



The Almanack of Naval Ravikant

24

Books make for great friends, because the best thinkers of the last few thousand years tell you their nuggets of wisdom.

29

Money making is not a thing you do, it's a skill you learn.

30

If you don't know yet what you should work on, the most important thing is to figure it out.

31

Seek wealth, not money or status.

31

Ignore people playing status games.

31

You must own equity, a piece of a business, to gain financial freedom.

31

You will get rich by giving society what it wants but does not yet know how to get.

32

Play long-term games with long-term people.

32

All the returns in life, whether in wealth, relationships, or knowledge, come from compound interest.

32

Pick business partners with high intelligence, energy, and above all, integrity.

32

Learn to sell. Learn to build. If you can do both, you will be unstoppable.

33

Arm yourself with specific knowledge, accountability, and leverage.

33

Specific knowledge is found by pursuing your genuine curiosity and passion.

33

Building specific knowledge will feel like play to you but will look like work to others.

33

When specific knowledge is taught, it's through apprenticeships, not schools.

34

Embrace accountability... Society will reward you with responsibility, equity, and leverage.

34

Business leverage comes from capital, people, and products with no marginal cost of replication. (Code and content)

34

Capital means money. Labor means people working for you.

35

Code and media are permissionless leverage.

35

If you can't code, write books and blogs, record videos and podcasts.

35

Judgment requires experience.

36

Study microeconomics, game theory, psychology, persuasion, ethics, mathematics, and computers.

36

Reading is faster than listening. Doing is faster than watching.

36

You should be too busy to "do coffee."

36

Work as hard as you can.

37

Become the best in the world at what you do.

37

There are no get-rich-quick schemes.

37

Productize yourself. Leverage specific knowledge and accountability.

38

Ask yourself, "Is this authentic to me?"

38

Money is how we transfer wealth. It is the ability to have credits and debits of other people's time.

38

Wealth is assets that earn while you sleep.

39

The best person in the world at anything gets to do it for everyone.

39

Society will pay you for creating things it wants.

39

Figure out how to scale it.

41

Specific knowledge cannot be taught, but it can be learned.

41

No one can compete with you on being you.

42

Science applied is the engine of humanity.

43

Focus on the thing that you are really into.

43

Specific knowledge is found much more by pursuing your innate talents, your genuine curiosity, and your passion.

43

If you're not 100 percent into it, somebody else who is 100 percent into it will outperform you.

44

Escape competition through authenticity.

45

The best jobs are... creative expressions of continuous learners in free markets.

45

The most important skill for getting rich is becoming a perpetual learner.

45

It's much more important today to be able to become an expert in a brand-new field in nine to twelve months than to have studied the "right" thing a long time ago.

45

Knowing how to be persuasive when speaking is far more important than being an expert digital marketer or click optimizer.

46

You can only achieve mastery in one or two things.

47

Compounding in business relationships is very important.

47

Compound interest also happens in your reputation.

48

Intentions don't matter. Actions do.

48

When you find the right thing to do, when you find the right people to work with, invest deeply.

48

99% of effort is wasted.

49

be very thoughtful and realize in most things (relationships, work, even in learning) what you're trying to do is find the thing you can go all-in on to earn compound interest.

50

Leverage comes in labor, comes in capital, or can come through code or media.

51

The people who have the ability to fail in public under their own names actually gain a lot of power.

52

There's not really that much to fear in terms of failure, and so people should take on a lot more accountability than they do.

53

If you don't own a piece of a business, you don't have a path towards financial freedom.

53

to have passive income [is] where a business is earning for you while you are on vacation.

53

Without ownership, your inputs are very closely tied to your outputs.

54

They are going to pay you the bare minimum they have to, to get you to do their job.

54

If you don't own equity in a business, your odds of making money are very slim.
You have to work to the point where you can own equity in a business.

55

Following your genuine intellectual curiosity is a better foundation for a career than following whatever is making money right now.

56

If it entertains you now but will bore you someday, it's a distraction.

56

I only really want to do things for their own sake.
When you do things for their own sake, you create your best work.

56

Follow your intellectual curiosity more than whatever is "hot" right now.

57

If they can replace you, then they don't have to pay you a lot.
If they can train you to do it, then eventually they will train a computer to do it.

57

Think about what product or service society wants but does not yet know how to get.

