are people, however, who see such restraints as an intolerable infringement on their freedom, and who have a need to prove the superiority of their values and beliefs. In the end, though, their arguments convince only a few and offend a great deal more. The reason arguments do not work is that most people hold their ideas and values without thinking about them. There is a strong emotional content in their beliefs: They really do not want to have to rework their habits of thinking, and when you challenge them, whether directly through your arguments or indirectly through your behavior, they are hostile.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7431-7437). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 39: Stir Up Waters to Catch Fish

Meaning: Unsettling your enemies while you remain calm, gives you power.

When to Disobey: Study the enemy. Know who you are dealing with. Some enemy's wrath may be more than you can deal with. Sometimes reacting is a better strategy. A sudden burst of strong emotion may cause fear and respect in others.

Quotes from the Book:

To show your frustration is to show that you have lost your power to shape events; it is the helpless action of the child who resorts to a hysterical fit to get his way. The powerful never reveal this kind of weakness.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7554-7556). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Remember: Tantrums neither intimidate nor inspire loyalty. They only create doubts and uneasiness about your power. Exposing your weakness, these stormy eruptions often herald a fall.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7560-7561). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Angry people usually end up looking ridiculous, for their response seems out of proportion to what occasioned it. They have taken things too seriously, exaggerating the hurt or insult that has been done to them. They are so sensitive to slight that it becomes comical how much they take personally. More comical still is their belief that their outbursts signify power. The truth is the opposite: Petulance is not power, it is a sign of helplessness. People may temporarily be cowed by your tantrums, but in the end they lose respect for you. They also realize they can easily undermine a person with so little self-control.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7618-7619). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 40: Despise The Free Lunch

Meaning: What is offered for free often has hidden motives behind it. Things that have worth should be paid for; because it prevents you from the lingering feelings of guilt, often associated with an unequal exchange.

This **Chinese Fable** was mentioned inside “The 48 Laws of Power” and effectively highlights an example of this law: [The Man Who Loved Money Better Than Life](#)

Quotes from the Book:

In the realm of power, everything must be judged by its cost, and everything has a price. What is offered for free or at bargain rates often comes with a psychological price tag— complicated feelings of obligation, compromises with quality, the insecurity those compromises bring, on and on. The powerful learn early to protect their most valuable resources: independence and room to maneuver. By paying the full price, they keep themselves free of dangerous entanglements and worries.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7693-7696). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Being open and flexible with money also teaches the value of strategic generosity, a variation on the old trick of “giving when you are about to take.” By giving the appropriate gift, you put the recipient under obligation. Generosity softens people up— to be deceived. By gaining a reputation for liberality, you win people’s admiration while distracting them from your power plays. By

strategically spreading your wealth, you charm the other courtiers, creating pleasure and making valuable allies.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7698-7700). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

The worth of money is not in its possession, but in its use.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7736-7737). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

The powerful must have grandeur of spirit— they can never reveal any pettiness. And money is the most visible arena in which to display either grandeur or pettiness. Best spend freely, then, and create a reputation for generosity, which in the end will pay great dividends. Never let financial details blind you to the bigger picture of how people perceive you. Their resentment will cost you in the long run. And if you want to meddle in the work of creative people under your hire, at least pay them well. Your money will buy their submission better than your displays of power.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 7829-7833). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 41: Avoid Stepping Into A Great Man's Shoes

Meaning: First place often has more power than second place. Second place will often have to work twice as hard as first place to win equal power. Establish your own identity by being different.

When to Disobey: Being in the shadow of a predecessor can be used as a tactic to get you power. Then once you acquire power you can discard their name.

The qualities and tactics used by predecessors gained them power for a reason. Utilizing their strategies may be to your benefit.

Quotes from the Book:

Never let yourself be seen as following your predecessor's path. If you do you will never surpass him. You must physically demonstrate your difference, by establishing a style and symbolism that sets you apart.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 8267-8268). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

The problem with the overbearing predecessor is that he fills the vistas before you with symbols of the past. You have no room to create your own name. To deal with this situation you need to hunt out the vacuums— those areas in culture that have been left vacant and in which you can become the first and principal figure to shine.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 8274-8275). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 42: Strike The Shepherd and The Sheep Will Scatter

Meaning: Trouble can often be traced to one source. Troublemakers often become the biggest influencers. In your pursuit for power, remove the trouble maker; so that they don't detract from your power.

When to Disobey: Once again, know you're enemy. Make sure that the person you strike cannot repay his resentment; oftentimes this means you have to be in a position of power at the time you strike.

