

**“THIS BOOK WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE.
AND, IF ENOUGH OF US COMMIT, IT WILL CHANGE THE WORLD.”**
—PHIL STUTZ, AUTHOR OF THE TOOLS, FEATURED IN NETFLIX DOCUMENTARY STUTZ

ANCIENT WISDOM + MODERN SCIENCE

ARETÉ

ACTIVATE YOUR HEROIC POTENTIAL

MOVE FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE TO MASTERY

VOLUME I

BRIAN JOHNSON

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ADVANCE PRAISE FOR
ARETÉ

“I wish this book was available 50 years ago when I was just starting out on my own life journey. I wholeheartedly recommend it.”

— **John Mackey**, Co-founder and Former CEO,
Whole Foods Market

“Optimization for the sake of optimization is ultimately shallow. Brian Johnson draws from profound ancient wisdom, activated with powerful modern science, to provide a deeper alternative: the cultivation of heroism. This book provides the answer for those who are asking that most basic of questions: what should I do with my life?”

— **Cal Newport**, *New York Times* bestselling author of
Digital Minimalism and *Deep Work*

“This book will unlock the recesses of your true capabilities. Brian Johnson shows even the most successful leaders that there is more in the fuel tank to reach even greater heights. An absolute ‘must read’ for those who want to reach the Mount Olympus of leading superstar-performing teams.”

— **Mike Manazir**, Retired US Navy Admiral, Top Gun Pilot,
bestselling author of *Learn How to Lead to Win*

“This is a must read for anyone looking to take their game of life to the Pro level!! The wisdom from Brian in this book is unmatched and it will unequivocally change your life!”

— **Sean Casey**, New York Yankees hitting coach,

3x Major League Baseball All-Star “As a close friend and mentor, Brian’s insights and guidance have had a profound impact on my own personal growth. His unwavering dedication to making a positive impact on the world motivates me to be a better human being each day. Brian’s burning passion for living life through the concept of *Areté* makes his noble mission a cause to relentlessly support. We all want a better world for our kids and future generations. Many of Brian’s tenets of character and leadership have been woven into the very fabric of our world-class warriors in Naval Special Warfare during their basic training phase. Brian has been extremely gracious to the families of our fallen heroes, for which I will always be grateful. Brian Johnson is an exceptional individual that comes along once in a life time who possesses the wisdom, leadership qualities and love of humanity that are necessary to make a lasting difference in our world.”

— **Mike Magaraci**, Former Force Master Chief of the
Naval Special Warfare Community

“Every hero needs a guide. But when they hand you the play-book to leading a life of meaning ... It’s the ultimate gift! This book won’t leave your nightstand.”

— **Todd Herman**, bestselling author of *The Alter Ego Effect*

“In *Areté*, Brian Johnson masterfully integrates time-honored wisdom with contemporary science, creating a roadmap for increased well-being. This will sound cheesy, but it’s more than just a book—it’s a call for all of us to unearth our untapped potential. Brian offers practical, tangible tools for turning our greatest challenges into fuel for resilience and personal transformation. His new book is essential reading for anyone seeking to harness their heroic potential and influence the world in a positive way.”

— **Sonja Lyubomirsky**, Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Riverside, bestselling author of *The How of Happiness*

“From the beginning of this book Brian Johnson sets up incredibly high expectations, promising us the best, most heroic version of ourselves. And then, with each word, metaphor, story, and research, Brian proceeds to overdeliver on his promise. You have in your hands a life-changing masterpiece.”

— **Tal Ben-Shahar**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Happier*, taught largest class at Harvard at Harvard

“This book is your next read AND your training template for a life well-lived. Philosophy, ethics and morality in our modern world have devolved into relativism and opinion, with little action to back up the blather. It wasn’t always this way. In ancient Greece and Rome, the Stoics understood that a personal philosophy not backed by powerful action, and habituation of virtues, simply displayed a lack of character. Brian Johnson is a Stoic reincarnate. Not only does he have a deep love for marrying ancient

with modern wisdom, but also has a passion for embodying such wisdom in his own life—through daily discipline and effort. In short, he is willing to do the work of self-examination and character refinement espoused by the Stoics, Yogis, Taoists and other philosopher-practitioners of the past. In *Areté: Activate Your Heroic Potential*, Brian shares this wisdom with us so that we, too, can be men and women of character and deep integrity. It is a message that is both timely and urgent. Thank you Brian for this important work.”

— **Mark Divine**, Ret. Navy SEAL Commander,
New York Times bestselling author of
Unbeatable Mind & The Way of the Seal

“I have followed Brian Johnson’s work for over a decade. He is the coach of coaches. The impact he’s had on me and, as a result, those I coach, is immeasurable. If you’re looking to level up every aspect of your personal and professional life, this is a must read.”

