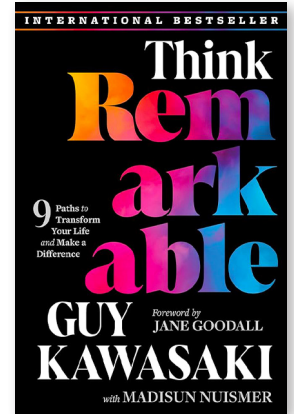


# Think Remarkable

9 Paths to Transform Your Life and Make a Difference

by **Guy Kawasaki with Madisun Nuismer**



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## THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

The goal of this book is to help you make a difference. First, let's define what being remarkable means. It does not mean amassing wealth, power, or fame. There are people who have done this and are not remarkable. And there are people who haven't and are. In *Think Remarkable: 9 Paths to Transform Your Life and Make a Difference*, being remarkable means you are making a difference and making the world a better place.

Being remarkable also means you are a good person—people use words such as empathetic, honest, and compassionate to describe you. If offered the chance, they would love to join your ohana, the Hawaiian word for the community of people who support and care for you. This book provides the roadmap, along with some inspirational examples, but only you can do the work. Being remarkable is neither innate nor conferred—if it were, you wouldn't need this book.

Making a difference and being remarkable are not easy, but you won't regret trying. When you make a difference and are remarkable, you live a life that matters, reflects your best self, and inspires others to be remarkable as well.

## IN THIS EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARY:

- The reasons why making a difference is the key to being remarkable
- The importance of adopting a growth mindset and learning from your experiences
- The process of using your perseverance to make a positive impact

## Stage 1: Growth - Build a Foundation - Embrace the Growth Mindset

### Adopt the Growth Mindset

Undoubtedly, the growth mindset is necessary to be remarkable, and you hold the power to change and elevate yourself. Let this sink in: if you want to be remarkable, you have to grow.

### Find Support

If adopting the growth mindset was a personal decision and transition, life would be simple. However, growing requires both supportive people and a supportive environment.

### Embrace Change

Your mindset can only grow to the extent that you expose it to new experiences, domains of knowledge, and skill sets. Study subjects that you've never considered—or that you failed at in the past.

Explore areas you've kept putting off because you didn't think you'd excel at them. Adopt the interests of your family, friends, and followers instead of making them embrace yours. Experiment with new tools and technologies and see where they take you.

### Take Baby Steps

Until you've got the growth mindset flowing through your neurons, set small goals so that success begets success.

### Find a Hero

It helps to have a hero to put your “plight” into perspective and reduce tendencies to focus on the negative. Perseverance is one of the things that makes people remarkable.

### Bloom, Baby, Bloom

Growth and transition are challenging and time-consuming, but they are essential to making a difference and being remarkable. They demand conviction, humility, and considerable effort to achieve.

### Embrace Vulnerability

#### Flip Over Growth

The flip side of the growth mindset is vulnerability. Becoming remarkable will take a long time, and you will face failure and setback, so the journey entails embracing vulnerability.

### Go On, Be Brave

More important than avoiding wounds is how you deal with them. A great approach to failure is this: sometimes you win and sometimes you grow.

### Brace for Impact

Every remarkable person I know has dealt with challenges. You will face negativity, rejection, and even danger. Keep in mind that with difficulty comes opportunities for growth—which is exactly what a remarkable person invites with open arms.

### Give Yourself a Break

The first step in the process of bouncing back is to “give yourself a break” by forgiving yourself and stopping the self-criticism.

### Learn from failure.

Failures provide valuable information that improve future efforts, and you could not have obtained this information in any other way than risking failure.

### Use the doubters.

Has anyone told you that you can't succeed? They could be doing you a favor if you can turn their doubt and negativity into your determination.

### Face it until you make it.

Face and deal with your vulnerabilities and wounds.

### Plant Many Seeds

#### Get Stoked about Oaks

The metaphor of planting acorns is perfect for making a difference and being remarkable. That is, you must collect, prepare, plant, tend, and wait. It is as simple to describe as it is difficult to accomplish.

### Trust the Dots

If we knew which acorns would grow into mighty oaks and which dots would connect, then we would tend only to those. You have to plant many seeds and trust that things will work out later.

### Get an Education

There are few better ways to plant seeds than to get a formal education. One can also get an education in other

# Eliminating suffering from people's lives is an excellent means of achieving remarkableness.

ways: reading, online courses, apprenticeships, internships and training programs. Remarkable individuals obtain an education and then never stop learning.

