

Chapter 19

Think and Grow Rich

I wanted to devote an entire chapter to Napoleon Hill's book *Think and Grow Rich*. While its actual connection to Andrew Carnegie may be dubious, there is a reason why *Think and Grow Rich* has remained so popular since its original publication in 1937. If you do not know specifically what to do now to pursue wealth, or if you are debating whether to read *The Offer* or *TGR* first, read Napoleon's book. You can buy mine, but you do not have to read it immediately! Napoleon's is available for free. Do come back to read *The Offer* because *The Offer* expands on the principles of *TGR*.

The central premise of *Think and Grow Rich* asserts that you can mold your reality according to your thoughts, and this can be used to advance your financial interests.

In similar fashion to *The Offer*, to implement the principles of *TGR*, you must determine what it is that you want. *TGR* provides the following six specific instructions on where to start on your path of wealth accumulation. I quote the entire relevant passage in its entirety:

First. Fix in your mind the exact amount of money you desire. It is not sufficient merely to say "I want plenty of money." Be definite as to the amount. (There is a psychological reason for definite-ness which will be described in a subsequent chapter).

Second. Determine exactly what you intend to give in return for the money you desire. (There is no such reality as "something for nothing.")

Third. Establish a definite date when you intend to possess the money you desire.

Fourth. Create a definite plan for carrying out your desire, and begin at once, whether you are ready or not, to put this plan into action.

Fifth. Write out a clear, concise statement of the amount of money you intend to acquire, name the time limit for its acquisition, state what you intend to give in return for the money, and describe clearly the plan through which you intend to accumulate it.

Sixth. Read your written statement aloud, twice daily, once just before retiring at night, and once after arising in the morning. AS YOU READ, SEE AND FEEL AND BELIEVE YOURSELF ALREADY IN POSSESSION OF THE MONEY.

After reading this in 2017, I wrote out the following:

My Definite Chief Aim, My Major Purpose: to provide for my kids and myself and be a blessing to my world. To glorify God and enjoy him forever.

By January 1, 2027, I will own \$10 million and/or enough real estate investments that will generate at least \$40,000 in monthly passive income. In return for this money, I will give my full work time and attention as a securities attorney or otherwise. My current plan for accomplishing this is to continue practicing as a securities attorney and taking full advantage of other opportunities that my vocation presents to me. I believe that I will have this money in my possession. My faith is so strong that I can now see this money before my eyes. I can touch it with my hands. It is now awaiting transfer to me at that time, and in the proportion that I deliver the service I intend to render in return for it. I am awaiting a plan by which to accumulate this money, and will follow that plan, when it is received.

In humility, I'm sharing with you what my goal was when I first read TGR and understood its concepts. I also wanted to describe how reading this book is a great first step to wealth creation for anyone, and in fact, reading TGR was my first step on the path that led me to The Offer.

I printed my statement out and tacked it to my wall. At the bottom of the page, I wrote this direct quote from the book:

"You can never have riches in great quantities UNLESS you can work yourself into a white heat of DESIRE for money, and actually BELIEVE you will possess it."

"The white heat of DESIRE for money" concept challenged me. It sounds like avarice or greed, right?

To answer that, let's pause for a second and ask ourselves what kind of wealth you want to possess? Maybe there is a book out there that you can read that helps you define wealth on your own terms, and provides you with some specific tools to help you achieve that wealth not only for yourself but also for your community? You are reading that very book right now!

You must "actually BELIEVE you will possess" the wealth that I am describing. Your belief about whether you will possess this wealth is informed by how you view the universe.

