

**MINDSETS**  
*for*  
**ACHIEVING SUCCESS**



*Timeless Wisdom from a World-Class Organization*

Compiled by  
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Adapted for Western Readers



# **Mindsets for Achieving Success**

*Timeless Wisdom from a World-Class Organization*

Originally compiled in Thai by Phra Khru Samuh Narong  
Tantacitto

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Adapted and translated for Western audiences.

The teachings collected here draw primarily from the guidance  
of Luang Phor Dhammajayo and the Dhammakaya tradition.

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## **A Note to the Reader**

You don't need to be a Buddhist to benefit from this book.

What you're holding is a distillation of organizational wisdom—principles that have guided thousands of people across cultures, backgrounds, and walks of life toward greater clarity, purpose, and inner peace. These teachings were originally collected in Thai by a senior monk reflecting on sixty years of life and decades of service within one of the world's most systematic spiritual communities.

Think of it this way: if a company that has thrived for over fifty years, coordinating thousands of people with remarkable harmony, published its internal playbook—wouldn't you want to read it?

That's essentially what this handbook is. Except the “company” is a spiritual community, the “profit” is inner peace, and the “playbook” is rooted in principles the Buddha taught over 2,600 years ago—adapted for real life.

The original text organizes these insights into five mindset domains: Purpose, Self-Development, People, Work, and Mind. We've kept that structure here, because it mirrors how life actually works—from the big “why” questions down to the daily practice of sitting quietly with yourself.

Wherever you are on your journey—whether you pray, meditate, or simply try to be a good person—these principles can meet you right where you are.

## **Introduction**

### *The Power of a Shared Mindset*

Any organization that endures for decades, earns global respect, and operates with genuine harmony among its members must have something deeper than a good business plan. It must have a shared mindset—a set of core beliefs that everyone lives by.

The community from which these teachings emerge has thousands of members working together daily, alongside millions of supporters worldwide. Managing that kind of cooperation isn't easy. It doesn't happen through rules alone. It happens when people internalize a common set of principles so deeply that those principles become second nature.

More than ninety percent of the insights gathered here come from a single teacher—a founder and spiritual guide whose life's work has been translating ancient Buddhist wisdom into practical, memorable guidance that anyone can apply.

These mindsets are organized into five domains:

- 1. Purpose — Understanding why you're here*
- 2. Self — Training and refining yourself*
- 3. People — Growing and serving together*
- 4. Work — Turning daily effort into something that lasts*
- 5. Mind — The inner practice that powers everything else*

Each domain builds on the others. Purpose gives you direction. Self-development builds your capacity. People multiply your impact. Work grounds the vision in reality. And training the mind is what makes all four possible.

Let's begin.

*Part One*

**PURPOSE**

*Know Why You're Here*

# **Purpose: Know Why You're Here**

## **Three Levels of Life's Goals**

According to this tradition, every human life has three tiers of purpose:

The first is the Earthly Goal: to live in this world with genuine happiness—not just surviving, but thriving with a sense of meaning and peace.

The second is the Heavenly Goal: to live in such a way that when this life ends, the momentum of your goodness carries you forward—to something bright, not dark.

The third is the Transcendent Goal: to actively seek the path to ultimate liberation—what the Buddhist tradition calls Nibbana, or Nirvana. This is the state where suffering is fully extinguished.

You don't have to accept all three right now. But consider this: most people stop at level one. They focus entirely on career, comfort, and security.

There's nothing wrong with that—but it's like exploring only the lobby of a magnificent building.

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## **You Were Born to Build Something Lasting**

*We were born to seek what is truly good, to accumulate merit, and to build the kind of character that endures.*

In this tradition, the word “merit” (or “bun” in Thai) refers to the positive energy generated by good actions—generosity, ethical conduct, and mental cultivation. It's not a reward from the outside. It's a force you generate from within. Think of it as spiritual capital: the more you invest through good deeds, the stronger and more resilient your inner life becomes.

The teaching is clear: we're not here just to get by. We're here to build something—within ourselves and in the world.

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## **Don't Just Survive—Get Free**

*Being skilled at making a living isn't enough.  
You also need to be skilled at keeping your  
soul safe.*

This is one of the most provocative teachings in the collection. It challenges the idea that financial security equals life success. Being good at your job is important—but if that's all you focus on, you've only secured one dimension of your life.

The deeper security, this tradition teaches, comes from freeing yourself from destructive mental patterns—greed, anger, delusion—that create suffering not just in this life, but that shape the trajectory of your existence.

