

THE BIG IDEAS

The First Premise

First, win in your mind.

Self-Confidence

Character + skill.

Starve Fear, Feed Courage

And bomb the negativity.

Concentration

How's yours?

Breath

Awareness + control are key.

Emotional Resilience

Is a must.

One Thing + 3 P's

What are yours?

Uncommon Resolve

Is required for an uncommon life.

Unbeatable Mind

Forge Resiliency and Mental Toughness to Succeed at an Elite Level

BY MARK DIVINE · CREATESPACE © 2014 · 216 PAGES

“The “big idea” of this book is that you are capable of so much more than you think you are, but you have been kept in the dark about this potential your entire life. I call this potential your **20X Factor**, in that you are capable of at least twenty times what your current paradigm allows you to believe. It is not as though your family or our culture purposely kept you in the dark about this important fact. No, they were ignorant about it as well and can't be held to blame. We cannot ignore this unbelievable truth any longer. Not only do you deserve to tap into your full potential for your own success and happiness, but our collective minds are needed to sync up like a global crowdsourced network of solution finders to pull us out of the mess we have created. This book isn't about those messes, though—there are plenty of authors writing about the perils we face on our abused planet. No, this book is about how you can begin to tap into that vast potential lying dormant inside of you—so that you can achieve your fullest expression of yourself, help those around you, and send positive ripples throughout the world.”

~ Mark Divine from *Unbeatable Mind*

I think Mark Divine is a real-life superhero.

Seriously.

I've always admired the grit and character of special ops warriors—from the classic Spartan warriors to the modern-day versions: Navy SEALs and Army Rangers and other elite forces. Mark is a former Navy SEAL and just a good, SOLID guy.

I don't know how else to articulate it. Strong. Virtuous. Committed. Grounded. Smart. Powerful. Integrated. A warrior-philosopher.

And his book, *Unbeatable Mind*, is all of those things.

If you'd like to, as the sub-title promises and the book delivers, “*forge resiliency and mental toughness to succeed at an elite level*,” then this book is for you. Get it [here](#). Check out Mark and learn more about all his other projects at [MarkDivine.com](#).

Let's jump in and take a quick look at some of my favorite Big Ideas—knowing we'll barely scratch the surface of my (ridiculously) marked up copy of the book.

THE FIRST PREMISE: FIRST, WIN IN YOUR MIND

“I think by now I have made it clear that SEALs operate at an elite level because they learn to control their minds and establish the win internally *before* they enter the fight. This is the First Premise.”

So, the First Premise of creating an unbeatable mind? We need to learn how to control our minds and, specifically, win the battles of life *before* we enter the fight. The entire book is all

“The principles of Unbeatable Mind are not about being hard-core but rather about how to perform at your peak in any domain, whether you are a mom, dad, SEAL, student or CPA.”

~ Mark Divine

"He taught me that to live an uncommon life, one needs to learn uncommon disciplines."

~ Mark Divine

"First you must choose to control your mind and turn it toward success."

~ Mark Divine

"Stress and success are defined by choice, and it is the small choices, not the big ones, that make the difference between good and excellent."

~ Mark Divine

about rockin' this. Mark lays out these five steps as a high-level process for mental success:

"Step 1: The first step is to focus your mind and prevent it from running all over the place."

If you haven't noticed, we have a little crazy drunk monkey in our minds—swinging from (usually negative) thought to thought to thought. We need to tame and sober that guy up and create a *disciplined* mind via concentration practices. As Mark says, even a little progress on this front yields HUGE results.

Once we've gained some mastery here we can move on to: **"Step 2: As you learn to discipline your monkey mind, you will begin to learn to connect with your internal witness. This is that part of you that is untethered from your ego."**

As we build mental strength, we can disconnect from the constant stream of thoughts and *see* those thoughts from what's called a "witness" perspective. It's kinda like the difference between sitting directly under a waterfall and getting hammered by the water vs. stepping back to the bank of the lagoon and *watching* the water fall. Much more pleasant experience.

