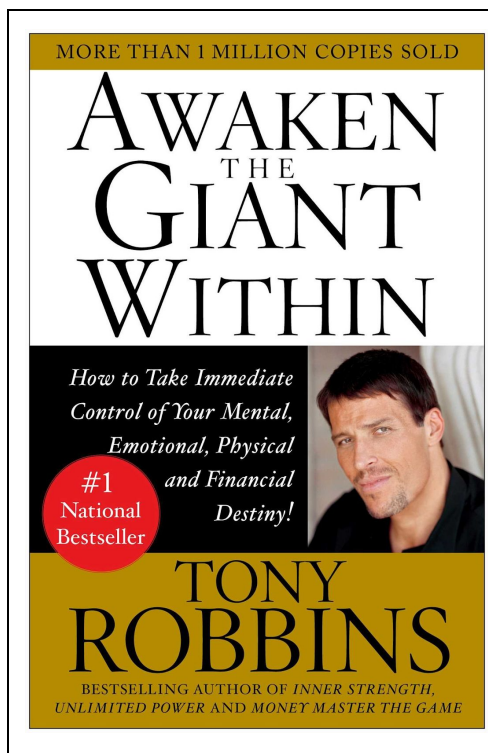


Favorite Quote:

"It is in your moments of decision that your destiny is shaped."



Summary: "It changed my life" is a common refrain from those that have read [Awaken the Giant Within](#). This 523-page book is packed with inspiring quotes, anecdotes and lessons for leading the life you desire.

The goal of all this is to empower you to shape your own destiny by taking control of your mental, emotional, physical and financial self.

The major themes that recur throughout the book are:

- **Pain vs. Pleasure:** they drive the majority of our behavior.
- **Focus:** we are what we focus on.
- **Decision:** the true commitment that precedes all action.
- **Goals:** emotionally-changed designs for your future life.
- **Action:** make it massive, make it consistent.

Tony doesn't want you to just read this book. He demands that you take action. He literally pauses the audiobook and waits. That's what sets this book apart: it compels change.

One of the most powerful tactics is **Neuro Associative Conditioning** (NAC) which helps us link pain/pleasure with inaction/action to break and reinforce bad and good behavior, respectively [[see table below](#)].

"The secret of success is learning how to use pain and pleasure instead of having pain and pleasure use you. If you do that, you're in control of your life. If you don't, life controls you."

Tony Robbins (born Anthony J. Mahavoric) is an American author, entrepreneur, philanthropist and life coach. Robbins is known for his infomercials, seminars, and self-help books.

Robbins is the founder of several companies that earn approximately \$6 billion in annual sales. In 2015 and 2016 he was listed on the Worth Magazine Power 100 list. His seminars are organized through Robbins Research International.

Tony is married to Bonnie "Sage" Robbins. He has four children: 1 with a former girlfriend (Liz Acosta), and 3 adopted children from his first wife's (Becky Jenkins) two previous marriages.

Tony currently lives in Palm Beach, FL which offers the lifestyle and tax benefits not found in his previous home state of California. Uniquely, Tony was born on Feb 29th which makes him a leap-year baby (1960).



Part 1: Unleash Your Power. Decisions are the pathway to power. You can change anything—right now—in an instant. This is the power of decisions. If you don't make decisions about how you're going to live, life will make them for you. Most people make excuses not commitments. Don't be most people.

Decisions must be rooted in:

1. Who do you want to become?
2. What results do you desire?

A decision, after all, is not a **preference**. A true decision is a **commitment**. In Latin, *decision* actually means “cut away” from other possibilities.

3 decisions that shape everything:

1. What to focus on
2. What things mean to you
3. What should I do now



“A real decision is measured by the fact that you've taken a new action. If there's no action, you haven't truly decided.”

Don't let yourself suffer from “Niagara syndrome”—when current events, fear and challenges run the show. These people just go with the flow. They don't decide upstream, and as a result their lives are one of default—the path of least resistance.

4 step process for decision making

1. Clearly decide what you want.
2. Take action. Massive action!
3. Notice what's working and what's not working.
4. Change when things don't work.

Other tips for harnessing decision-making power

- Remember the power of cause and effect; NEW action is a requirement.
- A true commitment is the hardest part. Make them quickly; never leave a decision without action.
- Increase decision frequency. Make them more often!
- Learn from your decisions. When you screw up, learn something. What's good about this?

- Commit to decisions, but flexible on APPROACH. Cultivate the art of flexibility.
 - Enjoy making decisions. Cherish them.
-



Tony also shares the amazing story of [Soichiro Honda](#) who founded Honda in 1948.

Reason is a small piece of humanity. We are moved by emotions—good and bad—and passion—good and bad. Controlling how we react to pain or pleasure is how we shape our lives.

To get what you want, you must be willing to break through short-term pain. If you're failing to take action, you learned to associate more pain with taking action than NOT taking action.

Will power is not enough. Often it is over-rated. Our actions are rooted in deeply held beliefs tied to pain and pleasure. It is our emotional source code.

