

NOTES FROM: *Tools of Titans*, by Tim Ferriss

SUMMARY: *Tools of Titans* is a massive compendium of the best, most life-changing advice, tactics, and mental frameworks from the more than 200 world-class performers that Tim Ferriss has interviewed for his podcast. This, along with *Tribe of Mentors*, could take virtually anyone on earth from where they are now, all the way to heights of happiness and success they couldn't even see from their current vantage point.

As you can see from my *nine pages* of notes, this is an extremely wide-ranging book that doesn't waste any space. It sacrifices *some* depth, naturally, but you don't have to read this book front to back if you don't want to. Read about the people who interest you, take a few of their ideas, dive deeper on your own, and implement their advice in the laboratory of your own life.

Tim asks some *great* questions too, such as: What do these people do in the first sixty minutes of each morning? What do their workout routines look like, and why? What books have they gifted most to other people? What are the biggest wastes of time for novices in their field? What supplements do they take on a daily basis?

In terms of guests, you've got Arnold Schwarzenegger, Derek Sivers, Naval Ravikant, Jamie Foxx, Ryan Holiday, Maria Popova - just on and on. I won't list them all, but you get the idea. They've all shared their wisdom, tactics, and advice with Tim, either for the podcast or this book specifically, and if you don't have time to listen to all 200 episodes, you can just read *Tools of Titans*. The wisdom-per-page here is just unreal.

"Judge a man by his questions rather than by his answers."

"If you had a plan to achieve something in 10 years, why couldn't you do it in 6 months?"

"If forced to achieve your 10-year goals in 6 months, how would you do it?"

MK: Spend some actual, real time with the questions and techniques that seem the most ridiculous. Maybe there's something useful or valuable in there that you can't yet see.

"Very often, our beliefs are not our own."

"Someone else has done your version of 'success' before."

"Become really good at suffering."

MK: High-temperature sauna sessions can increase endurance, GH levels, and can reduce delayed-onset muscle soreness.

“If the best in the world are all doing the same thing in order to get strong or improve, then why aren't you?”

“All the problems I have in the daily world subside when I do cold exposure. Exposing myself to the worthy cold...it is a great cleaning purifying force.”

“You *can* actually trust many people on this planet.”

“People are way too serious and most of us just need to move more.”

“Tell people what you *want*, not what you *don't* want.”

“If you're over 40, there's an 80% chance that you're going to die from one of four major diseases: cardiovascular disease, cerebrovascular disease, cancer, or neurodegenerative disease.”

“Control thy variables!”

“People are nicer than they look, but you have to go first.”

“If you ran into an asshole in the morning, you ran into an asshole. If you've been running into assholes all day, then *you're* the asshole.”

“Loving your children can override a lot of wrongs.”

MK: Low-enough doses of LSD or mescaline can dramatically increase your ability to solve problems.

“See if you can last at least 60 minutes in a sensory deprivation tank before trying psychedelics.”

“Worrying about it now isn't going to change a damn thing. I've either done everything I could to get ready, or I haven't.”

MK: Do quarterly 80/20 reviews of your stress points and figure out what you're still doing yourself that someone *else* could do better - or that doesn't need to be done at all.

“The small things are the big things.”

Archilochus: "We do not rise to the level of our expectations, we fall to the level of our training."

“Chill the fuck out before you burn the fuck out.”

“Dealing with the temporary frustration of not making progress is an integral part of the path towards excellence.”

“The secret is to show up, do the work, and go home.”

“You are going to spend far more time on the actual journey than with those all-too-brief moments of victory at the end.”

“Make one decision to reach your final goal, and relieve yourself of the distraction of making decisions all along the way about whether or not to keep going.”

“Not my circus, not my monkeys.”

“Experience often deeply embeds the assumptions that need to be questioned in the first place.”

“Is your product any good if people won't pay more for it?”

“Develop extremely strong views, but hold them loosely.”

“Anyone who has ever achieved anything really big isn't necessarily that much different from you, and when they started, they were pretty much just like you.”

“It's not what you know, it's what you do consistently.”

MK: We can't know who's successful and who isn't without knowing each person's aims and goals. It's very lazy thinking to look at someone's house or car and assign them some random “success score.”

MK: Look at the standard pace for how long it takes someone to do something, and find ways to shorten it for yourself. If it takes most people three years to achieve a certain result, look into how you might be able to shorten the time frame to two years or less.

“If it's not a ‘Hell Yeah!!!,’ then it's a ‘No.’”

