

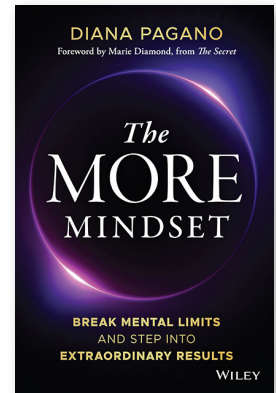


# Executive Book Summaries<sup>®</sup>

## The More Mindset

Break Mental Limits and Step into Extraordinary Results

by **Diana Pagano**



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### THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

*The More Mindset: Break Mental Limits and Step into Extraordinary Results* explores how deeply rooted beliefs, internal dialogue, and habitual thought patterns shape confidence, decision-making, and perceptions of possibility. Many individuals who appear outwardly successful still experience dissatisfaction, burnout, or uncertainty about their direction. These tensions often arise from unexamined beliefs absorbed from family, culture, and past experiences that quietly influence expectations and behavior. Recognizing these inherited assumptions reveals how fear-based thinking and negative self-talk can reinforce hesitation and limit progress.

The book presents a framework for intentionally redirecting thoughts and choices to replace limiting mental habits with more constructive patterns. Drawing on concepts related to neuroplasticity, emotional awareness, and mindset development, it outlines strategies for reframing adversity, challenging internal narratives, and cultivating habits that strengthen resilience and confidence. Practices such as visualization, gratitude, boundary-setting, and reflection are offered as ways to sharpen focus and sustain motivation during periods of uncertainty or stress. Ultimately, the work emphasizes aligning daily actions with personal values and long-term aspirations so individuals can reshape beliefs and expand the possibilities they see for their lives.

### IN THIS EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARY

- Examine inherited beliefs and internal narratives that shape confidence and choices
- Reframe fear, setbacks, and adversity as signals that guide growth and action
- Apply visualization, gratitude, and self-talk to redirect attention and sustain motivation while pursuing meaningful goals
- Establish boundaries and reflection habits that align daily actions with long-term purpose and personal values

### Introduction

As a single mom living in Scottsdale and a rookie entrepreneur managing my real estate career, people thought I had it all together. But inside, I was searching and longing for something more. The moment I raised my standards from what my life was to the life I dreamed of, everything changed.

The life I imagined became reality because of the mindset shifts I cultivated. These shifts helped me grow a multimillion-dollar foreign language company to five times its size when others saw it as impossible. Without the tools I will share, none of it would have happened.

This is about building a life, brick by brick. No shortcuts. But this time, you will be laying the kind of foundation that will weather any storm. You won't just think positive thoughts—you'll build something solid, something real.

You will gain a robust understanding of how to harness the power of your thoughts to change your life's trajectory, develop deeper self-awareness, and cultivate transformative habits that foster personal growth and fulfillment.

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#### CHAPTER 1

### You Are What You Believe

From the moment you enter this world, your beliefs are shaping you. These beliefs, acquired both consciously and unconsciously throughout our lives, actively construct who we are, influencing our self-image and confidence. They shape our understanding of the world and guide our perspective, ultimately affecting our expectations, goals, and dreams.

Beliefs can be, and often are, passed from one generation to another without challenging their validity or origin. We absorb these unquestioned beliefs on face value because we trust the source. Oftentimes, these "psychological DNA-like residues" belong to our parents, our teachers, our friends, and the broader social network around us—our village. They become part of the framework through which we interpret our experiences and life events.

Some beliefs are positive; others are negative to the point that they harm us on a psychological level. Still others can paralyze our progress toward success, making it impossible to achieve our goals, become our true selves, and fulfill our potential.

While seemingly harmless, even comical or absurd, some of the beliefs we acquire in childhood can have surprisingly detrimental effects on our development that continue into adulthood, while others have more significant implications.

