

NOTES

9. ONE THING YOU CANNOT HIDE

I am sure you will agree we acquire the skills of living successfully through knowledge. Knowledge – properly applied – is power and knowledge is available to all of us.

At the very peak of the pyramid, you will find the world's most brilliant people.

The degree of a person's ignorance will determine their place in the world. Everyone is born ignorant and must, for a time, live in ignorance. But remember this – anyone who remains ignorant, has only themselves to blame. An illiterate person in our society is on the lowest rung of our social ladder. Using that starting point, think of society as a pyramid with a broad base, gradually rising to a high point. We know that the greatest majority of people are to be found at the bottom, representing the greatest area of the pyramid. The higher you go, the smaller the layers.

At the very top of the pyramid, you will find the world's most brilliant people. We may not have the native equipment to reach the upper-most pinnacle, although we certainly could do, we do control where we live between the very top and the very bottom. We can, most certainly, get into the top 3% – let's say the top three layers of the pyramid. And from here, we can live well and successfully all the days of our lives. It isn't that we want to be above anyone, it's just having the ambition and good sense to want to live as best we can. The higher you climb on a pyramid, the farther you can see; the fresher the air; the better the view, and the less crowded it becomes. Another rewarding thing about climbing is that as we climb, we help most of those associated with us, to also climb.



One of the most important ladders leading to the top is **knowledge**. The more we know, the higher we can move.



NOTES

But, where does a person begin? No one person can know everything... In fact, our store of knowledge is growing far too fast for anyone to ever keep up with it. It is like walking into the Library of Congress with its millions of volumes and trying to decide which single book to read first, knowing that even if you lived a thousand years, you couldn't read them all.

Fortunately, we know the answer to this perplexing problem.

A person should begin with the study of their language, and then progress to their general area of interest. Two steps, in that order, that can move us higher up the pyramid.

First language, in our case, English. Not enough people realise that it is our ability to use our language that will determine our place on the social pyramid. And which will also control, to a great extent, the amount of money we may earn during our lives.



A person may dress fashionably and project a very attractive appearance. So far, so good. But the minute that person opens their mouth and begins to speak, they proclaim to the world their level on our pyramid. Shaw's play, 'Pygmalion', later adapted into the musical comedy 'My Fair Lady', is an extreme example of what I am talking about here.

Our use of language is the one thing we cannot hide.

To try to live without constantly expanding our knowledge, is to close our eyes, not just to the whole purpose of life, but to the facts of life as well. Never before has the world moved as rapidly as it is moving today. We must make up our mind to move with it, to stay with it, to grow and prosper with it. Not just because it is the best way to achieve our goals, but because it is the way to really enjoy living, just as the skilful sailor enjoys the sea.

Knowledge is power. The more knowledge you have, the more power you can exercise over your life and future.

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So often a person will live in the shallows from force of habit, or because those around him or her are wasting their time there – without realising that only a thin screen of reeds separates them from the fine, deep ocean beyond. That person can sail to any port of their choosing if they take the time, and expend the effort, to build a good boat.

Now, let me make an important point. The person who knows where they are going, and who has made up their mind to get there is going to make the grade, regardless of their education. If an education is necessary to accomplish their goal, they will get it. Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence and determination. I think it is important to succeed in every aspect of our lives, and becoming well-educated is vital. What good is substantial material success if a person has remained too ignorant to enjoy it? Or to administer it?

Now, let us recap: **Knowledge is power.** The more knowledge you have, the more power you can exercise over your life and future.

Think of human society as a pyramid, composed of layers, beginning with the broad base, and narrowing to a pinnacle at the top. Pick the place on the pyramid you are going to aim for and start climbing.



And finally, realise that today is just the beginning. The commencement of our days and years of learning. For with wisdom will come kindness, patience, love, understanding and success as a person. It is never too late to begin.