

## TWENTY-SIX KEYS TO LIVING WITH GREATER AWARENESS

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A study of the lives of successful men and women suggests two characteristics common to all of them: 1) an abundance of energy, particularly for those activities in which they achieved their success; and 2) a greater-than-usual degree of awareness. These characteristics are as common to success in business as in politics, in sports as in entertainment, in the sciences as in the arts. A deficiency of both, by contrast, is the single most common feature among people of mediocre ability.

People generally view abundant energy and high awareness as Nature's gifts, bestowed gratuitously on a fortunate few. Such is not the case. A person is never doomed to a twilight of incompetence and failure by his genes, his environment, or by oppressive circumstances in his life. He dooms himself, rather, if his attitude toward things is merely tepid, or if he meets life's challenges halfheartedly.

"It's too much trouble!" How often one finds people avoiding golden opportunities with this mumbled excuse. Success, however, demands an affirmation of energy. Reluctance to work hard or in other ways to commit oneself energetically to a project is the surest way to ultimate failure. Paramhansa Yogananda, the great spiritual teacher, used to say, "The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy." Will power actually *generates* energy in the body and brain. People who succeed in life not only have an abundance of energy and enthusiastic awareness, but dynamic will power as well.

In this connection, try to recall some occasion in your life when you felt tired, even exhausted—but then, unexpectedly, you saw a chance to do something you really *wanted* to do. Where did that burst of energy come from? All at once your fatigue vanished! Instead, you found all the strength you needed for the project itself, and, as likely as not, for a dozen others besides.

Yogananda used to tell his students, "A little gram of your flesh contains enough latent energy to keep the city of Chicago supplied with electricity for a week. And yet," he continued, smiling, "you complain of feeling tired! It is because you live too much attached to the body, rather than seeing yourselves as waves of God's infinite energy!"

Please study these twenty-six keys to living with dynamic energy and greater awareness. Be guided by them. The more you absorb these principles, the more you'll be amazed at their power to revolutionize your life.



1. Be active, never passive, in response to life's challenges. Willing activity will awaken within you the thought that something can be *done* about every problem you face.
2. Exercise regularly with deep attention. Physical exercise will not only help to keep the body fit, but will also enliven the mind.
3. Practice breathing deeply several times a day. An increased supply of oxygen to the lungs invigorates also the brain. While walking, inhale and exhale deeply. Count to four with the inhalation; hold the breath counting to four; exhale, again counting four; and hold the breath out four counts. Repeat this exercise six or twelve times in succession. Again, standing still, bend forward and exhale completely. Let your arms hang loosely before you. Then inhale from the diaphragm, straightening up slowly and raising the hands to the chest, your elbows out to the side. As you reach the upright position, raise the arms high above the head and stretch upward, completing your inhalation. Hold this position briefly, then exhale slowly, stooping forward in the reverse order of the above movements. Repeat this exercise three times. While practicing deep breathing, keep the following points in mind: A deep, full inhalation should always begin at the diaphragm, extend to the floating ribs, and only in the third and final stage include the upper chest.
4. Make a habit of holding your body erect, whether standing or sitting. An erect spine induces positive mental attitudes. A bent spine, on the other hand, is the natural companion of negativity and discouragement. While standing erect, think of yourself as almost weightless. Stand more often on the balls of your feet than heavily back on the heels. Keep your chest raised. Look naturally upward, too, as if what interested you lay more often above the horizon than down on the ground. When speaking to people, again, gaze frankly into their eyes instead of timidly at their knees.
5. Develop a preference for foods that are high in energy and nutrients, as opposed to those which merely "stick to the ribs." Remember, diet plays an important role in your mental, as well as your physical, well-being.
6. Be keenly interested in everything. Don't wait for things to *make* you interested. Awareness is not so much a matter of what one is aware *of* as of what he is aware *with*. Make interest in things a matter of deliberate,

conscious practice. If you tell yourself, “I’ll become interested when I can find something that awakens my interest,” you’ll find yourself becoming progressively bored with everything. Always be open, instead, to new possibilities, new ideas, new points of view.