### What You Think, You Attract

Our stress, sadness, and discontent create an energetic resonance within our environment, which in turn reflects back on us, amplifying and perpetuating these negative emotions. Our thoughts and emotions influence the experiences we attract into our lives. In essence, the universe reflects, delivers, and re-delivers.

Your thoughts give you a level of vibrational energy. If you are emitting a frequency of constant worry, you will likely attract similar circumstances toward you, as they tend to match that energy. Choose your responses wisely. Acknowledge your emotions, release them, and then move forward. Shift that frequency.

This switch can be as simple as saying, "There are bigger problems in life; this one isn't one of them." This change in perspective can quickly shift your energy.

### Pushing and Pulling Through

People who are truly focused on not just changing but transforming their circumstances commit, in both attitude and energy, to allowing nothing to stop them.

You have the power to control your thoughts, redirect them by "changing the channel," and build new ones that will help you get whatever you want in life and take you wherever you choose to go.

You can achieve anything you imagine, and even more, when you live your life devoid of self-imposed limitations. Scientific research has shown that belief in oneself significantly improves the likelihood of success.

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#### CHAPTER 2

### The Power to Make a New Choice

You wake up every day thinking, "This is the day when things will be different." But the harsh reality of dread lurks, residing in your stomach and biding its time for the opportune moment to strike. You try to convince yourself that this week, this month, this year will be different. But you simply can't muster the courage to take the next step.

Being in situations that deplete your energy, where you feel you were meant for more, is never the path you are meant to take, no matter what choices you've made in the past. Making a new choice now doesn't immediately guarantee instant change either. But it is the beginning of the change that's about to happen.

As difficult as it may be to admit, you are responsible for the choices you make: the good, the bad, and even the choices you don't make. ”

The Power of Choice is one of the first and most vital concepts I teach. For success to occur in any area of life, it is essential to recognize that you *always* have a choice, regardless of the circumstances. As difficult as it may be to admit, you are responsible for the choices you make: the good, the bad, and even the choices you don't make.

### Your Journey

Ruminating on negative thoughts and beliefs gives them an undeserved sense of truth. These self-fulfilling prophecies can then dictate the course of your life. This negative self-talk is precisely the obstacle you must overcome through conscious choice. To break this cycle, begin by examining your internal dialogue.

The key is to prevent these negative thoughts from paralyzing you. Acknowledge them, but don't dwell on them. Otherwise, they can take on lives of their own and begin emitting vibrational energy. This is how we manifest things into our lives.

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## CHAPTER 3

### Breathing During the Storm

When you're going through life and feeling like you're stuck, unfulfilled in some aspect of it, or even worse, in the throes of a crisis, it can feel impossible to counter negative thoughts that aren't serving you.

It is precisely during these times of *perceived* impossibility that we need to explore strategies for navigating adversity. This is where growth begins. Remember, some of the most remarkable achievements were once deemed impossible until they were actually accomplished.

#### It is Okay Until It's Not

Why do we consistently prioritize the needs of others over our own? Why do we habitually make promises to ourselves or tell ourselves that we'll eventually find the time, knowing deep down that these promises will remain unfulfilled?

I need you to confront the notion that you have no time for yourself. What you are doing is like driving a car on bald

tires, thinking, "Well, I am just driving another week, so it will be okay." It seems fine until it isn't. Then one day the bill comes due: your health, your comfort, your happiness, and sometimes even your life.

### Set Clear Boundaries

Without clear boundaries, anything goes. You become susceptible to guilt trips and may feel obligated to comply with every request, regardless of your own needs. This dynamic isn't limited to client relationships; it extends to interactions with family as well.

Asserting your boundaries is essential. You must clearly communicate your limits and expectations because people around you are not mind readers. One mistake we make is assuming they should just know. The truth is, they do not. Make it crystal clear.

Don't apologize for upholding your values, your time, and your energy. When you consistently stand your ground, people will recognize that you mean business and respect your clear boundaries.