With that mastery cultivated, we move on to **"Step 3: This step is to feed your unfettered mind with superfood for success. This food is in the form of powerful, positive imagery as well as positive emotions directed toward your desired future states, skills, and victories."**

Mental superfood = YUM! That leads to **"Step 4: In this step you activate a daily training plan to nurture your internal vision through repeated practice and to prepare for the fifth and final step, which is to..."**

Step 5: Take massive action, and recruit like-minded teammates to align with your vision and help you win your missions, every time."

The First Premise. First, we must win in our minds. I like it. (A lot.)

As Mark says, there's a lot of nuance wrapped in those 5 steps. And he unpacks them in the book. For now, let's look at some of my other favorite Big Ideas.

SELF-CONFIDENCE: CHARACTER + SKILL

"The self-confidence of a SEAL is both a character trait and a skill. The skill is to rack up small, worthy, and achievable victories on the way to mission accomplishment. In addition, it requires being able to reframe failures to find a silver lining. With these two skills, you will have the self-confidence to attack any challenge, and your confidence in your domain of expertise will grow as your success grows."

If there's one thing SEALs embody, it's self-confidence. Which, of course, is at the core of creating an unbeatable mind.

In our Note on [Mind Gym](#), we briefly looked at the etymology of the word *confident*. It comes from the Latin word that means, essentially, "intense trust." That INTENSE TRUST is earned from the hard work of showing up diligently, patiently and persistently, such that we know we can handle whatever life throws at us.

Mark describes this quality in his SEAL training instructors as "extreme competence." And, very importantly, he tells us self-confidence can be built—that it's both a character trait (that can be cultivated) and a skill.

Wherever we're at with our confidence, we can always dial it in even more.

You racking up small, worthy and achievable victories? Any failures in your life you need to reframe to see the silver lining?

Get on that.

STARVE FEAR, FEED COURAGE

“Negativity destroys performance, so it is crucial to train to move from witnessing negative thoughts to starving them and feeding the positive. This is the specific process:

“Negativity destroys performance in the short term and precludes success and happiness in the long term.”

~ Mark Divine

I. Witness negativity.

II. Interdict, or stop, the negative thoughts with a power statement.

III. Redirect your mind with self-talk and imagery to something positive and productive for your current goal.

IV. Maintain your new mental state with a jingle or mantra.”

That’s an incredibly cool, simple four-step process to get our minds right.

Mark tells the story of the two wolves battling within. The wolf of fear and the wolf of courage. Which one wins? The one we feed. Therefore, we need to STARVE the fear and FEED the courage.

Those four steps are how we do it. Quick re-cap:

First: We need to witness the negativity. That might sound easy, but it’s not. Most of the time we just get swept up in our own negative loops and think we’re in a bad mood b/c of things happening to us rather than b/c of our own negative internal patterns.

So, step one: See the negative thoughts. Train this ability via meditation and practice with the little day-to-day things that trigger us.

Once we notice the negativity, we STOP the negative thoughts. Aggressively. We interdict them with power statements.

To *interdict* means to “prohibit or forbid.” It also means “to intercept and prevent the movement of (a prohibited commodity or person).” From a military perspective, it means to “impede (an enemy force), especially by aerial bombing of lines of communication or supply.”

Essentially, we want to bomb the enemy force of negativity. To, in Mark’s words: “blow up negative mental chatter and allow your mind to still itself and await its next set of instructions.”

“To be disciplined is literally to be a disciple to something larger than you.”

~ Mark Divine

We do that by dropping power statements on the negative thoughts. Stuff like, “I’ve got this!!!” “Piece of cake.” “Let’s do this!” or whatever else resonates with you.

Step 3. Consistently bring your mind back to the good stuff via positive self-talk + positive imagery associated with your goals.