57

You build your brand in the meantime on Twitter, on YouTube, and by giving away free work. When it is time to move on the opportunity, you can do so with leverage - the maximum leverage possible.

58

Labor... is the worst form of leverage that you could possibly use. Money is a good form of leverage. Every time you make a decision, you multiply it with money.

58

If you get good at managing capital, you can manage more and more capital much more easily that you can manage more and more people.

58

The final form of leverage: Products with no marginal cost of replication. This includes books, media, movies, and code.

59

This book is a form of leverage. (As is this post)

60

The most interesting thing to keep in mind about new forms of leverage is they are permissionless. They don't require someone else's permission for you to use them or succeed.

60

You're never going to get rich renting out your time.

60

Whenever you can in life, optimize for independence rather than pay. If you have independence and you're accountable on your output, as opposed to your input - that's the dream.

61

A leveraged worker can out-produce a non-leveraged worker by a factor of one thousand or ten thousand. Judgment is far more important than how much time they put in or how hard they work.

61

What you want in life is to be in control of your time.

61

If you do something incredible to move the needle on the business, they have to pay you. Especially if they don't know how you did it because it's innate to your obsession of your skill or your innate abilities, they're going to have to keep paying you to do it.

62

All you care about is the actual work itself.

62

Forty hour work weeks are a relic of the Industrial Age.

63

If you want to be part of a great tech company, then you need to be able to SELL or BUILD.

64

Earn with your mind, not your time.

65

The developer takes on more risk, more accountability, had more leverage, and needs to have more specific knowledge.

66

You want to work your way up to try and get higher leverage, more accountability, and specific knowledge.

67

You have to watch your health.

67

Take rationally optimistic bets with big upsides.

68

I want a robot, capital, or computer to do the work, but I want to be paid for my judgment.

68

CEOs are highly paid because of their leverage. Small differences in judgment and capability really get amplified.

69

We waste our time with short-term thinking and busywork.

69

Solve via iteration, then get paid via repetition.

70

It's more about consistently creating wealth by creating businesses, creating opportunities, and creating investments.

70

You will never be worth more than you think you're worth.
No one is going to value you more than you value yourself.

71

Always factor your time into every decision.

71

Fast-forward to your wealthy self and pick some intermediate hourly rate.

72

If you secretly despise wealth, it will elude you.

72

Be optimistic, be positive. It's important. Optimists actually do better in the long run.

73

There are fundamentally two huge games in life that people play. One is the money game... the other game is the status game.

73

Wealth creation is an evolutionarily recent positive-sum game. Status is an old zero-sum game. Those attacking wealth creation are often just seeking status.

74

Status games are always going to exist.

74

There are basically three really big decisions you make in your early life: where you live, who you're with, and what you do.

75

You have to say no to everything and free up your time so you can solve the important problems.

75

Figure out what you're good at, and start helping other people with it. Give it away. Pay it forward.

75

Don't measure - your patience will run out if you count.

75

You'll never be rich since you're obviously smart, and someone will always offer you a job that's just good enough.

76

Find work that feels like play.

76

I would rather be a failed entrepreneur than someone who never tried.

77

I'm much more interested in solving problems than I am making money.

77

I'm just living life as I want to. I'm literally just doing it moment to moment.
I want to be off the hedonic treadmill.

78

Retirement is when you stop sacrificing today for an imaginary tomorrow.

78

Ways to retirement:

Your passive income covers your burn rate.

You become a monk.

You know how to do it better because you love it, and no one can compete with you.

79

Whether in commerce, science, or politics - history remembers the artists.

79

Art is anything done for its own sake.

79

I can create a new business within three months: raise the money, assemble a team, and launch it.

It makes money almost as a side effect.

80

It looks like work to others, but it feels like pay to me.

That's how I know no one can compete with me on it.

I'm just playing, for sixteen hours a day.

80

Lusting for money is bad for us because it is a bottomless pit.

81

I value freedom above everything else.

81

The winners of any game are the people who are so addicted they continue playing even as the marginal utility from winning declines.

82

If you're not getting promoted through the ranks, it gets a lot harder to catch up later in life. It's good to be in a smaller company early because there's less of an infrastructure to prevent early promotion.

82

Think about who you will work with and what those people are going on to do.

83

In 1,000 parallel universes, you want to be wealthy in 999 of them.