### Build and Boost Your Confidence

Confidence is like a winter coat: you have to wear it *every day*, because if you skip it, you will truly feel the cold. That means being proactive.

You must hold a pristinely clear vision in your mind of what your confident self looks like. To achieve it, you must know what that success looks like in vivid detail in the future, as if it has already happened.

Here are ideas on how to build and boost your confidence:

- Follow through on the promises you make to yourself, whether they are big or small
- Take action, even if it feels messy or imperfect
- Monitor your self-talk
- Practice daily gratitude
- Choose your environment wisely
- Visualize your success in what you want to achieve
- Elevate your energy
- Become your number one cheerleader

## CHAPTER 4

## Happiness Is Not Something You Seek

Happiness is a fundamental aspect of the human experience. Feelings of accomplishment and pride are enriching and uplifting emotions, as they contribute significantly to our overall happiness. However, it is important to remember that we are the source. This means we have the power to cultivate a mindset that embraces the beauty and wonder in every aspect of life.

Happiness is a state of mind; it is a proactive choice you make and a behavioral practice you develop every day. The happiest people on earth are happy because they *choose* to be happy. If your happiness is predicated on the expectations of others or on external circumstances, it will leave you empty.

The constant narratives you feed your mind—or self-criticism, even over minor details—can significantly impact your overall happiness. By dwelling on perceived flaws, you may unknowingly prevent yourself from fully appreciating and enjoying the present moment.

So how do you build on that? How do you change your conditioned subconscious to see and feel happiness while simultaneously working toward your dreams? By focusing on the right things and by listening and speaking to your heart.

Cultivating happiness begins with a conscious decision. Start by appreciating the little things that bring you joy. Reflect on areas of your life that fill your heart with it. Identify the specific aspects of these experiences that bring you the most fulfillment. Pay attention to the positive emotions they awaken. True happiness arises from within.

### Countering Negative Thoughts

Engaging with negative thoughts and images strengthens the neural pathways you have created through repeated focus on these unhealthy states, emotions, thoughts, and images. This can lead to an exaggerated emotional response to even minor challenges, potentially triggering feelings of depression and anxiety.

The crucial factor lies not in the presence of these emotions, but in *how* we choose to respond to them. Your mind possesses immense power. By consciously choosing to counter negative thoughts that do not serve you and avoiding dwelling on them, you can break free from the cycle of self-sabotage and build what motivation psychologist Carol Dweck calls a “resilient mindset.”

### Love Yourself

Before you can show up for others in your life, you need to love yourself. You need to do it unconditionally so that when you make a mistake, you don’t berate yourself with shame and criticism. Make personal check-ins a habit:

- Reflect on yourself, your milestones, and what you want to accomplish next
- Review your broader plan and purpose
- Be present and supportive of yourself and those around you
- Let these habits build your confidence over time

## CHAPTER 5

## Sorry, Not Sorry

Take time for yourself to figure out your life’s journey and do the things that light your heart on fire. When you start doing the very thing that you feel the most aligned with—your true purpose and what you love—your life will shift in ways you never thought possible.

Your goals don’t have to make sense to anyone but you. You are the only person who decides how big you want to dream. You don’t need permission to live your truth. You don’t need to apologize for your ambitious goals, and you certainly don’t need to feel guilty for wanting to live life on your terms and with real purpose.

The biggest regret you can have is the shot you didn’t take, the opportunities you didn’t pursue, the ideas you didn’t create, and the people you didn’t let in. Begin, even if it looks messy.

There will never be a perfect moment to disrupt the status quo and pursue what you truly want. If you wait for ideal conditions, you may never begin. This is how dreams are suffocated—by believing that

- some things are possible and others impossible
- certain circumstances are right while others are wrong
- you are either ready or not ready

## CHAPTER 6

## Change the Channel

Change is inevitable. Sometimes it’s a welcome guest; other times, it demands a pivot. You have to shape both your identity and the meaning you assign to your circumstances. To do so, you must embrace the challenges that come with them.