First step for change is become aware of the power that pain and pleasure exert over every decision. How our brain associates pain and pleasure is a huge part of what drives our decision making. If we have incorrectly associated something with pain we will avoid it, even if it is important and helpful in the long run. Tony refers to these as false neuro associations. Example: the passionate woman who got her heart broken 12 years ago. She has since blamed her passion as the reason for break up! The result: negative control via a false neuro association. Your brain blames the wrong thing and can be incredibly destructive to your life. Remember that our primitive brains are just machines designed to figure out: 1) what to avoid! 2) What to approach!

One of the biggest improvements Tony ever made to his life was he learned to associate incredible pleasure with learning. This gave in the burning pleasure-fueled desire to constantly learn which shaped his actions and quality-of-life.



The truth is incontrovertible. Malice may attack it, ignorance may deride it, but in the end, there it is.

- Winston Churchill

Focus on the pain of inaction. Focus on the pleasure of action.

On Beliefs: beliefs have the power to create or destroy. They make a Mother Theresa or Charles Manson. Your beliefs determine whether you become a hero, or lead a life of quiet desperation. Beliefs can truly change anything. Our bodies. Our lives. Our health.

“Beliefs are a feeling of certainty supported by references or life experiences. An idea is like the table top. The legs of the table are references based on life experience. Once the table top has legs, the idea comes a belief.”



What beliefs do you want to have about yourself, your relationships, your career, your health, your life?

Your beliefs are self-reinforcing because your brain will remember references that validate those beliefs. This can work for you or against you. If you believe in your own capabilities to learn and develop, your possibilities are unlimited.

How do we change our beliefs?

- Start with bad beliefs. Identify them, and learn to feel how much pain that costed you in the past, and how much future pain they will cause you.
- Then: pleasure with new belief.
- Create doubt. What made you change old beliefs? Doubt can break old bad beliefs.
- How do you change a believe into a conviction? Emotion. Create an emotional trigger. Want to quit smoking? Visit the emphysema wing of the hospital. Want to quit drugs? Visit a shelter.
- Wake up to the consequences of your beliefs. You have to feel it, see it, consciously admit it.

Exercise: take five minutes and write down the beliefs that empower you. then, write down your negative or limiting beliefs.

Tony makes a reference to [Sam Kinison](#), RIP.

Question your limiting beliefs:

- Where did the belief come from?
- Is the person I learned this from really that credible?
- Going back to the table metaphor, knock the f*&@\$% legs out from underneath the table one by one.
- Then, write down replacement beliefs for your negative beliefs.
- What type type a person will I have to become in order to achieve the life I want?

Neuro Associative Conditioning (NAC)

	Pain	Pleasure
Action	<p><i>Quadrant 1</i></p> <p>“Break bad habits.”</p> <p>By associating pain to action we create emotional resistance to bad behavior, e.g. someone trying to quit smoking visits a lung cancer ward.</p>	<p><i>Quadrant 2</i></p> <p>“Reinforce positive behavior.”</p> <p>By associating pleasure to action we create emotional support doing positive behavior, e.g. developing a habit of learning & sharing can become incredibly self-reinforcing.</p>
Inaction	<p><i>Quadrant 3</i></p> <p>“Stop procrastinating.”</p> <p>By associating pain to inaction we create emotional resistance to not doing good behavior, e.g. someone procrastinating on finances should visit a welfare office</p>	<p><i>Quadrant 4</i></p> <p>“Break bad habits.”</p> <p>By associating pleasure to inaction we create emotional support for not doing bad behavior, e.g. celebrating when you stop eating before your full (not overeating).</p>

Everyone wants to change only two things: 1) our feelings, 2) our behavior.

The 6 Steps for Neuro Associative Conditioning

1. Decide what you really want in life, and what’s preventing you from getting it. Clarity.
2. Get leverage over yourself. Learn to associate pain with *not* changing. Change is not a matter of capacity but will power. Make the pain undeniable. Make change a “must” not a “should”. It’s all motivation. What will this cost me if I don’t change? What’s it already costing me? How will this benefit me if I change? What sort of momentum could’ve built as a result? Ask yourself pleasure inducing questions.
3. Interrupt the limiting pattern. Steps 1 and 2 aren’t enough. You have to break the cycle. You have to do something that others don’t expect.
4. Create a new compelling alternative. This is where you replace the old destructive habit with something new. This step, step four is also where a lot of people fail. For smokers, they need to find a new way to relax. For stressed-out people, maybe they punch the bag at the gym.