83

The first kind of luck is blind luck.
There's luck through persistence, hard work, hustle, and motion.
You [can] become very good at spotting luck.

83

You [can] build a unique character, a unique brand, a unique mindset, which causes luck to find you.

84

Ways to get lucky:
Hope
Hustle
Prepare and be sensitive to chances
Become the best - luck becomes your destiny

84

One of the things I think is important to make money is having a reputation that makes people do deals through you.

85

In a long-term game, it seems that everybody is making each other rich. And in a short-term game, it seems like everybody is making themselves rich.
In a long-term game it's positive sum.

85

I think business networking is a complete waste of time.
If you're building something interesting, you will always have more people who will want to know you.

85

Be a maker who makes something interesting.
Show your craft, practice your craft, and the right people will eventually find you.

86

You cannot hide anything from yourself.

87

By the way, nobody changes.

87

Great people have great outcomes. You just have to be patient.

88

Apply specific knowledge with leverage and eventually, you will get what you deserve.

88

Everybody wants to get rich immediately, but the world is an efficient place; immediate doesn't work.

88

You have to enjoy it, keep doing it, and keep doing it. Don't keep track, and don't keep count because if you do, you will run out of time.

88

Most of history was built by young people. They just got credit when they were older.

89

People are oddly consistent. Karma is just you, repeating your patterns, virtues, and flaws until you finally get what you deserve.

89

You have to do hard things anyway to create your own meaning in life.
Go struggle.

89

Money buys you freedom in the material world. It's not going to make you happy.

91

Amazing how many people confuse wealth and wisdom.

94

Stay on the bleeding edge of trends and study technology, design, and art - become really good at something.

94

You get rich by saving your time to make money.

94

How hard you work matters a lot less in the modern economy.

94

Wisdom is knowing the long-term consequences of your actions. Wisdom applied to external problems is judgment.

95

Without hard work, you'll develop neither judgment nor leverage.

95

The direction you're heading in matters more than how fast you move, especially with leverage. Just pick the right direction to start walking in, and start walking.

95

Real knowledge is intrinsic, and it's built from the ground up.

95

If you can't explain it to a child, then you don't know it.

96

[Don't] rely on definitions. I would rather understand the basics really well than memorize all kinds of complicated concepts I can't stitch together and can't rederive from the basics.

96

The "monkey mind" will always respond with this regurgitated emotional response to what it thinks the world should be.

96

The number one thing clouding us from being able to see reality is we have preconceived notions of the way it should be.

97

When you're in pain - is a moment of truth.

97

To see the truth, you have to get your ego out of the way.

97

Suffering is the moment when we can no longer deny reality.

The problem isn't reality.

98

It's actually really important to have empty space.

98

It's only after you're bored you have the great ideas.

99

Very smart people tend to be weird since they insist on thinking everything through for themselves.

100

A contrarian reasons independently from the ground up and resists pressure to conform.

Optimistic contrarians are the rarest breed.

101

"Tension is who you think you should be.

Relaxation is who you are."

Buddhist saying

101

It's really important to uncondition yourself. Does [that habit] still serve me?

102

To be honest, speak without identity.

103

There are no permanent solutions in a dynamic system.

104

For important decisions, discard memory and identity, and focus on the problem.

104

Radical honesty just means I want to be free.

104

The moment you tell somebody something dishonest, you've lied to yourself.

104

I think "this is what it is" or "this is what it isn't."

105

If you have to praise somebody, then always try and find the person who is the best example of what you're praising and praise the person, specifically. Then people's egos and identities, which we all have, don't work against you. They work for you.

105

Charisma is the ability to project confidence and love at the same time.

105

If I manage \$1 billion and I'm right 10 percent more often than somebody else, my decision-making creates \$100 million worth of value on a judgment call.

106

The more you know, the less you diversify.

106

I use [tweets] as maxims that help compress my own learnings and recall them.

107

Mental models are really just compact ways for you to recall your own knowledge.

107

Being successful is just about no making mistakes.

108

Microeconomics and game theory are fundamental.

109

You optimize for yourself rather than for the principal's assets.

109

The more closely you can tie someone's compensation to the exact value they're creating, the more you turn them into a principal.

109

Compound Interest

110

You want arithmetic, probability, and statistics.

111

If you can't decide the answer is no.