# Ruminating on negative thoughts and beliefs gives them an undeserved sense of truth.



Imagine trying to “change the channel” of your thoughts. Just like on television, the channel you choose shapes how you feel. A comedy channel brings joy; a suspense channel brings tension and anxiety; and a horror channel brings fear. When facing challenges, it works the same: the *perspective* you choose—the “channel” you tune into—shapes your experience and your outcome. Remember, the angle at which you perceive challenges matters.

Practice with purpose until this mindset becomes second nature. Having the right perspective can do wonders. How we speak to ourselves and the questions we ask ourselves in those circumstances are of great importance.

People who refuse to allow negative language, thoughts, and images to saturate their minds during significant moments are simply light years ahead of those who do. They don’t allow those thoughts to take flight; they challenge them. See yourself as a winner, and you will become one.

## It’s Never a Failure

What makes someone say, “I have failed”? Maybe it’s the belief that if you don’t achieve what society deems worthy, then you have failed. Sometimes it’s as simple as selecting the wrong answer or making the wrong decision. But isn’t this what life is about? Nobody taught us how to “do life.”

Release the notion that your life has to be perfect in the world’s eyes. Challenges are clues—something you need to learn from. To stop or give up, refusing to try again, is my definition of failure. When you pivot, struggle, or fall, remember that there is something better on the other side. The only question you need to ask yourself is: Who do I want to be on the other side?

It may seem difficult to “pull yourself up by the bootstraps” when you are in the thick of the storm. It doesn’t have to be that way. You have the one thing that is readily available to you, the greatest gift you can access at any moment: the ability to change the channel.

You alone can do that; nobody else can do it for you. Nothing will change unless you change the channel that you’re on. Be an active participant in replacing your negative thoughts with positive ones. Don’t get discouraged if it feels difficult at

first. Ease comes with consistent practice. Put in the time to make your reality and your future better than they are now.

## CHAPTER 7

### A Time to Move, a Time to Be Still

As with everything, awareness is power. When you are aware of how your mindset and subconscious affect your well-being, you can use that knowledge for good.

You must be able to distinguish between when it is time for you to steer—to put in the effort and go hard after your goals—and when it is time to ease off the pedal, calm your mind, slow down, and focus on your inner peace.

#### Take Control of Your Anxiety

Focusing on nothing else but the future triggers anxiety, especially when it comes with a host of worst-case scenarios and what-ifs.

Anxiety is closely connected to the concept of FEAR (False Evidence Appearing Real). It can conjure feelings so powerful that they cause you to believe the issues in focus are real. Feelings are not facts; they stem from your thinking. Therefore, since you can change your thinking, you can also change your feelings, including feelings of anxiety.

Most people fail to realize that they are literally holding their breath during an anxiety attack. This can cause hyperventilation, further exacerbating physical symptoms and making it difficult to calm both the brain and the body.

Take five or even ten deep breaths. I like to use the 5-4-6 second method: breathe in for five seconds, hold for four seconds, and breathe out slowly for six seconds. Repeat. Even something this simple can make an immediate difference.

A proactive and productive way to manage anxiety with lasting effects is simple:

1. Stop
2. Breathe
3. Clear your mind
4. Be still

5. Focus on positive thoughts
6. Visualize yourself calm, cool, and collected
7. Use affirmations while imagining yourself in that state, such as: “I am calm, cool, and collected,” or “All is well. I am loved, and I am safe.”
8. Repeat

You can do this for as little as two to five minutes a day, or as many times a day as your schedule allows.