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## **The Human Advantage**

*Only in human form can we build the kind of  
character and wisdom that leads to true  
freedom. This opportunity is rare. Don't  
waste it.*

This is a foundational teaching across Buddhist traditions. Human life is considered uniquely precious because it's the one state of existence where we have both the intelligence and the conditions to

make real spiritual progress. Other forms of life are either too comfortable to motivate growth, or too painful to allow it.

Whether you take the “rebirth” framework literally or metaphorically, the practical message is universal: you have a window of opportunity in this life. Use it wisely.



## **Believe in Cause and Effect**

*Even when you can't see the law of cause and effect at work, it always sees you.*

The law of karma, at its simplest, is the principle that actions have consequences. Good actions tend to produce good outcomes. Harmful actions tend to produce suffering—even when the connection isn’t immediately obvious. This isn’t about cosmic punishment. It’s about how reality works, like gravity. You don’t have to believe in gravity for it to act on you.

The practical takeaway: make choices as if your every action matters—because it does.



## **Make Every Moment Count**

*Use every second of this life—and everything you have—in the service of what’s truly good.*

*That’s the only way to make a human life worthwhile.*

There is a beautiful urgency in these teachings. They don’t promote anxiety—they promote wakefulness. The question isn’t “Do I have enough time?” but “Am I using the time I have for what actually matters?”



## **Keep Three Things in Your Heart**

The original teaching instructs practitioners to always keep three things at the center of their awareness:

Your teacher or source of wisdom. The teachings themselves. Your mission in life.

In everyday terms: stay connected to the people and ideas that inspire you. Stay grounded in your principles. And never lose sight of the work you’re here to do.



## **Think Right, Start Over**

*If you've been thinking wrong, think again.  
If you're thinking again, don't get it wrong  
this time.*

This wonderfully direct teaching captures the spirit of constant self-correction. Growth isn't about being perfect—it's about being honest, catching your mistakes, and choosing better next time.



## **Your True Rivals**

*Your real competitors in life are time and the  
force of your own mental distractions.*

In the original text, the word used is “Mara”—a Buddhist term for the inner tempter, the part of your mind that pulls you toward distraction, procrastination, and self-sabotage. Combined with the relentless passage of time, these are the only opponents that truly matter.

This teaching reframes competition entirely. It's not about beating other people—it's about not losing to your own worst tendencies.

*Part Two*

**SELF**

*Train Yourself First*

## **Self: Train Yourself First**

### **Lean Against the Bodhi Tree**

*Whatever you do, let timeless principles be your backbone.*

The “Bodhi tree” is the tree under which the Buddha attained enlightenment. The metaphor is beautiful: let your decisions lean against something solid—not trends, not opinions, not moods, but tested, enduring principles.

In practical terms: before making any important decision, ask yourself, “Is this consistent with what I know to be deeply true?”

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### **Learn Two Kinds of Knowledge**

*Beyond your professional expertise, learn the art of living well.*

This teaching distinguishes between vocational knowledge (how to do your job) and life knowledge (how to navigate your inner world). Most of us pour enormous energy into the first and almost none into

the second. But it's the second kind of knowledge that determines whether you can handle setbacks, maintain relationships, and find lasting peace.



## **The Five Universal Qualities**

This is a foundational framework—five qualities that every person should practice daily, until they become second nature:

**Cleanliness:** Keep your environment and your life organized. Outer order creates inner calm.

**Orderliness:** Develop systems and routines that reduce chaos and free your mind for what matters.

**Gentleness:** Be soft in your interactions. A gentle person puts others at ease and creates space for real connection.

**Punctuality:** Being on time shows respect—for others and for yourself. It also removes the anxiety of rushing.

**Inner stillness:** Make time each day to quiet the mind. Even five minutes of genuine mental stillness changes the quality of your entire day.

Notice the progression: outer cleanliness, outer order, relational softness, respect for time, and finally, inner peace. The five together form a complete daily practice for becoming a better human being.



## **The Right Action Framework**

The original teaching offers a simple but powerful test for evaluating your actions:

*If an action brings no harm, no guilt, and no regret to you or anyone else—it's right. Do it.*

*If it brings regret afterward—it's wrong.  
Stop.*

*If it causes suffering for others but comfort for you—still wrong.*

*Only when it brings peace to both you and others—then it's truly good.*

This is a beautifully practical ethical compass. You don't need a philosophy degree to use it. You just need honesty.