Do you believe that the universe is arbitrary and mechanistic, devoid of any soul or intention? Alternatively, do I believe that the universe is somehow interconnected, that there is a powerful unseen force out

there that is aware of my existence? Do I believe that this awareness includes an actual benevolence toward me and possesses supreme knowledge of every element of my being because somehow, I am part of what it intends for creation? If you have a hard time connecting with this option, this book may not be for you. I will pause, though and mention that for anyone to accumulate great wealth, possess it and enjoy it (wealth=blessing), they must be able to consider things from different perspectives. If you are not wealthy, but only believe in the universe that I described at first (mechanistic), let me suggest that you may need to suspend your view of the universe at least momentarily to become wealthy. Psychedelics help with this and helped me with this immensely.

This is the case because I really doubted God. I really wondered why a good and loving God would ever allow me to experience the pain of the same tragedy that happened to my parents. I could not imagine why, after vowing never to get a divorce, the same thing happened to me as my parents AND I had four kids. What harm to my children would result from my divorce?

When I finally started dealing effectively with my childhood trauma and the trauma from my divorce

(coincident with my 2012 experiences with psilocybin), I began to perceive genuinely that God was good and that he loved me. Before that time, I always heard that to be true at church, I read it in the Bible, but I never felt it. Then, I get a divorce, the one thing I grew up vowing would never happen to me (particularly if I had kids) because I knew of the pain that it would cause. I knew that from my own experience when my parents divorced when I was five.

The reason why I am dedicating this book to my mom and dad is because they have taught me more about what it means to be a human being with infinite potential than anyone else. This is the case because they always pointed me in the direction of God. They are my parents, but they also are human beings and I have tried to describe their humanity in these pages. Tolkien wrote about how all our lives are allegories, and my parents have been caring, loving examples of Jesus' love to me. I owe them so much for how they raised me, and even ways that they unintentionally have influenced me.

Part of the reason my mom and I lived a little isolated from other kids when I was growing up was because my mom had a terrific stay at home job in the 1970s in the women's dormitory at Concordia University

in Austin (when it was still on 32nd Street and Interstate 35). My mom and I lived in an apartment within the dorm, and I grew up at Concordia. Remember who I said my friends were? Books! I had access to a small college library growing up. I had an internet equivalent in the 1970s and back then we called them libraries. This library was readily available to me when most kids my age only (maybe) had a local public library within walking distance of their home. None of them likely had ready access to the library of the caliber that I did. I was the wealthiest kid in Austin, and I didn't even know it. My fabulous wealth was so ordinary I couldn't recognize it for what it was at the time.

After writing this, I realized that I truly am the wealthiest man in the universe, because no one defines wealth just like me and I have the key to how I can become wealthy. I already am wealthy and I am going to continue in my life on the path I am describing here to accumulate more and more wealth. It is an inevitability.

This is the secret of wealth. When I look deep into my source text, I understand that it instructs me that my fundamental purpose is to enjoy life. This includes a deep consideration of the questions, who am I and what do I want? My enjoyment is determined by

reference to what I want and who I am. This is true not only for me but for EVERYONE. I am informed that enjoyment must be connected to the notion of service, or put another way, to the notion of love. Our service toward one another, and loving one another, occurs in community.

I had no idea in 2017 when I wrote my TGR statement how all the things I describe in this book might come about. Immediately after I wrote my statement, in addition to working hard at my law practice (my highest hourly rate), I internally committed to the course of continuing to write the T. H. Chalm Bible poetry I described. I started with Psalms, then worked on Job, and finally, I finished Rhyming Solomon, including Song of Songs, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. I had no other idea about what I wanted to write about, but I knew that this project would be a way for me to worship my source and learn more about my source's characteristics. Also, I knew that by defining such specific parameters for my writing (rhyming iambic pentameter), writing this poetry would be like a gym for my writing skills. I can say that my writing skills improved tremendously with the Bible poetry I've written. You may not enjoy it, but The Offer poem is

very representative of my Bible poetry and includes lines from Ecclesiastes. I love the jarring and unusual syntax that results from reordering words to conform to the meter. I think that this promotes thought, and if you go through and read one of my poems, it may cause you to see the Bible in a different way.