Quotes from The Book:

Learn the lesson: Do not waste your time lashing out in all directions at what seems to be a many-headed enemy. Find the one head that matters— the person with willpower, or smarts, or, most important of all, charisma. Whatever it costs you, lure this person away, for once he is absent his powers will lose their effect.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 8469-8471). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

If you draw a bow, draw the strongest. If you use an arrow, use the longest. To shoot a rider, first shoot his horse. To catch a gang of bandits, first capture its leader. Just as a country has its border, so the killing of men has its limits. If the enemy's attack can be stopped [with a blow to the head], why have any more dead and wounded than necessary? (Chinese poet Tu Fu, Tang dynasty, eighth century)

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 8524-8526). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 43: Work on the Hearts & Minds of Others

Meaning: This law goes back to the idea of convincing people that what you want, is what they want. To acquire power; pull at other peoples psychological fears,

their emotions, and how they want to perceive themselves. Seduce them to your path.

This **Aesops Fable** was mentioned inside “The 48 Laws of Power” and effectively highlights an example of this law: [The Gentle Art of Persuasion](#)

Quotes from the Book:

In the game of power, you are surrounded by people who have absolutely no reason to help you unless it is in their interest to do so. And if you have nothing to offer their self-interest, you are likely to make them hostile, for they will see in you just one more competitor, one more waster of their time. Those that overcome this prevailing coldness are the ones who find the key that unlocks the stranger’s heart and mind, seducing him into their corner, if necessary softening him up for a punch.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 8684-8687). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 44: Disarm & Infuriate With The Mirror Life Effect

Meaning: By mirroring, you keep your strategy concealed. This is also a way to show people themselves, and possibly help them to discover lessons they may not have otherwise. This law can also be used to seduce people; as it gives them the illusion that you two hold similar values, and behaviors.

When to Disobey: You have to be constantly alert to enforcing this law when you have decided to use it. Appearing inconsistent in behaviors and beliefs may

raise suspicions, or cause others to view you as unstable. Both of these detract from power.

Quotes from the Book:

Simply echoing the moves of others gives you the space you need to develop a strategy of your own.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 8878). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Understand: Everyone is wrapped up in their own narcissistic shell. When you try to impose your own ego on them, a wall goes up, resistance is increased. By mirroring them, however, you seduce them into a kind of narcissistic rapture: They are gazing at a double of their own soul. This double is actually manufactured in its entirety by you. Once you have used the mirror to seduce them, you have great power over them.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 8916-8919). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

By doubling the tastes and ideals of the target, it shows your attention to his or her psychology, an attention more charming than any aggressive pursuit. Find out what sets the other person apart, then hold up the mirror that will reflect it and bring it out of them. Feed their fantasies of power and greatness by reflecting their ideals, and they will succumb.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 8975-8977). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 45: Preach The Need for Change, But Never Reform Too

Much At Once

Meaning: We are inherently creatures of habit. Introducing too much new protocol will cause people to revolt. In your pursuit of power, act as though you respect the old protocol.

When to Disobey: In the case that reform would be perceived as a better route than to maintain the current protocol.

Quotes from the Book:

The man who initiates strong reforms often becomes the scapegoat for any kind of dissatisfaction. And eventually the reaction to his reforms may consume him, for change is upsetting to the human animal, even when it is for the good. Because the world is and always has been full of insecurity and threat, we latch on to familiar faces and create habits and rituals to make the world more comfortable.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9184-9186). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

If reform is necessary, anticipate the reaction against it and find ways to disguise the change and sweeten the poison.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9190-9191). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Another strategy to disguise change is to make a loud and public display of support for the values of the past. Seem to be a zealot for tradition and few will notice how unconventional you really are.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9262-9263). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 46: Never Appear Too Perfect

Meaning: Appearing too have little faults will raise insecurities.

How to Obey: Avoid talking about your accomplishments and your aspirations. At times discuss your misfortunes, or weaknesses (be sure they aren't real).

When to Disobey: In the case that your power is impeachable; flaunting your accomplishments and aspirations will further other people's envy, and cause them discomfort, while you rest on your throne.

Video Lesson - In this video I cover LAW 46. I present a story that effectively highlights an example of this law: [Click Here to Watch](#)

Quotes from the Book:

It takes great talent and skill to conceal one's talent and skill LA
ROCHEFOUCAULD, 1613-1680

Never be so foolish as to believe that you are stirring up admiration by flaunting the qualities that raise you above others. By making others aware of their inferior position, you are only stirring up “unhappy admiration,” or envy, which will gnaw away at them until they undermine you in ways you cannot foresee.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9438-9440). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