## **Pursue “interests and not “passions.”**

Passion is too high a bar, so give yourself a break. Passions start as “interests” that are acorns.

## **Build random connections.**

The more people you know, the more likely you'll develop meaningful relationships and make connections.

## **Don't be picky.**

Pride and pickiness often prevent people from seizing opportunities.

## **Fight framing.**

Don't let others - including yourself - define you.

## **Start in sales.**

There are few functions as good as sales to force you to get outside your bubble and reach out to people you don't already know.

## **Make yourself indispensable.**

These are the ways to become an indispensable asset to your company and boss: show up, do what nobody else wants to do, broaden your skill set, own a niche, establish high standards, and make your boss look good. People who are indispensable to others are almost always remarkable.

## **Weed the seeds.**

It is the ability to make wise judgments—to see the difference between what is true and what is false, what is good and what is bad, what is important and what is not. Discernment skills will help you decide when to listen, when to ignore, and when to challenge.

Always ask “what's missing” when evaluating information or data.

## **STAGE 2: Grit - Activate Your Aspirations - Do Good Shit**

### **Embrace the Grit Mindset.**

Good shit can be a product, service, team, classroom, group, art, sports, or a life—this is up to you. Doing good shit takes resilience, perseverance, and patience—aka grit. It is a characteristic shared by all remarkable people.

### **Create What You Want to Use**

Visualize a change that you want to make—in yourself or with a product, service, book, piece of art, or cause.

### **Alleviate pain.**

Eliminating suffering from people's lives is an excellent means of achieving remarkableness. Ask yourself, “Whose pain can I alleviate?” to uncover opportunities.

### **Work backwards.**

If you start with people's needs and work backwards, you are more assured that they will embrace what you're doing.

### **Resolve Your Indignation**

Addressing something that pisses you off is a good way to identify a cause, as is righting wrongs even if they don't directly affect you.

### **Jump to the next curve.**

Create the future rather than react to it. Truly innovative and remarkable businesses develop products that accelerate the next curve.

### **Ride the tide.**

Seek ways to “raise the tide” for everyone—not only your boat. The leading edge of remarkableness is to be the first to jump curves and create the tide, but you can also achieve remarkableness by riding a rising tide.

### **Go see, go be, and go do.**

Doing or participating is the way to learn. “Go and see”

and “go and be” foster the ability to feel what other people are feeling. Being remarkable also requires making the leap from empathy to action.

### **Do the right thing.**

Often, doing the right thing is neither the simplest nor the most practical option. Pay attention to your inner compass and denounce dishonesty and fraud, but also recognize that this course involves personal risk.

### **Transform yourself.**

Transformation of your own life is another path to being remarkable and making a difference.

### **Ask simple questions.**

Remarkable people don't usually start with grandiose plans of crushing or dominating the universe. They start with: Isn't this strange? Is there a better way? Why has no one done this before?

### **Establish a subcategory.**

It's cheaper to create a niche within a category because people have a basic understanding of what you do. Creating a new category is a remarkable accomplishment, but new categories are rare.

### **Get unique and valuable.**

A good test of the viability of an idea is whether it is both unique and valuable. When what you're offering is unique and valuable, then marketing, selling, fundraising, and recruiting all get easier, so do your best to create products and services that embody both qualities.

### **Get Beyond Eureka**

#### **Formalize your goals.**

Formalizing your goals by writing them down helps you to go beyond Eureka and achieve results.

#### **Prove your concept.**

This refers to a prototype or mock-up that allows people to touch, feel, and interact with your idea.

#### **Get mentors.**

Mentors are force multipliers. They can help you see opportunities, avoid mistakes, and stay on the right path.

#### **Find complements.**

Whatever you do, there are conditions that make complements, well, complementary. Complements can enhance creativity, decision-making, problem-solving, productivity, and the workplace environment.

### **Identify your inner Nigel.**

Julia Cameron, the queen of creativity, has an imaginary friend and inner critic named Nigel. Naming your inner critic is beneficial because it compartmentalizes doubt into a single entity. Then the relationship can become humorous and lighthearted—and probably more constructive.

### **Develop a routine.**

Rather than vacillate about what to do first, you just start every day with the same activity. The goal is to get in motion and save your brain power for important choices.

### **Break bad habits.**

Katy Milkman's remarkable book explains how to break bad habits that are preventing you from moving beyond Eureka: reduce impulsivity, decrease procrastination and overcome inertia, establish a streak-setting initiative, combat insecurity, and surround yourself with successful people.