I even imagined that a Satanist could read my poetry and say this, “I hate this because it’s about Jesus, but it’s not bad poetry.” If I accomplished that, it would be an evangelical outreach success through art! My religion says that I should share the Gospel (the good news about Jesus), but that is a thing because we are supposed to believe that the Gospel is good news. Later chapters in this book provide some observations about modern American Christianity, particularly as the Gospel is preached as a means toward getting rich (without a corresponding discussion of the matters described herein).

Through my poetry, I was refining my craft as a creative writer. Little did I know that my source was using this exercise to train me as a writer for another genre of literature, and this training allowed me to write the core of *The Offer* (around 150 pages) in a matter of about four days. I have a “white heat of DESIRE” for

The Offer.

Did you see anything in my TGR statement about poetry? I was still so out of touch with my identity that I did not even include anything about creative writing in my statement. To be fair to myself, I had a vague notion about how, if I had more money, I could have more time to devote to activities that I loved. Knowing that I loved to write poetry, having more money might give me more time to write.

My writing incorporated a notion about community because part of my ambition with writing is to write books that sell millions of copies, right? I am pretty smart and have a lot of really good ideas, and I've read and digested A LOT of really good information. Through The Offer, I discovered that I at least had the potential to write something that people might be able to connect with more than my poetry.

I always had a dream of wanting to bless people through my writing, just like I was blessed as a lonely child whose best friends were books. My writing is my attempt to rescue that child who exists out there now in someone else. There are other people in the world who are lonely, who feel as if they do not have any help, and I thought that at the very least, maybe I could just write a

letter encouraging them.

Writing was my highest calling ever since I started reading Narnia when I was around eight years old, and then LOTR when I was ten. Aragorn and Aslan were my ideal men and I identified with them strongly. (I prefer Aragorn, though, because it is easier for me to identify with a man than a lion.) They were my mentors, and those books provided me with solace. I cultivated my imagination by exploring both Narnia and Middle Earth in my mind. This is why writing is such a core part of my identity because I am desperately trying to reach that lonely child with some words that may bring him comfort even though he has no one else to encourage him.

I am writing to all the actually poor people, or the poor in spirit, and want to encourage them to humility (meekness) because my source tells me that the meek inherit the earth. Do you want to be wealthy like I define it in this book? Do you want to be wealthy like the wealthiest man in history defined *true* wealth?

Notice, that immediately after I wrote my statement in 2017, my eruption at Lorie occurred, and as a result, I resigned from a good professional opportunity in shame. Because of my unprocessed trauma, I sabotaged

myself.

The beautiful thing about this story, though, is that immediately after my unprofessional email and resignation from Adventum, a *bodhisattva* appeared to challenge me about meditation.

I did not know how I was going to achieve the wealth that The Offer represents to me. Nevertheless, Solomon, through his wisdom and my work on the Chalm poetry with Ecclesiastes specifically led me here, now, to both register Real Advisers as an investment adviser and write The Offer.

At the very moment The Offer was created I realized with greater specificity what it was that I wanted to do. Remember what I said about how I have a present ambition that sounds a little preposterous? My present ambition is to go back to school on a full-time basis as a 49-year-old man and pursue a Master of Fine Arts in poetry. I don't know if that is the place where I can best serve, and I have asked for advice from people in my community (including some of the smartest, wealthiest, and most highly-regarded attorneys and other business people in Austin) about whether I should do this. They will have to pay me to do it so they will need to think about this question for a while.

In humility, I will accept their answer, knowing that it may be in their best interests for me to keep writing. That is the case if The Offer is a legitimate way to promote an investment advisory business. I wrote the core of this book in about a week, and the way that the ideas keep flowing, and how much I know it resonates with everyone that I describe it to (except for the curmudgeons, and I try not to spend too much time with them), I think there is a great deal of additional intellectual property that can be created with The Offer. It may be in Real Advisers' best interests to fund my writing. I will ask them for permission to devote time to getting an MFA, but the main thing for me will be to continue to engage with the core of my identity, my passion to be a creative writer.

