

CHAD HOWSE'S

# 12 VIRTUES OF MANLINESS



MASTERY

## MASTERY

You don't matter, your work does.

What you *do*, the things you give others, the skills you acquire, the products you create, the lives you enhance, these are what matter. You don't. If you're not working toward something you're not serving much of a purpose.

This can seem harsh, and it's not completely true, but in order to be a man of value, this is the stand you have to take.

**It's not about you. It's about what you do.**

Mastery goes further than mere work, though. It goes back to our tribal days when a man was useless if he was strong and game but ineffective.

It's nice to throw your hat into the ring, to stand for something, to fight for someone and against someone, but if you don't know *how to fight*, what's the point? Sure, you're living with courage, you're doing what a man must do, but the outcome is predetermined because you suck at it.

Mastery comes in a couple forms. It's related to your purpose in life, the fact that humans are happier when we're working toward something, when we have real time feedback as to whether we're improving and learning, or not.

We need work. We need to acquire skills. Whatever you're working on or toward you should be purposely improving at it.

Mastery also speaks to the *good at being a man* scenario. You're a warrior and a defender. If you take no time to become good at being such you are not good at being a man. Whether this means learning how to use a gun – always the best form of self-defense – or a knife, or your limbs, as a man, need to know how to fight. And hitting a bag isn't enough.

It's a growing trend for fellas to buy a bag and hang it up in the garage or get a dummy on a stand and plop it in the backyard, whaling away at something that doesn't hit back. You're not actually training in the ways of combat until you spar. You're *not* in the arena. You're afraid to go to a real gym, to spar with real humans, so you film videos of the bag or the dummy you're hitting to convey an image that isn't real.

This brings up a pretty simple challenge for the week:

**Join a boxing gym or a jiu-jitsu gym or a kickboxing gym – or any other kind of combat.**

Get in there. Spar. Get punched in the face.

## MASTERY

I can't fathom trusting a dude who's never been punched in the face. *You know* they're going to run when the shit hits the fan or there's at least a good possibility that they will.

Being good at being a man is important, as is being a good man. Most of you may hesitate at this step, but it's an important one, a *necessary one*. Don't go on in this program until you've taken this step.

To be both good at being a man and a good man you have to be effective, useful in the ways of *men*, in the purposes we've existed for since day one.  
Get in that gym!

## WHAT ARE YOU PRACTICING?

*What are you practicing?*

The more we practice the better we get at practicing.

So what are you practicing?

What skill are you working on, trying to perfect?

There doesn't have to be just one...

The more we practice the better we become at practicing and the better we become at performing. Becoming an optimal performer, no matter your trade or area of focus, is dependent on purposeful practice.

That is, not merely going through the motions, but being absorbed with the skill you're performing.

Don't relegate practice to just work, however.

Success in your business, area of work, even your hobby, is dependent on you becoming great at practicing. So broaden your scope (probably the only time I'll ever write that).

Have your work, the money-maker, the skill you need to best develop to succeed in business:

*That may be writing, copywriting, selling, painting, building, designing, whatever. Identify that single skill.*

Have your hobbies:

*Shooting, archery, lifting, running, hiking, hunting, fighting, and so on. If there's more than one, cool, just make sure you can plan time at least 3-4 times a week to practice this skill.*

The point is to become great, not good, not above average, so focusing on fewer things obviously has its benefits.

Determine what success is. Identify how to master each skill. Then start practicing.

Reading, of course, is a wonderful skill to love and perfect.