### **Forget Balance, Think Ikigai.**

This is a Japanese term that roughly translates to one's purpose. It may be that instead of finding your ikigai, it finds you and grows over time.

### **Savor your shit sandwich.**

The real-world test to determine if you have found your ikigai comes from Mark Manson, author of *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F\*ck*. He says you'll know you found your calling when you enjoy the shit sandwiches that it requires.

### **Make decisions right.**

Perfect decisions are an illusion. So take your best shot, focus on making your decision right, and don't look back. Remarkable people get things done.

### **Get your foot in the door.**

The purpose of most pitches is to avoid elimination and to stay in the game—which means continued engagement, conversation, and discussion. The purpose of a pitch is to gain access through the door and prevent it from being shut.

### **Get your early adopters.**

Until you gain your first and second followers, you may be

# Making a difference and becoming remarkable necessitates building relationships and persuading people.

considered an isolated nutcase. Do whatever it takes to get them, and your credibility will subsequently increase.

## **Grok the Gospel of Bob.**

Bob Cialdini is the godfather of influence and persuasion. Here are some favorite Cialdini-isms that will accelerate the adoption of your ideas: make people like you, use peers, “pre-ciprocate”, ask for reciprocity, provide social proof, demonstrate expertise, demonstrate scarcity, tap into commitment and consistency, foster unity, demonstrate a trend, promote helping others, use converts.

## **Find something in common**

Making a difference and becoming remarkable necessitates building relationships and persuading people. Harness the power of observation, do your homework, keep your eye on the goal, and focus on the big picture and learn to ignore the rest.

## **Tell good stories**

David Aaker, the godfather of branding, extols the advantage of storytelling as a method to garner support. Stories are easier to tell and to remember. Aaker’s blueprint for good stories: Provide a narrative arc. Good stories are short, yet have a clear beginning, middle, and end; be authentic, grab attention, evoke strong emotions, communicate a simple, significant lesson.

## **Open Your Architecture**

This is technical jargon for creating products and services that other organizations can supplement with features and functionality. This enables other organizations not only to buy into your dreams, but also to integrate their products into your dreams as well.

## **Don’t Hear “No”**

As Shellye Archambeau was ascending corporate America she didn’t hear “No” for an answer. People may have said no, but Shellye heard them say, “Not yet” or “Not now.” Maybe she even heard, “Yes, if.” This kind of grit and invulnerability to vulnerability are necessary to become remarkable and make a difference, so don’t give up.

## **“Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom”**

This is a line stolen from Chairman Mao Zedong, although I fail to see how he implemented it. Let any kind of flower blossom and be thankful that anything blossoms at all.

## **Optimize the Day**

This can be done with: a broad coalition, being clear about what you want to accomplish, and when you do have an action, make sure it’s something people can do.

## **Show up in Person**

Your presence communicates that you care and are invested in the process, thereby strengthening relationships and establishing trust.

## **Become a Mission-Driven Asshole**

According to Tony Faddell, creator of the iPod, iPhone, and Nest thermostat, there are four kinds of assholes: political, controlling, ego-driven, and mission-driven. Mission driven people are dedicated to the mission of the organization, they steamroll people who aren’t excellent. They care a lot. They work hard. They listen and change their minds if you are right.

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## **STAGE 3: Grace - Uplift and Inspire - Lead by Example**

### **Embrace Grace**

Grace is the final stage of becoming remarkable. It refers to the poise, kindness, and thoughtfulness that serves to uplift and inspire others.

### **Get Over Imposter Syndrome**

Viewed positively, imposter syndrome can mean that you have a sense of humility and self-awareness. When you are racked by imposter syndrome and don’t exude confidence, you can impede your own progress, so here’s what to do:

- Admit that you’re feeling inadequate.
- Assure yourself that even remarkable people sometimes feel like imposters.

- Focus on your accomplishments.
- Seek the assurance and feedback of friends and colleagues.
- Fake it until you make it. This is not the same as falsifying your accomplishments or results.
- Focus on the mission or cause.

### **Craft a “Good Situation”**

A remarkable leader enables the success of others; fosters their development by rewarding their commitment, perseverance, and achievements; and ultimately guides people to realize their full potential.

### **Hire Better Than Yourself**

Put aside your ego and look for people who will make the organization even better, with or without you.

### **Negotiate Like a Champ**

Remarkable people are good negotiators. They get what they want and want what they get. And the people who they negotiated with want to do business again.