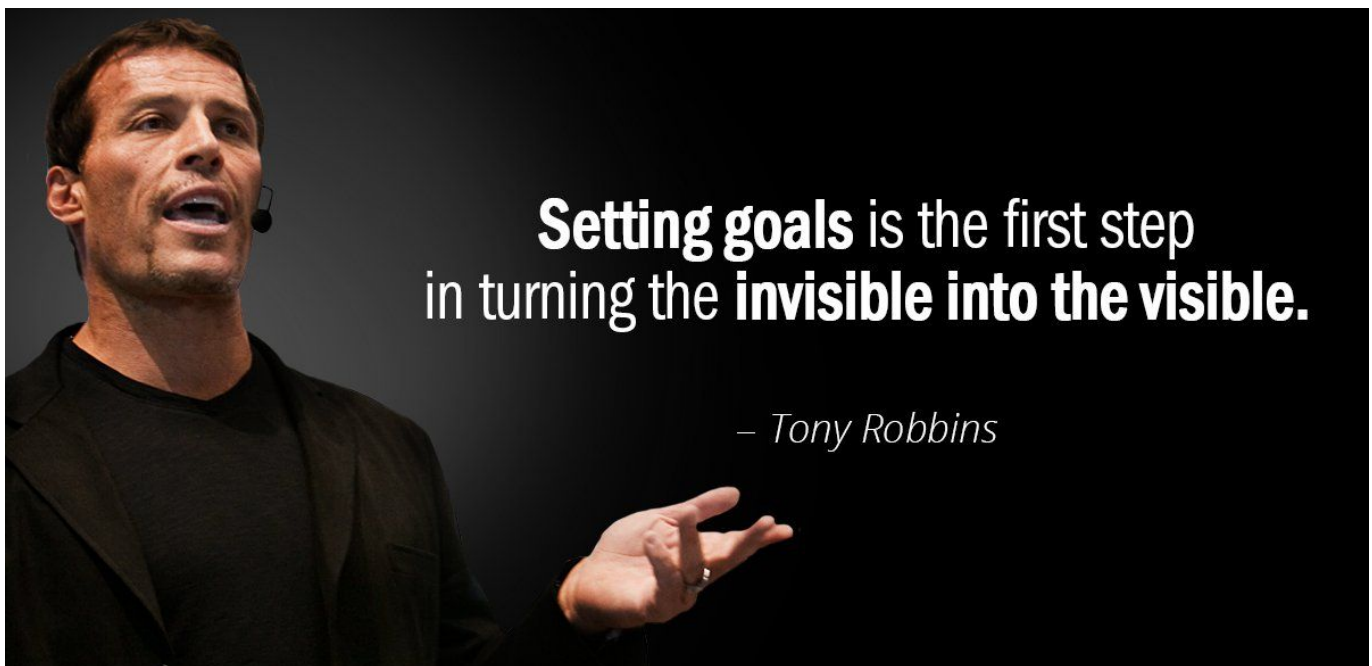
5. Condition the new pattern until it is consistent. This requires a schedule of activities, not just initial activity, and rewards. Reward the new behavior with immediate pleasure do you create an emotional connection. Link great pleasure to the new behavior.
6. Test the new pattern for ecology and effectiveness. Does it really work in other parts of life? Is pain fully associated with the old pattern? Have I linked pleasure to the new pattern? Is the new pattern consistent with my values? Can this new pattern get the benefits of the old pattern? Am I certain the new pattern is sustainable.

Two beliefs we need to have first:

1. The first belief we need to cultivate is: **we can change right now.**
2. The second believe we need to have: **we are responsible for our own change.** We are the agent of improvement. It is on us, no one else.

You get what you focus on.

How Tony thinks about goals



He sets 4 Types of Goals:

1. Personal development
2. Career/Business/Economic
3. Adventure (Toys)
 - a. What do you want to build, create, purchase? this category is about sheer fun and enjoyment. do you want to own a castle, a music studio, and art collection? Epic treehouse?
4. Contribution
 - a. These can be the most inspiring goals of all because they are about creating a legacy that will outlast you. Adopt a child? Build a shelter for the homeless? Volunteer with the Peace Corps?

Tips for good goal-setting

- Quality over quantity: Tony recommends setting **only one master goal in each of the four categories for a one year time**, i.e. 4 master goals.
- Really, really focus on the why: This mirrors the message in Victor Frankl's man's search for meaning: "A man with a strong enough why can endure almost any how."

After you've set your goals, rehearse them twice per day. Specifically, rehearse the emotional part associated with the master goals in the morning, and every night. How will you feel when you accomplish this goal? This creates continuous focus and creates absolute certainty.



The story of Del Mar Castle: Tony had an ambitious goal. He wanted to buy and live in Del Mar Castle, San Diego, an expansive oceanside estate.

Twice everyday Tony reminded himself of this goal. He visualized himself sitting in his circular office overlooking the water.

Tony achieved the castle goal in less than two years by rehearsing it in such detail. He also said the exercise kept the goal top of mind and attracted mentors to help him in his quest.

There's a great short section called "Code of Conduct" in which Tony shares various ways to guide how we live our lives. One of the best references was:

JOHN WOODEN'S SEVEN-POINT CREED: "MAKING THE MOST OF ONESELF"

1. Be true to yourself.
2. Make each day your masterpiece.
3. Help others.
4. Drink deeply from good books.
5. Make friendship a fine art.
6. Build a shelter against a rainy day.
7. Pray for guidance and give thanks for your blessings every day.