I know that I will be exercising this passion for the rest of my life. I can continue to exercise my passion for writing as a practicing attorney. I could be exercising another secret ambition that I have denied myself through the same lie I told myself about not being creative enough; this secret ambition is to write science fiction. I could write more Bible poetry. I could write for Real Advisers. I joke with Jon that he and I will be happy in the nursing home because we can play chess,

and when I get tired of that I can write poetry. Writing is such a fundamental part of my identity because every time I craft a sentence or express a thought, I am engaging in a process that helps me reach the lonely 10-year-old Roland. When he looked for a friend, he found solace in books and maybe I can write some cool science fiction story that will be a gift to kids in the future. Who knows? AS ABOVE, SO BELOW.

The beautiful thing about *The Offer* is that it should reconnect you with your identity. I told a friend last night that my 17-year-old self would look at me now, at 49 and give me a fist bump. He would be disappointed about how unkindly I have acted toward people in my life (particularly Aricka) but at least he would see that we survived the depression, anxiety, and endless successions of suicidal ideations we lived with for years. He would see that at age 49, we are thriving despite my failures, and in fact, we're peaking in our overall experience. Life has never been better for me than right now.

The universe carried me along despite my failures and enabled its intention to bring me to a place of genuine wealth. My 17-year-old self would be pleased with me. I know this because I am pleased with myself

and I say that without pride. Everyone should be able to say that genuinely and without arrogance. It is possible to say that in humility because we can only be truly pleased with ourselves if we are serving.

Ecclesiastes directed me to a path of wealth. All I did was ask my three questions. I started to answer those questions immediately after I heard them in yoga class from Jenn. This is a perfect illustration of the notion of community and how I was blessed through my community, by hearing other ideas besides my own. By exercising humility and actually listening to what Jenn said, she revealed a perspective that I did not have. To hear what she was saying, I had to tell myself that even though I am super intelligent and have a lot of valuable information in my head, other people STILL can communicate valuable information to me!

As my wealth began to grow, not only in my bank account but also in my mind and in my community, I began to be more authentic and genuine with people. My empathy expanded and I was able to be more attentive with my friends. I could more easily tolerate temporary misunderstandings where in the past I would write people off at the most minor of offenses. In the past I was unable to circle back around with people

and tell them that even though we are in a disagreement (we have these diametrically opposed perspectives and it seems like they both can't be "true" at the same time), I would still like to be your friend. Meditation has allowed me to sit with uncomfortable silences and simply think (rather than react) in those instances where my friends seem to have an opposite way of viewing shared circumstances. I remain present at these times even when the opposing perspectives seems to be at odds with our friendship.

For the sake of relationships, out of a spirit of humility, and because we want to continue to experience the force multiplier effect of communities that I describe elsewhere, we may want to overlook minor slights. We may want to acknowledge how we ourselves may frequently make mistakes. We should never make the mistake of impairing relationships that enable valuable force multiplier effects in our lives. This is particularly the case if these people are part of your community. This is even more particularly the case if these people are part of your faith-based community. We must be prepared to exercise humility with each other to maintain the efficiencies and effectiveness necessary for the creation of the true wealth I describe in *The Offer*.

My teacher (Rabbi) instructed me that we should love one another. This is a simple way of saying that we must be gentle with other people and it probably is in our personal best interest to extend more grace toward people than we do at present.

Do you see what can happen when you follow these principles and the ideas in TGR? I didn't even finish reading *Think and Grow Rich*. Napoleon Hill writes in its first chapters that as soon as you understand its central premise, that your thoughts create your own reality, you can quit reading. I told you that about *The Offer* back in Chapter 1, didn't I? When I understood TGR and its consistency with my core belief system, I stopped reading and started writing. I proceeded on with my life and the things happened that I described to you here.

The Offer is the universe's invitation to you to step into abundance. Please join me on a path of creating great wealth based on the principles of *The Offer*.