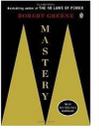


MASTERY

by Robert Greene



Overview

This book discusses the nebulous concept of “Mastery”, which is achieved once you’ve surpassed 10,000 hours of deliberate practice and delve into an intuitive feel for your field. Einstein, Mozart, Da Vinci, and Darwin were not borne geniuses; rather, they pursued their passions, studied meticulously for thousands of hours, and were able to spark a child-like creativity. You first submit to an Apprenticeship phase, in which you quietly observe and study from the sidelines. Then, you unlock your creativity and gain an intuitive Mastery.

Introduction

When you begin to learn a new instrument or begin a new job, you feel intimidated. You have no feel for the musical structure or the social dynamics. However, if you do not let this fear turn into boredom and impatience, you start to see connections. Afterwards, you can start to mix your intuition with rationality. The early pre-humans, standing less than five feet tall, became “the most formidable hunters on the planet” by being able to detach themselves from the present moment and see patterns.

Mastery is seen as quaint and outdated. We scorn discipline, and wish our technology could do all the work. However, to desire easy political connections or tricks, one grows weaker and ends up in a dead-end career. People want to believe that talent is simply innate. Mozart and Da Vinci did not necessarily have *innate* talent; they simply spent more hours on their passions. Darwin’s cousin was smarter, but it was his passion of collecting specimens that led to his world-changing theories. Some have a moral issue with gaining Mastery or power over the world, believing it’s for the “*domain of patriarchal elites who oppress us.*” Believing that power is inherently “bad” can infect us subtly. Rather, aim to see Mastery as a positive goal to gain a higher level of intelligence, in line with our unique inclinations

“The power they have achieved is clearly the result of effort and process, not genetics or privilege.”

Chapter 1. Discover Your Calling: The Life’s Task

The word “vocation” stems from hearing the voice of God deep within you. Da Vinci’s fascination with sketching the world in front of him allowed him to paint with a rigorous eye for detail. His obsession with birds made him want to invent flying machines. He ignored those who said he worked too slowly, and who said that he should ignore his inner voice and go to Rome like the other young adults. Even Einstein talked about an inner voice. Instead of dismissing this as mystical, view it as practical: we all have a unique combination of DNA, and thus unique inclinations. “*They are forces within us that come from a deeper place than conscious words can express.*”

The counterforce is the desire to conform to others’ expectations, which slowly saps this inner voice. “*Reconnect with your inclination*”, remove other voices, and look deeply back into your childhood to find your calling. Modern life lacks a larger purpose, and we scarcely realize the degree to which this emptiness subtly infects us. This “*religion-like quest*” is not antisocial, but rather a higher purpose outside the “*tastes of others*”.

There are 5 methods to find your inner voice:

1. **Origins:** Einstein and Marie Curie both had moments in childhood which sparked their curiosity. Recall moments of curiosity or a profound sense of power.
2. **Niche.** With too much competition, it may be difficult to thrive; find a small narrow niche and dominate it.
3. **Rebellion.** Mozart’s father forced him to support the entire family. His father wanted him to become a conductor. When Mozart chose to rebel and stay in Vienna, his feeling of anger and rebellion against his father caused him to compose “*at a furious pace, his most famous operas and compositions.*” False paths can stem from desiring money, attention, or fame. But you must use anger and actively rebel against those (parents or peers) who encouraged this path “*Let your sense of rebellion fill you with energy and purpose.*”

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