7. Practice *willingness*, too, as a matter of principle. Subconscious reluctance can defeat a person’s most strenuous efforts to succeed, even as pushing on both ends of a car will thwart every effort to remove it from a ditch.
8. *Faith* is another vitally important principle. To do a thing really well, one must believe in it wholeheartedly. Faith is intuitive recognition of the truth of a thing. It is not passive acceptance, but committed belief, belief put into practice. Faith transcends petty victories and defeats. It is not commitment to things, merely, but to truth. The foundation of faith should be one’s sheer joy in the fact that he is *alive*. Rejoice in the power within you, a power shared by all mankind, to achieve your own highest potential.
9. Don’t merely *wish* for broader awareness: *Embrace* it. Never fear it. The way out of life’s difficulties is not to deaden one’s consciousness to them, but to see them always in relation to broader realities.
10. Say YES to life! In everyone, two voices compete. The one is life-affirming; the other, life-negating. Be open to the yes-saying influence. When faced with any new opportunity, ask yourself, “How can I make it a reality?” Shun the tendency of so many people to enumerate all the reasons why a new idea could not possibly work.
11. Be solution-oriented. Solutions to problems don’t come by dwelling on the problems. They come by concentrating on resolving them. To be solution-oriented is to approach problems with faith, almost as if the problems themselves were not wholly real. For every problem contains its own built-in solution. Successful people don’t brood on the obstacles facing them. They commit themselves, instead, to finding ways out of difficulties, and are certain that such ways exist.
12. Be happy! This advice may sound impracticable. Most people think that happiness comes as a result of escaping some difficulty, or of fulfilling some desire. Happiness, however, comes primarily from holding happy thoughts. Happiness increases one’s awareness, moreover, for it naturally includes other people in one’s well-being, embraces fresh experiences, and welcomes new opportunities. Smile readily. You’ll never be happy in the possession of mere things. Make it your philosophy of life simply to *be* happy!
13. Give your full attention to everything you do. Live wholeheartedly HERE and NOW. The reality of the past is that it has helped to create the present. The future will be determined by how wisely—or unwisely—you live now. Do your best today, and the results will take care of themselves. Indeed, they will reflect the very best that is in you.
14. Don’t be attached to success or failure. Successful people work primarily for the joy of doing what they feel inspired to do. They are less concerned with returns on their labor. Nonattachment helps a person to live fully in the present tense—to do his best *right now*.
15. Practice affirmation. The simple statement, for instance, “I live wholeheartedly HERE and NOW!” when repeated several times a day with deep concentration, can help to transform mere intentions into reality by giving them force and definition.
16. Develop a habit, in response to every challenge, of saying, “I *can!*” “I *can!*” is the yes-saying principle in action. Unwillingness must be nipped in the bud. Let your first instinct be, rather, to affirm your openness to new possibilities. Habitual skepticism kills opportunity. The time exists, indeed, for reasoned consideration, but this time comes *after* one has affirmed his willingness to approach a new idea constructively.
17. Dwell more on the thought of giving of yourself. Jesus Christ said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Giving is expansive. The desire to receive, by contrast, is contractive. Energy and awareness grow as one’s sympathies expand. They shrink, however, if one turns his sympathies selfishly inward upon himself.
18. “Act enthusiastic, and you’ll *be* enthusiastic!” It was Dale Carnegie who gave this famous saying to the world. In books and in lectures across the country he would urge people not to wait for circumstances to transform their indifference into enthusiasm. “Even if you feel uninspired,” he told his audiences, “act as though you were overflowing with enthusiasm.” He cited convincing examples of people who had been failures in life, but who in a very short time had become outstanding successes by following this principle. When you act out an attitude, the action itself is a kind of affirmation.
19. Don’t wait for others to love you. Love them! Love everyone—not for what you receive outwardly in return, but for the sheer joy of offering yourself as a channel for this greatest of all gifts. Love is a natural quality of the feeling of the heart. Love becomes deadened, however, by selfishness. Unselfish love, once awakened, brings

every cell in the body into harmony. It directs the energy of the brain powerfully toward whatever one sets one's mind to accomplish.

20. View life as a unity. Dwell on the harmony that underlies the universe. Seek correlations between events and between circumstances. Consider the sunlight, how it is not an isolated phenomenon, but gives vitality to all living things. Consider the infinite variety in the world around us, how all things are manifestations of a few simple elements. Consider the seeming struggle between life and death, but how death itself only makes way for new life-expressions. Ponder the relationship between opposing mental states, and how suffering often becomes a portal to deeper experiences of joy. Relationships abound everywhere. A fractured view of things brings mental confusion, but a unitive view expands the consciousness, and develops wisdom.
21. Avoid wishful thinking. Try to harmonize yourself with whatever *is*.
22. Work *with* others, not against them. Be supportive rather than antagonistic in your dealings with them.
23. Be true to your word. And always speak the truth.
24. Live more in the consciousness of energy. Don't think of yourself as a physical body, merely. Think of the body itself, rather, as a vehicle for the expression of energy.
25. Meditate regularly. Meditation raises the consciousness into what many psychologists have described as "superconsciousness." This state is the polar opposite of subconsciousness. Inspired men and women have derived inspiration to a great extent from this higher-than-conscious level of awareness.
26. Make transcendence your "ulterior motive" in everything you do. Never let yourself stagnate in lesser victories. Keep ever climbing up the mountain toward the highest that is in you. Realize that that highest embraces not merely physical and mental accomplishments, but spiritual ones above all. There is a longing deep within every soul for perfect peace, absolute love, and infinite joy.

☞ *Out-of-print pamphlet, circa 1972* ☞