Step 4. Maintain our new positive state with jingles/mantras that fire you up. In Sanskrit, *mantra* literally means “tools of the mind.” We want to literally work on our minds to re-tool them.

Install this goodness via practice, practice, and more practice. (And then practice, practice, practice and more practice. Seriously. Never miss a moment to show your mind who’s boss.)

CONCENTRATION

“We all understand what it means to concentrate, but can we really concentrate with enough depth that all distractions are eliminated? Can we concentrate on our *one* thing (the most important thing) for long enough periods of time to get the job done? Can we do it with a hair-on-fire intensity? Deep, long, unbroken, and inspired concentration is a hallmark skill of super-successful people. Yet the only way to improve concentration is by practicing concentration.”

Concentration. It’s huge. How’s yours?

"Philosophers of all ages have noted that goodness comes from aligning with universal laws/beliefs, while the potential for weakness, even evil, comes from moral relativism."

~ Mark Divine

Can you focus your attention on your one thing without wavering? Or does that little, drunk, crazy monkey in your head take over the airwaves and keep you hopping from dopamine rush to dopamine rush as you flit from an important project to email to Facebook to the news to Twitter back to email to ... in a maddening loop?

As we discuss throughout these Notes, being able to put our minds where we want, when we want, is the mark of a happy, successful human being.

And the only way to create that ability is to practice. Mark talks about a bunch of ways to rock it. Meditation. Visualization. Yoga. Qi gong. All of these help us cultivate mental strength. Huge.

I also like to set my physical environment up for success. I'm typing this at 5:56am on a Friday morning. I got up even earlier than normal today—2:45am. (Digital sunset + going to bed at 7pm didn't hurt.) First thing: Meditation for 20-minutes. Then 5 minutes of basic yoga. Then I started working on this Note. That's my One Thing for this morning.

To make sure I rock it, I set up my computer to be as distraction-free as possible. My desktop is clean. I have two folders: "One Thing Stuff" (Inspired by Mark) + "Other Stuff." That's it. I'm almost never online these days and currently not even checking email aside from exchanges with my right-hand guy.

This space creates a tremendous opportunity to focus. To CONCENTRATE.

How about *you*?

How can you cultivate your concentration powers more? Time to start meditating? Practicing creative visualization?

Now a good time to start building that habit?

BREATH AWARENESS AND CONTROL

"In a crunch situation, I recommend you collapse your concentration to your breathing while maintaining relaxed awareness of the surroundings. Breathing deeply will greatly reduce the stress, slow your heart rate, and bring your nervous system back into balance. The mind will remain focused as your body comes back into balance. Then you can make better decisions in the midst of the chaos, danger, or the debilitating effect of fear. This is why breath awareness and control is the number one tool for Unbeatable Mind students who challenge themselves and push the envelope. But it is equally effective to enhance your performance in the boardroom. The level of control over your physiology and psychology I am talking about must be practiced and habituated until it becomes a routine skill."

Feeling particularly stressed and/or need to be in super locked in mode?

Dial in your breath.

Mark has *genius* wisdom on the power of our breathing and tells us: "To say that learning breath control is the most important component to forging mental toughness would not be an overstatement."

You'll want to check out the book for more practices on how to rock that.

For now, try out what he calls "Box Breathing." Inhale to the count of 5. Hold it for 5. Exhale to 5. Hold it for 5. Repeat.

Amazing way to ground. Throw in some mantras and you're unbeatable.

BEING EMOTIONALLY RESILIENT

"To be emotionally resilient and a survivor, it is crucial to know the answer to "what is your why,

"The word Kokoro has Japanese origin and means to merge one's heart and mind in action... Kokoro can also be described as positive willpower, a non-gutting spirit, and is associated with your spiritual development."

~ Mark Divine

"Getting to the terrain of elite performers requires that you learn to tap into the 90 percent of your mental power that lies beyond the rational, thinking part of your mind."