111

You're biologically not built to realize how many choices there are.

112

Run Uphill - If you're evenly split on a difficult decision, take the path more painful in the short term.

112

With the law of compound interest, long-term gain is what you want to go toward.

113

Most of the gains in life come from suffering in the short term so you can get paid in the long term.

113

Read a lot - just read.

115

Read what you love until you love to read.

115

The better the book, the more slowly it should be absorbed.

117

The number of books completed is a vanity metric. Focus on new concepts with predictive power.

118

Explain what you learned to someone else. Teaching forces learning.

119

Learn how to learn and read the books.

120

Read Darwin first.

Don't read the current interpretation someone is feeding you about how things should be done and run.

122

There is ancient wisdom in books.
The older the problem, the older the solution.

123

Any book that survived for two thousand years has been filtered through many people.

124

A calm mind, a fit body, and a house full of love.
These things cannot be bought.
They must be earned.

125

The three big ones in life are wealth, health, and happiness. We pursue them in that order, but their importance is reverse.

127

Don't take yourself too seriously. You're just a monkey with a plan.

128

Whatever happiness means to me, it means something different to you.

129

Happiness is there when you remove the sense of something missing in your life.

129

When nothing is missing, your mind shuts down and stops running into the past or future to regret something or to plan something.

129

Every positive thought even has a seed of a negative thought within it and vice versa, which is why a lot of greatness in life comes out of suffering.

130

The fewer desires I can have, the more I can accept the current state of things, the less my mind is moving, because the mind really exists in motion towards the future or the past.

130

Nature has no concept of happiness or unhappiness.

130

Reality has no judgments.

130

You're born, you have a whole set of sensory experiences and stimulations, and then you die. How you choose to interpret them is up to you - you have that choice.

131

Happiness is a choice. If you believe it's a choice, you can start working on it.

131

There are no external forces affecting your emotions - as much as it may feel that way.

131

Life is just the way it is. When you accept that, you have no cause to be happy or unhappy.

132

Every second you have on this planet is very precious, and it's your responsibility to make sure you're happy and interpreting everything in the best possible way.

133

I don't care about things that don't really matter.
I really value my time on this earth.

133

Happiness, love, and passion... aren't things you find - they're choices you make.

134

Happiness is a choice you make and a skill you develop.

134

Memory and identity are burdens from the past preventing us from living freely in the present.

135

Anticipation for our vices pulls us into the future.

135

Enlightenment is the space between your thoughts.

135

What if this is the paradise we were promised, and we're just squandering it?

135

Happiness is more about peace than it is about joy.

136

As long as I have my thoughts, I can't have my peace.

137

The most common mistake for humanity is believing you're going to be made happy because of some external circumstance.

138

You're meant to do something.
You should self actualize.
You should do what you are meant to do.

138

The fundamental delusion: There is something out there that will make me happy and fulfilled forever.

138

Desire is a contract you make with yourself to be unhappy until you get what you want.

138

I try not to have more than one big desire in my life at any given time.

139

Younger people are less happy but more healthy. Older people are more happy but less healthy.

139

By the time people realize they have enough money, they've lost their time and their health.

139

Confucius says you have two lives, and the second begins when you realize you only have one.

140

All real success is internal and has very little to do with external circumstances.

141

To me, the real winners are the ones who step out of the game.

141

Winning or losing does not matter to them.

142

Peace is not a guarantee. It's always flowing. It's always changing.

142

You can get almost anything you want out of life, as long as it's one thing and you want it far more than anything else.

142

Peace is happiness at rest, and happiness is peace in motion.

143

We are such social creatures, we're externally programmed and driven.

143

The reality is life is a single-player game. You're born alone. You're going to die alone. All of your interpretations are alone. All your memories are alone.

145

Jealousy faded away because I don't want to be anybody else.

145

Peace and happiness are skills.

A lot of it is conditioning from your environment, but you can un-condition and recondition yourself.

145

When working, surround yourself with people more successful than you.

146

It's all trial and error. Did that work for you?

You literally have to try all of these things until you find something that works for you.

146

You can build good habits.

147

You have to go through your life replacing your thoughtless bad habits with good ones. You are a combination of your habits and the people who you spend the most time with.

148

Don't hang around people who constantly engage in conflict.

148

When we get something, we assume the world owes it to us.