Here are tips to be a remarkable negotiator:

- Give the other side what it wants.
- Write the other side’s victory speech.
- Make the other side’s case.
- Hardly ever say no.
- Fight fire with water.
- Don’t anchor.

### **Put Skills First**

In the quest to hire better than yourself, the most important quality is the skills people bring to a job.

### **Send the Right Signals**

Ensure that your incentives and objectives are aligned. You should avoid encouraging people to take the wrong actions to achieve their objectives if you want all of you to achieve remarkable results.

### **Draw Boundaries**

An essential skill for anyone who wants to be remarkable is drawing boundaries around demands of their time, attention, and energy.

### **Manage by Zooming Around (MBZA)**

Do not underestimate the power that relationships and connections possess. It is crucial for your success in all aspects of life that you interact with others frequently.

### **Shut the F\* Up**

One of the ways to lead the way in a graceful manner is to listen more than you talk. Silence shows power. It means that you’re in control of the pace, and you are giving people the chance to absorb what has been said. It also shows you can manage your emotions, and you take the time to understand the situation. Silence is often more eloquent than words.

### **Reduce Risk**

When you are not dealing with constant crises, you become a more self-assured and inspiring leader, which sets the tone for the entire organization.

### **Say “I Don’t Know”**

It’s okay to acknowledge your own ignorance. In fact, it can increase your credibility and trustworthiness. However, be sure to express it in a way that inspires optimism.

### **Take the High Road**

#### **Value All People**

You can tell a lot about a person by what they do when there’s no money or glory involved.

#### **Count Your Blessings**

Everyone interviewed for Remarkable People counted their blessings even when their blessings were few and their difficulties were numerous. Everyone.

#### **Fulfill Your Success Oblige**

Here are tangible ways to fulfill your success oblige by supporting others: Mentor them. Give them money. Give them your products or services. Buy their products or services. Promote and recommend their products or services. Jointly develop products, services, or programs. Act as a reference. Set a good example.

#### **Help Others Succeed**

Help in person, help often, help strangers, share commonality, work through an organization, use your expertise, exert yourself, and let go.

#### **Make Wise Interventions**

Defined as “interventions that nurture people’s belonging and self-worth.” By asking others the appropriate questions, listening to their responses, and encouraging them to reflect on their experiences, we can foster in them a sense of belonging and self-worth.

### **Over-Deliver**

Exceeding expectations exemplifies generosity of time, effort, and trustworthiness. This is evidence of a remarkable and gracious person.

### **Change How You Keep Score**

Your life comes down to your legacy, and how you keep score determines your legacy. You should aim to make people’s lives better, and to make the world better.

### **Punch Up Not Down**

Remarkable people do not punch down. Clueless, arrogant, insensitive assholes punch down. End of discussion.

### **Ask “How”**

Asking “how” promotes understanding and empathy. This strategy not only helps you to connect on a deeper level, but also enables you to be a more effective influencer and leader in your own right.

### **Learn How to Apologize**

1) Simply say “I’m sorry,” 2) Accept responsibility for your actions, 3) Demonstrate compassion, and 4) Choose the appropriate moment.

### **Ignore the Small Stuff**

Ignoring the small stuff can also be satisfying because you’re

in control and you know what’s not getting to you, and it can be good for your reputation because counterattacking (and its temporary high) will not impress anyone.

### **Leave no Regrets Behind**

Even remarkable people have regrets. It is important to build a foundation by making wise choices, having the courage to take bold actions, nurturing and valuing relationships, and acting with morality and compassion. By acknowledging common regrets, you can live a remarkable life.

The Gospel according to Stacey Abrams is the perfect ending to this book. Her admonition to “be curious” is Growth; “solve problems” is Grit, and “do good” is Grace. This book aims to help guide you on the path to becoming remarkable. Being remarkable isn’t about wealth, fame, or power. It’s about making a positive impact in the world, even if it’s just one life, organization, or classroom. Additionally, remarkable people are known for their kindness, empathy, and compassion.

By following the steps outlined in the book, and embracing the core values of growth, grit, and grace, you can become remarkable and make a meaningful difference in the world.



Guy Kawasaki is the chief evangelist of Canva and host of the Remarkable People podcast. He was the chief evangelist of Apple, trustee of the Wikimedia Foundation, and brand ambassador of Mercedes-Benz. Kawasaki has a BA from Stanford University, an MBA from UCLA, and an honorary doctorate from Babson College. Madisun Nuismer is the producer of the Remarkable People podcast. Nuismer has a BA in public health from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She also attended the Institute of Integrative Nutrition and is a certified holistic health coach.

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