~ Mark Divine

and what are you willing to do to make sure it comes to fruition?" Then back it up with self-esteem, a positive attitude, optimism that you will succeed, and a focus on the others in your team."

What is your why? What are you willing to do to make sure it comes to fruition?

Let's take a moment to dial that in, shall we?

This is my why: _____

This is what I am willing to do to *make sure* it comes to fruition: _____

Fantastic. Now, as Mark advises, back that up with self-esteem, a positive attitude, optimism that you will succeed, and a focus on the others in your team.

Here's to cultivating our emotional resilience!!

ONE THING AND THREE P'S

"I believe it is crucial to be self-aware enough to be able to articulate our One Thing and Three Ps. Let's look at these by asking a few questions:

I. Who am I and what am I here for? What is the One Thing I am supposed to accomplish in my life, and what does that mean for me right now? That is, what is today's One Thing connected to my big One Thing?

II. What is my Purpose? How do I take my One Thing and activate it in the world?

III. What am I Passionate about and how can I do more of that?

IV. What do I value, and how can I develop these Principles so they define my character for the rest of my life?

Mastery over the self is somewhat difficult if you don't have clarity on these questions. The answer to these questions is what gives you direction in life. If you don't know yourself, what are you supposed to do besides just get by? Lack of meaning and purpose is a major cause of despair and despondency in the world. Some will stumble upon a vague sense of purpose in their professional lives. Others have their purpose shown to them early in life and are well into fulfilling it in their twenties. I have found that the vast majority of my students cannot clearly articulate their purpose and are deeply moved when they uncover it."

WOW. That's worth a slow re-read and some deep contemplation + journaling.

Mark provides a bunch of super powerful questions and insights on how to get more clarity on our One Thing + Three Ps. (I went thru and answered them all again this morning. SUPER powerful.) The book is worth it for this section alone.

What's your **ONE THING**? Who are you and what are you here for?!

How about your 3 Ps?!

- **Passion:** What fires you up?
- **Principles:** What do you truly value in your life?
- **Purpose:** What's your One thing? What are you here to do?!

If we want an unbeatable mind and to live an uncommon life that truly matters, we need to know our WHY.

"Remain content with where you are while executing a simple strategy for getting to where you want to go."

~ Mark Divine

"A virtue is a value that you have habituated until it becomes a character trait."

~ Mark Divine

UNCOMMON RESOLVE

"It took me considerable resolve to write three books in one year in 2013 when I finished *The Way of the SEAL*, *8 Weeks to SEALFIT*, and this one all in an eleven-month period. Some may call that uncommon resolve. The same kind of resolve is required for any goal or project that has an unreasonable level of challenge...

Is resolve a quality that can be developed? Of course it can—it is a natural corollary to forging mental toughness. You develop uncommon resolve by deepening confidence and courage, fortified with five attributes that define character and resolve. They are:

I. *Desire*: you must desire the outcome as if your hair were on fire.

II. *Belief*: you must believe in your purpose, your mission and yourself.

III. *Attitude*: you must have a positive attitude, drive, and be able to mobilize a team with it.

IV. *Discipline*: you must be willing to *give up* unnecessary attachments and commitments and *put in* the right amount of daily effort toward your goal.

V. *Determination*: you must have an unwavering commitment to finish the job, stay the course, and never, ever quit."

Uncommon resolve.

What a remarkable quality to cultivate.

Here's to cultivating our Desire + Belief + Attitude + Discipline + Determination as we forge mental toughness and create an uncommon life packed with meaning and profound service,

B

Brian Johnson,
Heroic Philosopher CEO

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About the Author of This Note

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Brian Johnson is the Founder + CEO of Heroic. He's spent half of the last 25 years as a Founder/CEO and the other half as a Philosopher. Brian loves integrating ancient wisdom and modern science to help YOU become the best, most heroic version of yourself so we can create a world in which 51% of humanity is flourishing by 2051. Learn more at heroic.us.