

A Guide to Your Internal True North

Think of this as a companion for building a life that actually fits you. We all start out with a head full of **"borrowed ideas"** — bits of advice from parents, teachers, mentors, news trends, or societal pressures that don't always align with who we are. This is a field guide to help you find your own **Internal True North** — a way of living defined by your own values rather than the expectations of others.

Finding that direction starts with changing how you see. What follows is a collection of **simple lenses** — mental shifts that help you strip away the masks of ego and social pressure to get to the raw truth of any situation. Whether you are navigating a career, seeking success, or finding a "gentle stillness" in your own mind, the goal is to stop being a passenger in your own life and become someone who actually understands the terrain.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Risk, Ruin & Survival

Second-Order Thinking

Wealth: Temperament Over Math

Mastery & Trust

Seeing Raw Truth

Wise Speech

Character & Ethics

The Body

The Human Glitch

The Laboratory of the Mind

Risk, Ruin, and Survival

SURVIVAL IS THE ONLY PREREQUISITE FOR SUCCESS.

The Good Bet: Look for the asymmetric win where the downside is a small, known cost, but the upside could change your life.

The Zero Rule: If a move has even a 1% chance of total ruin, don't make it. Over a long enough timeline, that 1% will eventually hit.

The Backup Plan: Efficient systems are brittle. Resilient systems are "wasteful" but they survive. You need extra cash and extra skills.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

"If I'm wrong about this, will it just be a bad afternoon, or is this the end of my ability to play the game?"

KEY INSIGHT

"If you want to be successful, you have to accept that your world will fall apart a few times a century. Survival is the win."

Wise Speech

CLARITY OF SPEECH IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARD CLARITY OF MIND.

The Three Gates: Before you speak, ask: Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary? If it fails even one gate, silence is the superior choice.

Avoid the Gossip Trap: Talking down about others feels like a "win" for the ego, but it creates a mental environment of constant judgment.

Precision is Power: Vague language leads to vague thinking. If you can't define your terms, you don't understand your thoughts. Say exactly what you mean.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

"Am I saying this to contribute value, or am I just looking for a hit of dopamine from the sound of my own ego?"

KEY INSIGHT

"Your words are the output of your mind. Sloppy output equals a cluttered mind. Clarity of speech is the first step toward clarity of mind."

Second-Order Thinking

EVERY SOLUTION CREATES NEW PROBLEMS.

The Lindy Test: For ideas, age is a feature. If an idea has lasted a thousand years, trust it over the latest viral thread.

Chesterton's Fence: Don't tear down a rule or system until you understand exactly why it was put there in the first place.

The Loop Logic: Understand if a system fixes itself or feeds itself. Bubbles are just feedback loops that have lost their brakes.

"And then what?:" Think past the immediate result. First-order effects often look great while second-order effects are disastrous.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

"Am I solving a problem, or just moving the disaster further down the road?"

KEY INSIGHT

"We frequently optimize for the first result while ignoring the permanent consequences. Think past the immediate result."

Character and Ethics

CHARACTER IS WHAT YOU DO WHEN NO ONE IS WATCHING.

The Inner Compass: Stop living for the applause of strangers. If you wouldn't take their advice, don't take their criticism.

The Clean Conscience: Ethical living reduces mental noise. Guilt and deception are "heavy" cognitive loads that make clarity impossible.

Integrity: It's not about being perfect; it's about your "inside" matching your "outside." You are what you do consistently, not what you say.

Skin in the Game: Moral authority comes from the trenches, not the tower. Never take advice from someone who doesn't suffer when they're wrong.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

"If everyone in the world knew my private thoughts and actions, would I be proud or ashamed?"

KEY INSIGHT

"Character isn't a static trait; it's a house you build one brick at a time. Every small choice either strengthens the structure or weakens it."

Wealth: Temperament Over Math

WEALTH IS FREEDOM. WEALTH IS ASSETS THAT EARN WHILE YOU SLEEP.

Room for Error: The "unexpected" is the only thing guaranteed. Always leave a margin of safety.

Compound Interest: It applies to more than money. It applies to relationships, reputation, and knowledge. Never interrupt it unnecessarily.

Rich vs. Wealthy: Being rich is about what you spend; being wealthy is about control over your time. Wealth is unspent money that buys you freedom.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

"Does this move give me more freedom or more obligations? Am I spending my future to impress people in the present?"

KEY INSIGHT

"Wealth is a tool for freedom, not a scorecard for status. Stay in the game long enough for the math to do the heavy lifting."

The Body

WITHOUT YOUR HEALTH, YOU HAVE ONE PROBLEM; WITH IT, A THOUSAND POSSIBILITIES.

Sleep is a Weapon: It is the foundation of clarity and emotional regulation. If you're sleep-deprived, you're playing with a handicap.

The Cut List: Stop eating slow poisons like sugar and seed oils. You don't need a fancy diet; you just need to stop sabotaging yourself.

The Rental Car: Your body is the only vehicle you get for this entire ride. Small daily movements matter more than the occasional heavy workout.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

"If I keep treating my body exactly like I am today, where will I be in ten years?"

KEY INSIGHT

"A healthy man wants a thousand things, a sick man only wants one. Don't wait until you are the second to care about the first."

Mastery and Trust

RELIABILITY IS A SUPERPOWER — A MULTIPLIER ON EVERY OTHER SKILL.

Guard Your Clock: High-value work requires long stretches of silence. Protect your "Maker" hours with your life.

The Trust Anchor: Being the person who delivers in a crisis builds "Trust Capital," the most valuable currency in any market.