## **Forget the Failures, Keep the Lessons**

One of the most compassionate teachings in this collection addresses how to deal with past mistakes:

First, stop replaying old failures—revisiting them only amplifies their hold on you. Second, commit to not repeating harmful patterns. Third, actively remember the good you've done—let those memories nourish you. Fourth, invest heavily in positive action now: generosity, integrity, inner cultivation. And fifth, pursue the deepest possible inner clarity, because a clear mind at life's end is the greatest safety net there is.

This is not about pretending the past didn't happen. It's about refusing to let it define your future.



## **The Power of Forgiveness**

*If you hold a grudge, it becomes a burden. If  
you let it go, it becomes nothing.*

The original text uses a vivid analogy: holding something heavy in your hand makes your hand hurt. Holding something heavy in your heart makes your heart hurt. The solution is the same—put it down.

This applies to others and to yourself. Forgiveness isn't weakness—it's the ultimate act of inner strength.



## **Manage Your Time Across Four Dimensions**

The teaching recommends dividing your time thoughtfully among four areas:

Time for your health. Time for your family and relationships. Time for honest livelihood. Time for inner growth.

Most people over-invest in the third category and neglect the others. A life that's heavy in one dimension but empty in the others will always feel

unbalanced—no matter how much money or status it produces.

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## **Merit Is Real Energy**

*Merit is a special kind of energy—the energy of purity—that dissolves what is impure in your mind.*

If this language feels unfamiliar, think of it this way: every genuinely good action you take slightly rewires your brain toward clarity and peace. Every selfish or harmful action does the opposite. The cumulative effect over time is enormous. That's merit in practice—not a mystical score, but the tangible result of a life well lived.

*Part Three*

**PEOPLE**

*Grow Together*

## **People: Grow Together**

### **Same Goal, Shared Responsibility**

*Share the same vision. Carry the same sense of duty. Be equal partners on the team.*

The first principle of working with others is alignment. When everyone is rowing in the same direction, a team becomes extraordinarily powerful. But this isn't about uniformity—it's about unity of purpose. You can be vastly different people and still share a common aim.

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### **Think Big, Do Big**

*Think small, you still die. Think big, you still die. Better to think big.*

This is one of the most memorable lines in the original text. It's a blunt reminder that life is finite either way—so why play small? The risk of ambition is the same as the risk of timidity: neither guarantees survival. But ambition gives your limited time far more meaning.

The companion teaching adds: “Do it for the right reasons, not for recognition.” True service, this tradition insists, comes from wanting the good, not wanting the glory.



## **Reframe Everything**

Here’s a remarkable perspective shift from the original text:

*Nothing is beneath you when the intention is pure. Picking up trash? You’re collecting jewels. Cleaning bathrooms? You’re polishing a palace. Receiving correction? It’s growth in disguise.*

This isn’t toxic positivity—it’s a genuine practice of transforming how you relate to daily tasks. When your mental frame changes, the experience changes. The work may stay the same, but you don’t.



## **When You’re Bright, the World Gets Brighter**

*When we become radiant, the world around us becomes radiant too.*

Your inner state affects everyone around you. If you've ever walked into a room and immediately felt the tension—or the warmth—you know this is true. Your mood, your presence, your energy: these are not private. They ripple outward.

The teaching implies a responsibility: working on yourself isn't selfish. It's one of the most generous things you can do.

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## **Speak to Lift, Not to Impress**

*Being able to speak is one thing. Knowing how to speak is another. Let your words carry vitamins—nourishment for the heart.*

Words can wound or heal, and this tradition takes communication very seriously. The guidance is practical: choose words that encourage. Speak in a way that makes people glad to work with you. Don't confuse being articulate with being helpful. The best speakers, according to this teaching, are those whose words leave others feeling stronger.

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## **Build the Next Generation**

*One day you'll be gone. Train someone to stand where you stood.*

This is leadership at its wisest: your greatest legacy isn't what you built—it's who you built. If your knowledge dies with you, your work was incomplete. True success is seeing others carry forward what you started.



## **A Smile Is Part of the Practice**

*The smile on your face is part of your spiritual practice. It creates an atmosphere that draws others toward what is good.*

This is so simple it's easy to overlook. But in communities built on these principles, the warmth and joy of the members becomes the most powerful recruitment tool. People don't join an organization because of its mission statement—they join because they feel something real when they walk through the door.



