



Mastery

The Keys to Success and Long-Term Fulfillment

by George Leonard

Plume © 1992

192 pages

The Big Ideas

Dabble/Obsess/Hack

Which do you do when you're not in mastery?

Diligence

Diligence. Patience.
Persistence. Success.

Loving the Plateau

Learn to love it.

Practice As a Noun

Build your practice.

Surrender

Be willing to look stupid.

Intentionality

What's your vision?

The Edge

Go to it. Hold the balance.

Homeostasis

Work it.

Pitfalls on the Path

Watch your step.

Master Commonplace

Make your life a practice.

Energy for Mastery

Let's be spent!!

"We fail to realize that mastery is not about perfection. It's about a process, a journey. The master is the one who stays on the path day after day, year after year. The master is the one who is willing to try, and fail, and try again, for as long as he or she lives."

~ George Leonard from *Mastery*

Mastery.

If we have any desire to live at our highest potential, we MUST master the concept of Mastery. And George Leonard, a life-long learner, educator, teacher, author, and Aikido master is our ideal teacher.

This book is packed with simple, profound truths aimed at helping us re-orient ourselves from ineffective Dabbler, Obsessive and Hacker approaches to life to one of Mastery. Life's too short for anything other than our best, wouldn't you agree?

My vote: let's dedicate our lives to a path of Mastery. Starting now.

■ Dabbler, Obsessive & Hacker

"We all aspire to mastery, but the path is always long and sometimes rocky, and it promises no quick pay off. So we look for other paths, each of which attracts a different person."

And those three other paths? The Dabbler. The Obsessive. And the Hacker.

- **The Dabbler:** Gets really into something for awhile and loves the quick results but the moment things fade, he/she's off to the next new thing—rationalizing that it just wasn't a good fit. Hence, no mastery.
- **The Obsessive:** A bottom-line type of person who wants to get the tennis stroke right on the first lesson and, when results start to slow, pushes even harder to make it work, ignoring the fact that plateaus are part of the path of mastery—pushing and pushing mercilessly to create a continuing upward curve. Then? A sharp, sharp decline. Hence, no mastery.
- **The Hacker:** After sort of getting the hang of something, the hacker is content to stay at a plateau—never really improving his skills beyond the first basic level. Hacking, hacking. Hence, no mastery.

You can find these three alternatives to mastery in work, sport, and relationships. Where do you show up? Can you think of some examples of how you may have shown up as a