## Mental Detox

Mental detox is important for your well-being and for moving you toward your dreams. Here are some of the mental detox practices I use:

- Unplug
- Keep a gratitude journal
- Take a “friends and family” vacation
- Embrace the outdoors
- Take a “me, myself, and I” day
- Improve your inner dialogue

## CHAPTER 8

### Visualization on Steroids

The power of visualization is real. Everyone has access to it, and anyone can practice it. To me, visualization is a way to rewire and train your brain to search for what can go right, *not* what can go wrong. By focusing on the bright spots and turning that insight into a mental image of what you want, you can produce powerful results.

All aspects of life carry energy. By intentionally directing that energy, you can shape your reality and conquer your goals. Manifesting your desired outcomes requires consistent daily actions that also boost your confidence and expand the possibilities you see for yourself and your circumstances.

Visualizing yourself successfully engaging in your goal activity is crucial to moving your life ahead in the right direction. It's that straightforward.

Celebrated author Napoleon Hill eloquently sums it up in his classic book *Think and Grow Rich*: “Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve.” My modern take: seeing is believing, and believing allows you to see. Visualization is simply the act of seeing and constructing the outcome you want.

## Momentum's Power Source

The Reticular Activating System (RAS) is a network of neurons located in the brainstem, where it connects to the spinal cord. This neural network operates below the level of conscious awareness, automatically filtering and prioritizing incoming and outgoing information.

Specifically, the RAS filters incoming information based on what it has been programmed to prioritize through focused visualization. Essentially, it allows only relevant details to reach your conscious awareness while ignoring what it perceives as unimportant to your current focus. These selected pieces of information are then processed into your conscious thoughts, influencing your emotions.

To put it simply, the RAS is like a genie in a bottle. You *tell* it what is important to you and what you want, and it delivers the tools you need to accomplish that.

## CHAPTER 9

### Barriers Overrated

Most obstacles that we encounter in life are ones we place there ourselves. These self-imposed barriers often prevent us from taking the first step because we've already convinced ourselves that the situation is impossible. Remember, it all begins in your mind. What you believe will be.

Barriers to your dreams only exist because you choose to quit after a challenge. But dreams truly die when you continue to believe that your skills and capabilities are limited.

Meet challenges head-on with the mindset: “Yes, this might be hard, but it doesn't matter because I will push through, figure it out, and make it happen.”

If you believe you can push through it, that you can overcome it, it's no longer a barrier. It's just a minor annoyance that you will deal with and then promptly forget.

## Breaking the Chains of Guilt

Self-imposed barriers, though often unseen, can be among the most difficult to overcome. One such pervasive barrier is guilt. This heavy emotional burden clouds our minds, distorts our vision of what we truly desire, and ultimately prevents us from pursuing fulfilling opportunities.

Whatever its origin, self-forgiveness is the path to overcoming guilt. A powerful tool in this process is engaging with our former selves. Through honest self-reflection and in-

Some of the most remarkable achievements were once deemed impossible until they were accomplished.

”

ner dialogue, we can confront past hurts, clear our minds, and extend forgiveness to ourselves and to those who have wounded us.

### When Fear Comes Knocking

Fear is a natural part of life; it is not a matter of *if*, but *when* you will encounter it. This is where “change the channel” comes into play. Remember, we are a reflection of what we project, and we have complete control over whether we choose to answer the call of FEAR when it comes knocking.

You can slam the door in the face of fear and choose to open another door that leads to hope, peace, and opportunity. The choice is always yours. When you do that, life begins to happen *for* you instead of *to* you.

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## CHAPTER 10

### Create a Life Worth Living

I often see others settling for less than their hearts’ desires. I was one of them. I was the one wondering, “How can I live a life of real purpose and live life on my terms? How can I stop settling and have more?”

I now have the answer, with certainty: by creating it for yourself. The magic of living life on your terms—the life you are ready to live—relies on three things in how you show up and what you feed:

- Your mind
- Your heart
- Your stomach (your second brain)

### Leverage Gratitude

Gratitude is one of the most important daily practices you can make time for. It works on many levels and can truly change your life. With consistency over time, you will notice even greater results.