“‘Busy’ really means out of control.”

“Lack of time is a lack of priorities.”

“Most successful people do big things *despite* negative habits and destructive self-talk.”

“It doesn't take much to appear superhuman and look ‘successful’ to the people around you.”

“Being busy is a form of laziness, because you're not putting enough time into figuring out what's really important.”

“Don't overestimate the world and underestimate yourself.”

“Clarity of writing indicates clarity of thinking.”

Nelson Mandela: “I didn't survive; I prepared.”

“If you don't have 10 minutes, you don't have a life.”

“How do I get no risk *and* get huge rewards?”

“When you ask a question continuously and believe that there's an answer, you'll get it.”

“Cage your monkey mind on paper so you can get on with your fucking day.”

“Morning pages don't need to solve your problems. They just need to get them out of your head.”

“Never go to sleep without sending a request to your subconscious.”

“Favor *learning* over education or credentialing.”

“Trust and attention are the rarest things in our post-scarcity world.”

“We can't out-obedience the competition.”

“Money is a story, and it's better to tell yourself a story about money that you can happily live with.”

“Once you get enough bad ideas, some good ones have to show up.”

“Tell ten people whom you trust about your idea, and if they don't show anyone else, then it's time to move on.”

“There are no real rules, so make rules that work for you.”

“We need to teach kids how to lead, and how to solve interesting problems.”

“The way you teach your kids to solve interesting problems is to give them interesting problems to solve. And then, don't criticize them when they fail. Because kids aren't stupid. If they get in trouble every time they try to solve an interesting problem, they'll just go back to memorizing what's in a textbook. I think that it's a privilege to be able to look a trusting, energetic, smart 11-year old in the eye and tell him the truth. And what we can say to that 11-year old is: 'I really don't care how you did on your vocabulary test. I care about whether you have something to say.'”

“Listen to how your body responds to input from the outside world, instead of how your brain responds. If you feel it in your body, then other people are going to care about it too.”

“Diversification works in every area of your life to reduce your stress.”

“To be something extraordinary, you have to either be the best at one specific thing, or enter the top 25% in two or more things.”

Scott Adams: "I can draw better than most people, but I'm no artist. I'm not the funniest person in the world, but I'm funnier than most people. That rare combination made me."

"Combine your 'pretty goods' until no one else has your unique mix."

"Everyone is interested in what's new. Few people are interested in what's better."

"Set up a new category that you can be first in."

"Do the 10,000-hour work until you get to the point where you can start selling yourself, and then do so at the highest price point."

"Wait until you reach a critical mass, and only then approach advertisers."

"Don't be afraid to do something that you're not qualified to do."

"There is no product, idea, or desire without a fan base on the internet."

"Ask the 'dumb' question that everyone else is afraid to ask."

"The final, polished product often bears little relationship to what you started off with."

"What artists do is that they learn to *see*."

"Everything breaks when a company triples in size."

"How are you complicit in creating the conditions you *say* that you don't want?"

"Don't accept the norms of your time."

"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming 'Wow! What a ride!'"

"What would this look like if it were easy?"

"There's a danger that your life could go as planned, and that will mean that you won't exceed your own expectations."

"The more we associate money with life, the more we convince ourselves that we are too poor to buy our freedom."

"Long-term travel isn't an act of rebellion against society - it's an act of common sense within society."

"Travel isn't an escape from your real life, but instead it is the discovery of your real life."

“There is a time-honored personal freedom technique popularly known as ‘quitting.’”

“If it wasn't a crazy idea, then it wasn't a breakthrough; it was an incremental improvement.”

“When you're trying to go 10% bigger, you're competing against everybody. But when you're trying to go 10X bigger, you're there by yourself.”

“When you go 10X, it's typically not 100 times harder, but the reward is 100 times more.”

“When given a choice, take both.”

“When forced to compromise, ask for more.”

“If you can't win, change the rules.”

“If you can't change the rules, then ignore them.”

“Once your life shifts from pitching outbound to defending inbound, you have to start ruthlessly saying ‘no’ to most things.”

Thoreau: “Those who work much, do not work hard.”

“You discover your 'dream' or your 'purpose' in the very act of walking the path.”

“If you want to be tougher, be tougher.”

“When writing, you never want to solve a research problem with language.”

“What is very difficult is balancing the courage to seek out what you might love, and the wisdom to stick around once you've found it.”