The human animal has a hard time dealing with feelings of inferiority. In the face of superior skill, talent, or power, we are often disturbed and ill at ease; this is because most of us have an inflated sense of ourselves, and when we meet people who surpass us they make it clear to us that we are in fact mediocre, or at least not as brilliant as we had thought. This disturbance in our self-image cannot last long without stirring up ugly emotions.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9455-9458). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Since it is far easier to avoid creating envy in the first place than to get rid of it once it is there, you should strategize to forestall it before it grows. It is often your own actions that stir up envy, your own unawareness. By becoming conscious of those actions and qualities that create envy, you can take the teeth out of it before it nibbles you to death.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9473-9475). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

A great danger in the realm of power is the sudden improvement in fortune— an unexpected promotion, a victory or success that seems to come out of nowhere. This is sure to stir up envy among your former peers.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9516-9517). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Beware of some of envy's disguises. Excessive praise is an almost sure sign that the person praising you envies you; they are either setting you up for a fall— it will be impossible for you to live up to their praise— or they are sharpening their blades behind your back. At the same time, those who are hypercritical of you, or who slander you publicly, probably envy you as well. Recognize their behavior as disguised envy and you keep out of the trap of mutual mud-slinging, or of taking their criticisms to heart. Win your revenge by ignoring their measly presence.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9545-9549). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 47: Do Not Go Past the Mark You Aimed for; in Victory,

Learn When to Stop

Meaning: Going past your victory may cause excessive envy in your enemies. Never get over-confident or arrogant. Be strategic and plan. Once you reach your mark, be sure to stop.

Quotes from the Book:

There is nothing more intoxicating than victory, and nothing more dangerous.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 9634). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Success plays strange tricks on the mind. It makes you feel invulnerable, while also making you more hostile and emotional when people challenge your power. It makes you less able to adapt to circumstance. You come to believe your character is more responsible for your success than your strategizing and planning.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9719-9721). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

The essence of strategy is controlling what comes next, and the elation of victory can upset your ability to control what comes next in two ways. First, you owe your success to a pattern that you are apt to try to repeat. You will try to keep moving in the same direction without stopping to see whether this is still the direction that is best for you. Second, success tends to go to your head and make you emotional. Feeling invulnerable, you make aggressive moves that ultimately undo the victory you have gained.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9728-9732). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Bad luck teaches valuable lessons about patience, timing, and the need to be prepared for the worst; good luck deludes you into the opposite lesson, making you think your brilliance will carry you through. Your fortune will inevitably turn, and when it does you will be completely unprepared.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 9740). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

As Machiavelli says, either destroy a man or leave him alone entirely. Inflicting half punishment or mild injury will only create an enemy whose bitterness will grow with time, and who will take revenge. When you beat an enemy, then, make your victory complete. Crush him into nonexistence.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9780-9782). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

LAW 48: Assume Formlessness

Meaning: By taking form, you open yourself up to be attacked. Be adaptable. Understand that stability is non-existent.

Quotes from the Book:

People weighed down by a system and inflexible ways of doing things cannot move fast, cannot sense or adapt to change.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Location 9860). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Learn to move fast and adapt or you will be eaten. The best way to avoid this fate is to assume formlessness. No predator alive can attack what it cannot see.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 9861-9862). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Never forget, though, that formlessness is a strategic pose. It gives you room to create tactical surprises; as your enemies struggle to guess your next move, they reveal their own strategy, putting them at a decided disadvantage. It keeps the initiative on your side, putting your enemies in the position of never acting, constantly reacting. It foils their spying and intelligence. Remember: Formlessness is a tool.

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 10060-10062). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

When you play with formlessness, keep on top of the process, and keep your long-term strategy in mind. When you assume a form and go on the attack, use concentration, speed, and power. As Mao said, “When we fight you, we make sure you can’t get away.”

Greene, Robert (2000-09-01). The 48 Laws of Power (Kindle Locations 10081-10083). Penguin Group US. Kindle Edition.

Conclusion

I think it is important to use “The 48 Laws of Power”, with the understanding that these laws are inherent in our society, and our psychology. Whether you are utilizing these tactics or not, someone else is likely using them. Please do not use the laws as an excuse to go around deceiving everyone in your life, or developing an “us and them” mentality. Use these laws sparingly. As mentioned, Robert Greene references a lot of historical stories to highlight each point. It would have been great to hear more modern examples. Keep in mind that just because a story or tactic, exemplifies a certain outcome, does not make it more valid than another story or tactic. “The 48 Laws of Power” could easily be viewed as a historical account of how power was developed and maintained in our history. Ultimately use the information from “The 48 Laws of Power” as you wish, and be adaptable.

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review on [Amazon](#). Thank you.

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If you'd like to provide feedback on how I can better improve these books, your opinion would be very much appreciated.

Please send me an email at: summaries@mindsetwarrior.com

I would love to hear from you.

- Alexaray Taylor (The Mindset Warrior)