148

Happiness is a skill you develop and a choice you make.

You decide it's important to you.

149

Insight Meditation

Just being very aware in every moment.

I always look for the positive side.

149

Happiness Habits: I try to get more sunlight on my skin.

149

Happiness Habits: Catching desire
Is this so important to me I'll be unhappy unless this goes my way?

149

Happiness Habits: Dropping caffeine

149

Happiness Habits: Working out every day

150

The world reflects your own feelings back at you.

150

Use meditation, music, and exercise to reset your mood.

150

All screen activities are linked to less happiness.

150

How much of [your] day is spent doing things out of obligation rather than out of interest?

150

It's the news' job to make you anxious and angry.
Stay optimistic.

151

Positive sum games create positive people.

151

Sunlight, exercise, positive thinking, and tryptophan increase serotonin.

151

Changing Habits:

Pick one

Plan

Identify

Track

Self-discipline

Self-image

151

First you know it.
Then, you understand it.
Then, you can explain it.
Then, you can feel it.
Finally, you are it.

151

Three choices in life:
You can change it
You can accept it
You can leave it

152

Acceptance:
To be okay whatever the outcome is.
To step back and see the grander scheme of things

152

The sooner you can accept it as reality, the sooner you can adapt to it.

153

Looking at previous bits of suffering.
What is the positive of this situation?
The universe is going to teach me something now.

154

One big hack: embracing death

154

When you look at your death and you acknowledge it, rather than running away from it, it'll bring great meaning to your life.

154

There is no legacy. There's nothing to leave.
Your life is a firefly blink in the night.

155

You're going to die one day, and none of this is going to matter. So enjoy yourself.
Project some love. Appreciate the moment. And do your work.

157

Ultimately, you have to take responsibility. Save yourself.

158

All you should do is what you want to do.

158

No one in the world is going to beat you at being you.

158

Listen and absorb, but don't try to emulate.

159

Find the people, business, project, or art that needs you the most.

160

To make an original contribution, you have to be irrationally obsessed with something.

161

My number one priority in life, above my happiness, above my family, above my work, is my own health.

161

We're meant to have some cold exposure. It kickstarts your immune system.

162

We're not meant to check our phone every five minutes.
We evolved for scarcity but live in abundance.

162

When everyone is sick, we no longer consider it a disease.

164

If bacteria won't eat it, should you?

164

When it comes to medicine and nutrition, subtract before you add.

165

The more processed the food, the less one should consume.

165

The daily morning workout [has] made me feel healthier, younger. It's made me not go out late.

165

"I don't have time" is just another way of saying "It's not a priority."

166

To stay flexible is to stay young.

166

The best workout for you is one you're excited enough to do every day.

167

Easy choices, hard life. Hard choices, easy life.

167

If you make the easy choices right now, your overall life will be a lot harder.

168

Your breath is one of the few places where your autonomic nervous system meets your voluntary nervous system.

168

Relaxed breathing tells your body you're safe. It can reroute resources to the rest of your body.

169

We're constantly clothed, fed, and warm. Our bodies have lost touch with the cold. The cold is important because it can activate the immune system.

169

Most of our suffering comes from avoidance.

170

Meditation is intermittent fasting for the mind.

171

What I find is 90 percent of thoughts I have are fear-based. The other 10 percent may be desire-based.

172

Just sit there and close your eyes for at least one hour a day.

172

What happens in meditation is you're sitting there and not resisting your mind.

173

Now you're an adult with some distance, time, and space from previous events, and you can just resolve them. You can be much more objective.

173

If you can get a free hour of bliss every morning just by sitting and closing your eyes, that is worth its weight in gold.

173

Meditation isn't hard. All you have to do is sit there and do nothing. Just sit down.

173

If thoughts come, thoughts come.

174

The attraction of drugs is spiritual.

175

The advantage of meditation is recognizing just how out of control your mind is.

175

Why am I fantasy-future planning?

176

Do I really need to solve this problem right now?
When a particular problem arises, I'll immerse myself in it.

176

The ability to singularly focus is related to the ability to lose yourself and be present, happy, and more effective.

177

I am more than the monkey mind.
You're a level of awareness.

177

Modern humans, we don't live enough in our bodies. We don't live enough in our awareness.
We live too much in this internal monologue of our heads.