The T-Shape: Go deep on one core craft, but stay curious about everything else. A multidisciplinary master is indispensable.

The Learning Obsession: The only security is the ability to learn. Spend an hour a day sharpening your mind without noise.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

"If I were paying for my own work today with my last hundred dollars, would I be truly happy with what I am buying?"

KEY INSIGHT

"Reliability is your bedrock. The people who win are the learning machines. They go to bed every night a little bit wiser."

The Human Glitch

THE BRAIN IS A FILTER FOR SURVIVAL ON THE SAVANNA, NOT TRUTH IN THE CITY.

The Lying Mind: "Pain-caused denial" is a silent killer. When the truth hurts, we bend it until failure is inevitable.

The Lollapalooza: This happens when multiple biases hit at once. It's how rational people make catastrophic errors.

Envy is a Ghost: It is the only sin that offers zero pleasure. Stop comparing your "inside" to someone's curated "outside."

The 90-Second Rule: An emotion lasts 90 seconds. If it stays longer, you are re-fueling it with a story. Stop the story, and the fire dies.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

"Is this my actual evidence-based opinion, or am I just looking for reasons to justify what I already want to be true?"

KEY INSIGHT

"We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are. The brain is often a very unreliable narrator."

Seeing Raw Truth

YOUR MENTAL MODELS ARE LENSES. THE MORE YOU HAVE, THE MORE TRUTH YOU CAN SEE.

Inversions: Instead of asking how to succeed, ask "How do I blow this?" and then ruthlessly avoid those traps.

Strip to the Studs: Find fundamental truths and build your logic from the ground up without relying on assumptions.

Know Your Edge: You don't need to be a genius at everything. You just need to know exactly where your expertise ends.

Maps Aren't the Dirt: Your models are sketches. Always be ready to burn your "map" the moment the raw territory shows you something different.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

"If the opposite of what I believe were true, what evidence would I see? Am I making this move on actual truth?"

KEY INSIGHT

"To find the solution, first find exactly how to fail. You need a latticework of models to truly understand the world."

The Laboratory of the Mind

YOU ARE NOT THE VOICE IN YOUR HEAD; YOU ARE THE VAST SPACE THAT HEARS THE VOICE.

Shedding the Self: Authenticity isn't a goal; it's what's left when you stop pretending. Drop the mask and discover the miracle of simply being alive.

Kindfulness: Mindfulness without kindness is just a new way to bully yourself. Approach your mind with a "gentle stillness" rather than through force.

The Guest House: Treat pain or difficult emotions like guests. Say, "I see you are here," and let them stay as long as they need. They always leave.

The Sky and the Clouds: Thoughts are just weather. You are the sky — the vast, unchanging space where the weather happens. You don't have to become the storm.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

"Am I actually living this moment, or am I just busy narrating a story about it while my actual life passes me by?"

KEY INSIGHT

"Monotony collapses time; novelty unfolds it. Stay awake. When the masks fall away, life becomes a miracle."

THE BLUEPRINT: THE CADENCE OF MASTERY

DAILY MAINTENANCE

The AM Brain Dump

Spend five minutes every morning writing down everything bothering you to clear the loops.

The 90-Second Guard

When a surge of emotion hits, wait out the chemical spike for 90 seconds without adding to the mental story.

The Hour of Silence

60 minutes of deep work or thinking before you let the world's noise into your head.

The Evening Mirror

Before you go to sleep, ask: "If everyone lived exactly like I did today, would the world be a better place or a worse one?"

The Inner Watch

15 minutes of "gentle stillness" — observing your thoughts like weather passing through the sky, without judgment or force.

QUARTERLY ALIGNMENT

Incentive Scan: Are your habits acting for long-term goals or short-term "carrots"?

Review your commitments: Are you delivering on your promises, or is your reliability starting to drift?

Kill a Darling: Find one long-held belief and find a reason to prove it wrong. Stay intellectually honest.

Novelty Injection: Plan a weekend trip or a new skill to learn. Combat time collapse.

ANNUAL REVIEW

The Mirror of Becoming: Are you becoming the person you want to be, or repeating borrowed patterns?

The Obituary Test: Does your current schedule lead to the person you want to be remembered as?

The Noise Filter: Audit your information sources. Are you consuming truth or lies?

The Survival Audit: Review your margin of safety. Do you have the cash, skills, and health to survive?

THE CORE PILLARS

Earn Your Luck. Be useful to the world.

Keep it Simple. Complexity is where the bugs hide.

Ignore the Pack. The crowd is usually late and loud.

Never Stop Growing. Go to bed wiser than you woke up.

Burn Your Ego. Ego is the wall between you and the truth.

Love Yourself First. You become what you think of yourself.

Invert the Problem. To find the solution, first find how to fail.

Make Memories. Monotony collapses time; novelty unfolds it.

Guard the Exits. Avoid big, game-ending mistakes at all costs.

Respect the Lindy. Trust ideas that have survived for centuries.

Watch the Incentives. Never ask a barber if you need a haircut.

Love the Boring. Success is simple things done daily for decades.

Lightly, child, lightly. Feel deeply, but do all else with a gentle spirit.

Ask "And Then What?". Never judge a choice only by its first result.

Speak with Precision. Sloppy language is the precursor to sloppy thinking.

Observe the Weather. Your thoughts are just clouds passing through your sky.

Protect Your Maker Hours. High-value work requires long stretches of silence.

Survival is the Win. You cannot win if you do not stay in the game and on the field.