When you think about the people and things you are grateful for in your life, you tap into a powerful resource. When things go wrong, as they sometimes will, you may feel tested, frustrated, or angry. In those moments, learn to pause, take

a deep breath, and think about everything you are grateful for. Don’t overthink it. Practice it consistently over time and notice the difference.

### Authenticity Matters

In our lives, we often wear a mask, a façade of who we think we are supposed to be. To become who you are meant to be, you must show up honestly as yourself and be comfortable with your imperfections.

Being authentic is a prerequisite for happiness. When you realize that you are a good person, deserving of praise and admiration for who you are and what you have accomplished, no matter how big or small it may seem, you will be able to appreciate and love yourself even more.

There is no reason you cannot have the life you desire. When you picture it, you will feel it. You need to have it burned into your mind’s eye to the point that it feels almost within reach. This is the power of the true, authentic you. Don’t ask out of fear. Ask with a hopeful heart and let the hope of your heart’s desire lead the way. Build the image of your life on your own terms.

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## CHAPTER 11

### Be Open to Receive More

What does it mean to be open to receive more? Opening your heart, mind, and soul to receive more is like opening a door and allowing new, positive energy to enter. When your entire being is open to new opportunities, possibilities, thoughts, emotions, habits, and connections, those things begin to appear in your life.

We are all human, and we all make mistakes. That’s how you learn. That’s how you grow. Give yourself the grace you deserve. Allow yourself to be happy and open to living the life you truly want. Continue to see in your mind’s eye where you want to be and what it feels like, and build on that vision.

### Be Happy and Celebrate Daily

Be happy today because today offers the chance to make a new choice, take a new step, and begin again. Be happy

today because you are privileged to open your eyes in the morning and are given the gift of another day. Tomorrow is not promised to anyone, but today is yours, so make it count.

In our day and age, people don't celebrate small victories nearly enough. Something grand has to happen—a graduation, a marriage, a birthday, a promotion. But what about celebrating the small things?

Underestimating the power of celebrating the small steps toward a larger goal is a mistake. Each small victory is a chance to invest in yourself.

The best part of celebrating your victories is the momentum it creates. When you gain momentum, everything begins to happen more easily, more quickly, and more effectively. This is when your whole being exudes an infectious energy that can move mountains. It's the kind of creative, exciting energy that fuels what once seemed impossible.

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## Conclusion

Living your life to the fullest and being open to more require effort. Think about your life as a garden. You plant your seeds with intention. You pull out the weeds that do not serve you. You water your garden to nourish it. Then, you enjoy the fruits of your labor.

Putting this into practice involves a few simple habits:

- Reflect
- Show gratitude
- Reward yourself
- Look ahead
- Believe in your ability to dream bigger

You choose how big you want to dream. Never restrain yourself, your capabilities, or your potential; likewise, never let anyone else do the same.

If you feed your mind with negativity and denial instead of positivity and drive, and if you don't focus on your grit while working with your grace, you won't reach your goals. But if you work with the amazing gift you have been given—your mind—you will achieve remarkable things.

You will accomplish things in your life that no one ever dreamed possible, simply because you have discovered the power that lies within you for more.

Your potential is greater than any challenge you may face.

Your faith, focus, and action will unlock opportunities you haven't yet imagined.

Believe in yourself.

The best is yet to come.



**Diana Pagano** is a mindset coach, author, keynote speaker, and host of the *Make Things Happen* podcast. Founder of the MAKE THINGS HAPPEN™ movement, she helps individuals and organizations break through limiting beliefs and achieve next-level performance using strategies grounded in neuroscience and practical experience. A first-generation Mexican American from San Diego, Pagano overcame early financial instability and frequent moves to build a successful career in real estate and business leadership. She later helped scale a multi-million-dollar language company as executive vice president. Today she inspires audiences worldwide through speaking, workshops, and coaching that turn motivation into bold action.

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