## **Don't Wait Until You're Old**

*Stop telling yourself you'll get serious about inner growth later. Later, the body weakens, the mind slows, and the window closes.*

This teaching carries real urgency. Ask anyone over seventy: the body becomes less cooperative with age. Energy fades, focus scatters, aches multiply. If you postpone inner work until retirement, you'll face it with far fewer resources. The time to begin is always now.

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## **The World Doesn't Need More Clever People**

*The world isn't short of smart people. It's short of good people. We need to be both.*

Intelligence without character is dangerous. Competence without compassion can do more harm than good. This teaching challenges the modern obsession with talent and reminds us that goodness—simple, consistent, unglamorous goodness—is what the world actually needs more of.

*Part Four*

**WORK**

*Turn Effort into Legacy*

## **Work: Turn Effort into Legacy**

### **The Work Is Bigger Than Any Lifetime**

*The work we're doing is vast—even a full lifetime isn't enough to finish it. And no one can do it alone. It must be done as a team.*

Any meaningful work—building a family, creating an organization, healing a community, or pursuing inner freedom—is multigenerational by nature. This teaching protects you from burnout by putting your effort in context: you're running a relay, not a solo marathon. Do your leg with everything you have, then pass the baton.

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### **Obstacles Are Normal**

*When you commit deeply, you'll meet deep resistance. When you sail a big ship, expect big waves. That's just how it works.*

This is one of the most grounding teachings in the collection. It doesn't promise smooth sailing. It

promises that the storms are proportional to the size of your mission. If your goals are small, your obstacles will be small. If your goals are great, your obstacles will match. The question isn't whether you'll face resistance—it's whether you'll let it stop you.

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## **Focus on the Goal, Not the Noise**

*Keep your eyes on the destination. Don't waste time on petty distractions.*

There will always be small problems, office politics, minor irritations. The person who achieves something real is the one who can stay focused on what matters through all the noise. This teaching is a constant refrain in the original text: the goal is the compass. Everything else is weather.

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## **Set High Targets—Then Hit Them**

*Set your targets high. But remember: a target only matters if you actually aim for it.*

Ambitious goals without effort are daydreams. Effort without ambitious goals is busywork. This tradition calls for both—aspiration and execution. Set

the bar higher than feels comfortable, then organize your life around reaching it.



## **When You Succeed, Lift the Team**

*When the work succeeds, don't elevate yourself. Elevate the team.*

This is leadership wisdom found in every great tradition, but it bears repeating because ego is so persistent. The moment of success is the most dangerous moment for humility. The teaching is clear: credit the team, always. The results belong to everyone who contributed.



## **Sweat Now, Rejoice Later**

*The sweat you shed today will never become tears tomorrow. It will become joy.*

Hard work done in service of something good compounds. It doesn't evaporate. The effort you invest now—even when no one sees it, even when it feels thankless—is building something that will sustain you when you need it most.



## **Choose Your Livelihood Wisely**

*Whatever career you choose, make sure it keeps your conscience clear. Don't just ask, "Will this make me rich?" Ask, "Will this keep my mind at peace?"*

This is one of the Buddha's core teachings, known as "Right Livelihood." Your work should not require you to harm others, deceive, or compromise your integrity. The money isn't worth it if it costs you your peace of mind.



## **Words as Tools**

*Choose the kind of words that make people glad to work beside you. Offer encouragement. Give guidance. Help solve problems. Lead people toward their goals.*

In teamwork, communication is everything. This teaching isn't about being nice for niceness' sake—it's about using your words as precision tools for building something together.



## **Don't Get Trapped by Past Success**

*Don't get caught in the trap of yesterday's achievement and refuse to keep growing.*

Past success can be a prison if you let it define you. The person who peaked last year and coasted this year is already falling behind. In this tradition, there is always further to go—always more to refine, more to give, more to learn. Complacency is a quiet form of defeat.

*Part Five*

**MIND**

*The Inner Practice*

## **Mind: The Inner Practice**

### **Meditation Is the Most Important Thing You'll Ever Do**

*The practice of meditation is the most important thing in life. It is, in a sense, the whole of life—because it is the vehicle for reaching life's highest purpose.*

This is a bold claim, and the tradition stands behind it fully. Everything else discussed in this handbook—purpose, self-development, teamwork, livelihood—serves as preparation for and support of this one practice: learning to still the mind.

You don't need to accept that claim on faith. Simply try it. Ten minutes of genuine stillness each day, and observe what changes over a month.