“You should spend 5% of your working time figuring out what you want to do, and in the course of an 80,000-hour career, that ends up being about 2,000 hours.”

“Wisdom is being able to follow your own advice.”

“If someone came to me with a list of my problems, I'd be able to sort that person out very easily.”

“Risks aren't that scary once you take them.”

“Most people will choose unhappiness over uncertainty.”

“What we fear doing most is usually what we most need to do.”

“If you telescope out 10 years and know with 100% certainty that it is a path of disappointment and regret, and if we define risk as ‘the likelihood of an irreversible negative outcome,’ then inaction is the greatest risk of all.”

“In a world of distraction, single-tasking is a superpower.”

“The purpose of writing is to discover what you think.”

“There is more freedom to be gained from practicing poverty than in chasing wealth. Suffer a little regularly and you often cease to suffer.”

“When we judge other people, it's just a way not to look at ourselves.”

Louis CK: “If you think about something more than three times a week, you have to write about it.”

“The way you do anything is the way you do everything.”

“Happiness is wanting what you have.”

Dating in New York: “Everyone is too busy and everyone thinks they can do better.”

“This busyness serves as a kind of existential reassurance, a hedge against emptiness: Obviously your life cannot possibly be silly or trivial or meaningless if you are so BUSY, completely booked, in demand every hour of the day. All this noise and rush and stress seem contrived to drown out or cover up some fear at the centre of our lives.”

“I am the laziest ambitious person I know.”

“It's hard to find anything to say about life without immersing yourself in the world, but it's also just about impossible to figure out what that might be, or how best to say it, without getting the hell out of it again.”

“Time and quiet should not be luxury items.”

“Relaxed and focused people can be like the designated drivers for society.”

“The best art divides the audience.”

“Look backwards at yourself from the stars and think: ‘There's that little tiny character there for a fragment of time worrying about X.’”

“Honor those who seek the truth, beware of those who've found it.”

“You want to be famous to 2,000 or 3,000 people who you handpick.”

“You can drop out of college, but make sure you drop *into* something.”

“Focus on the people who *do* get it, and forget the people who don't.”

Naval Ravikant: “We go around desiring things all day and then wonder why we're unhappy.”

“You can consciously conceive of your desires as the axis of your suffering, and choose to have just one or just a few.”

MK: You've only got, like, 70 years out of the 50 billion or however long the universe is going to be around for, and so it's *really* important not to spend it being unhappy.

“Don't waste your time on marketing, just try to get better.”

“In writing, there's no one right answer.”

“If you're studying my game, then you're entering my game, and I'll be better at it than you.”

“When you're not cultivating quality, then you're essentially cultivating sloppiness.”

“When I had the opportunity, did I choose courage over comfort?”

“Reality is largely negotiable.”

“Most limitations are really just a fragile collection of socially reinforced rules that you can break at any time.”

“What if you did the opposite for 48 hours?”

“Most of our dreams are more affordable than we expect.”

“What are the worst things that could happen? Could I get back to where I started if things *did* go wrong?”

“To get huge things done, you have to be okay with letting a few small bad things happen.”

“Letting a few bad things happen is worth it so you can reduce your deadly stress.”

“People's IQ seems to double when you give them responsibility and let them know that you trust them.”

“What if I could only subtract?”

“Put systems in place that will take your business to the next level, decrease your stress, and outlast any vacation you might take.”

“Could it be that everything is fine and complete as it is?”

“You don't have to urgently press forward all the time and accumulate all the stress that that represents. 95% of what you want can come from calmly putting one foot in front of the other.”

“Be sure to look for simple solutions.”

“If the solution isn't simple, it's probably not the right answer.”

“You're gonna look back and say, 'Shit, I should have been laughing. Now I'm dead.’”

“On the other side of fear there's nothing.”

“Failure is not durable.”

MK: When the preacher at Jamie Foxx's grandmother's church started preaching against homosexuality, she stood up in front of everybody and said: ‘You stop that.’”

“Perhaps the biggest tragedy in our lives is that freedom is possible, and yet we can pass our years in the same old patterns.”

“They tried to bury us. They didn't know we were seeds.”

“Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.”

“Sometimes it just takes one conversation with a rational person to stop yourself from making a horrible, *irrational* decision.”

“At least one of the people you make smile during the day is on the front lines with you, battling something similar or equally difficult.”

“It's very important to act in anticipation of inspiration and not wait for it to come, because it rarely will.”

“You are only as young as the last time you changed your mind.”