177

We should control our own moods. Why don't we study how to control our moods?

178

Meditation is turning society off and listening to yourself.

178

The greatest superpower is the ability to change yourself.

179

When you're thirty, what advice would you give your twenty-year-old self?

179

Anger and emotions are a huge, completely unnecessary consequence.

180

To have peace of mind, you have to have peace of body first.

180

At any given time, I'm either trying to pick up a good habit or discard a previous bad habit. It takes time.

181

You should always be internally ready for a complete change.

181

If you really desire something, you just go do it.

181

I say I want to do this, but I don't really because if I really wanted to do it, I would just do it.

182

When you really want to change, you just change.

182

At least recognize it, be aware of it, and give yourself a smaller change that you can actually carry out.

182

Impatience with action, patience with results.

182

Anything you have to do, just get it done.

183

Set up systems, not goals. Use your judgment to figure out what kinds of environments you can thrive in, and then create an environment around you so you're statistically likely to succeed.

183

The clever brain can choose its upcoming environment.

184

I just stay on the basics.
I read concepts for fun.

I have to stick to what I enjoy.

184

Science, to me, is the study of truth and mathematics is the language of science and nature.

185

The returns in life are being out of the herd.
Social approval is inside the herd.

186

Everyone is motivated at something. It just depends on the thing.
Motivation is relative, so you just have to find the thing you're into.

186

Read everything you can.
Develop a love for it.

186

There's no such thing as junk.
Eventually, you'll guide yourself to the things that you should and want to be reading.

187

Persuasion is an actual skill. So you can learn it, and it's not that hard to do so.

187

Mathematics is a foundational language of nature.
Nature speaks in mathematics.

187

Be aware there are no "adults." Everyone makes it up as they go along.

188

Now, the freedom I'm looking for is internal freedom. It's "freedom from."

188

If you hurt other people because they have expectations of you, that's their problem. If they have an agreement with you, it's your problem.

189

Courage is not caring what other people think.

189

Value your time. It is all you have.

189

As long as you're doing what you want, it's not a waste of your time.

189

Don't spend your time making other people happy.
You are not responsible for making other people happy.

189

Anger is a way to signal as strongly as you can to the other party you're capable of violence.

190

Anger is a contract you make with yourself to be in physical and mental and emotional turmoil until reality changes.

190

Anger is it's own punishment.

190

People who live far below their means enjoy a freedom that people busy upgrading their lifestyles can't fathom.

191

To me, the mind should be a servant and a tool, not a master. My monkey mind should not control and drive me 24/7.

191

I want to break the habit of uncontrolled thining.

191

A busy mind accelerates the passage of subjective time.

192

The modern struggle: Lone individuals, up against armies of scientists

194

What is the meaning and purpose of life?
It's personal... find your own meaning.
There is no meaning.
You have to create your own meaning.

195

Before you were born, you didn't care... After death, you just don't care either.

195

in physics, the arrow of time comes from entropy.

196

disorder in the universe only goes up.
Humans locally reverse entropy because we have action.
Therefore, we're all one thing. We're essentially indistinguishable.

196

Honesty is a core value. I want to be able to just be me.

197

Before you can lie to another, you must first lie to yourself.

197

All benefits in life come from compound interest.
I only want to work on things I know have long-term payout.

197

I don't believe in anger anymore.

198

If their values lined up, the little things wouldn't matter.

198

To find a worthy mate, be worthy of a worthy mate.

198

The moment you have a child... it answers the meaning of life.
Your values inherently become a lot less selfish.

198

The older the question, the older the answers.

199

I have to reject all the pieces I can't verify for myself.

199

Make yourself happier, better off, more present and in control of your emotions - being a better human being.

200

Try everything, test it for yourself, be skeptical, keep what's useful, and discard what's not.

200

Wisdom is the discarding of vices and the return to virtue, by way of knowledge.

200

Wisdom: Understanding the long-term consequences of your actions.

202

There is actually nothing but this moment.

Literally the only thing that exists is this exact point where you are in space at the exact time you happen to be here.

202

Any moment is perfectly unique.

202

You're dying and being reborn at every moment. It's up to you whether to forget or remember that.

202

Everything is more beautiful because we're doomed. You will never be lovelier than you are now, and we will never be here again.

Homer, The Iliad

207

The best book is the one you'll devour.