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### **Stopping Is the Secret**

*Stopping the mind is the secret of success.*

This phrase is considered sacred in this tradition, attributed to a revered teacher from a previous

generation. It sounds counterintuitive in a culture that celebrates hustle and productivity. But the teaching insists: when the mind truly stops—when it becomes genuinely still—something profound opens up. Clarity, insight, peace, and a kind of knowing that thinking alone can never achieve.



## **The Four Keys to Practice**

The original text offers a memorable formula for meditation, captured in four qualities:

**Awareness (Sati):** Stay present. Don't drift into daydreaming or analysis.

**Comfort (Sabai):** Keep the body and mind relaxed. Tension is the enemy of stillness.

**Consistency (Sama-Samoe):** Practice regularly—daily, without exception. Sporadic effort yields sporadic results.

**Observation (Sangkeht):** Watch what arises without grabbing onto it. Just observe.

These four together—awareness, comfort, consistency, observation—form the complete

instruction for sitting practice. Simple to describe, a lifetime to master.

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## **Don't Wait for Perfect Conditions**

*Don't wait for everything to be just right before you meditate. In this world, perfect conditions are rare. Do everything at once—live your life, do your work, and practice, all together.*

This is refreshingly practical. You don't need a retreat center, a perfect schedule, or a silent room. You need the willingness to begin wherever you are, with whatever time you have. Even a few minutes of genuine stillness amidst a busy day counts.

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## **Chanting Is the Ointment, Meditation Is the Medicine**

*Prayer and chanting soothe the surface.  
Meditation heals from within.*

This teaching respects ritual and devotion while pointing to something deeper. External practices like prayer, chanting, or reading sacred texts prepare the ground. But the real transformation happens when

you sit quietly, go inward, and let the mind settle. Both have value—but meditation is where the deepest work occurs.

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## **Easy, Comfortable, Cool**

*Easy. Comfortable. Cool-hearted. That's how the mind should be when you practice.*

If meditation feels like a battle, you're doing it wrong—according to this tradition. The approach is gentle: no straining, no forcing, no urgency. Just a soft return to center, over and over. Like falling asleep—you can't will it to happen. You can only create the conditions and allow it.

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## **Stillness Dissolves Problems**

*When you meditate regularly, big problems become small ones. Small problems become nothing at all.*

This isn't magical thinking. When the mind is still and clear, your perspective shifts. What seemed overwhelming starts to look manageable. Situations that used to trigger you no longer do. The problems haven't changed—your capacity to meet them has.



## **The Happiness You've Been Searching For**

*You won't find true happiness in possessions, travel, food, or drink. True happiness arises when the mind becomes still.*

This is perhaps the most radical claim in the entire collection—and the one with the most empirical backing. Study after study confirms that external conditions contribute surprisingly little to lasting well-being. What matters most is the quality of your inner life. This tradition has been saying that for millennia.

The invitation is simple: test it yourself. Practice stillness. See what happens.



## **Life Has Suffering—Meditation Is the Way Through**

The closing teaching in this section is unflinching:

*Everyone suffers—rich or poor, high or low. There is no escaping suffering in this life. But*

*there is a way through it. The Buddha himself tried every method available, and found the answer in stillness—sitting quietly, going inward, and touching the peace that was there all along.*

This isn't pessimism. It's realism paired with hope. Suffering is universal, but so is the potential for freedom. And the door to that freedom, this tradition teaches, opens from the inside.

## **Closing**

### *The Life Well Lived*

The original author closes with a reflection that ties all five domains together:

*The true value of a life is measured by how deeply someone has dedicated themselves to inner growth—refining themselves until they can access the deepest peace within, and then becoming a light for others.*

That's the whole path in a single paragraph: develop yourself, find inner peace, and then help others do the same.

These mindsets were never meant to be merely read. They were meant to be lived. Each principle, no matter how simple its wording, carries layers of meaning that deepen with practice. The author himself notes that each line, though brief, holds a richness that could be discussed at length.

So begin wherever speaks to you most. Perhaps it's the five universal qualities. Perhaps it's the

meditation instructions. Perhaps it's simply the reminder that your real competitors are time and distraction—not other people.

Wherever you start, the direction is the same: inward, toward clarity; outward, toward service; and ever forward, toward the fullness of what a human life can be.



*The value of a life lies in who pours more of themselves into becoming a light for others—guiding fellow human beings to the happiness that comes from discovering peace within.*

*— From the original text*