— **Brian Cain**, mental performance coach for
MLB, UFC, NFL, PGA & NCAA champions

“Brian is the most Stoic guy I know. When I’m in a jam, when the universe is turning my life upside down, Brian is the man I call. Every Spartan in the world should read *Areté*.”

— **Joe De Sena**, CEO + Founder of Spartan

“This book is a life-changing masterpiece that will leave a lasting impact on anyone who reads it. If you’re searching for a roadmap to a meaningful life, look no further. The wisdom Brian

shares in *Areté* is the compass that will guide you towards a life of purpose, happiness, and the realization of your true potential.”

— **Brandon Guyer**, Los Angeles Angels mental toughness coach,
founder of Major League Mindset

“Most of us have read our share of self-improvement books. *Areté* is something else entirely—a self-illumination book. Each page sheds light on the undiscovered capacities that have been too-long hidden away within each of us. Brian’s genius lies in holding out these golden finds for us to recognize as our own, while simultaneously unleashing the untapped stores of purpose-driven energy we need to wield them well. This book will serve as a daily devotional for many. For those willing to dig deeper, it will serve as a treasure map, dog-eared pages and highlighted passages marking a clear trail back to our own best gifts.”

— **Pilar Gerasimo**, Award-winning health journalist,
podcaster, and author of *The Healthy Deviant*

“This book threatens to be one of the all-time best and most timeless masterpieces of personal productivity and self-development. From ancient wisdom to modern science, training the body, mind and soul, optimizing energy, love, sleep, work and beyond, it is a profoundly thorough treatise on everything you need to live as a full and complete human. Shove aside any books you’ve been planning to read and move *Areté* to the front of the line. You’ll thank yourself forever if you do.”

— **Ben Greenfield**, Founder of Kion,
bestselling author of *Boundless*

“Brian Johnson’s virtues of zest, service, and optimism are only matched by his kindness, generosity, and love. These virtues were embodied in Brian making Heroic available to the corps of cadets at the United States Military Academy at West Point. These future Army officers now have access to tools to assist them in leadership development, self-mastery, and antifragility. The beauty of this is not just the self-development aspect of cadets using Heroic, but that upon graduation and commissioning, they will take these virtues and skills to their platoons of America’s finest young women and men. This book gives heroic leaders from all walks of life access to Brian’s wisdom. I highly recommend it.”

— **Scott Parsons**, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Character and Ethics Development at Texas Tech, former Character Development Integrator at the United States Military Academy at West Point

“Mark my words: Brian Johnson is going to change the world, and this book is his ultimate manifesto. I’ve seen it over and over—when people connect with the Heroic movement they flourish. And flourishing is contagious. One purpose-driven hero impacts others, and within just a few iterations, the world. The science is solid; the history goes deep. *Areté* will elevate us all.”

— **Susan Peirce Thompson, PhD**, Professor of brain and cognitive sciences, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Bright Line Eating*

“I’ve known Brian Johnson for over 20 years, and I’ve never met anyone more focused and dedicated to making a difference in the world. He lives an authentically heroic life by constantly

challenging himself to grow and learn, by unapologetically eliminating all distractions, and by never giving up on his dreams. With *Heroic*, Brian has created a powerful and inspiring company to help us all live our lives to the fullest. *Areté* is a must-read for anyone who wants to be a hero.”

— **Kelly Perdew**, General Partner of Moonshots Capital,
Winner of *The Apprentice* Season 2, West Point graduate,
Airborne/ranger trained, JD/MBA

“No one is doing more in our time to bring practical wisdom to the world than Brian Johnson. He searches through ancient philosophy, modern science, and the best thought of our day to find the insights and tools we all need to propel our lives upward and forward with true excellence. He finds all the best stuff and brings it to us in a powerfully actionable form in this new book, from theory to practice to mastery. It’s an amazing achievement. I’m hoping that millions of people will benefit from Brian’s great work in these pages. We need it now like never before.

— **Tom Morris, PhD**, public philosopher and author of over thirty books, including perennial bestsellers *True Success*, *If Aristotle Ran General Motors*, *The Oasis Within*, and *Plato’s Lemonade Stand*“

Brian has alchemized the wisdom and teachings from the greatest thinkers on the planet. His teachings have created a framework for my own peak performance and leadership.”

— **John Herdman**, Head Coach, Canadian Men’s
National Soccer Team

“There is arguably no book more capable of accelerating your path to fulfilling your potential than *Areté* and no person more qualified to write it than Brian Johnson. Brian is a true modern day philosopher who has distilled and consolidated wisdom from the greatest minds in history so that you can use it to create the life you desire and deserve.”

— **Hal Elrod**, international bestselling author of
The Miracle Morning

“Prepare to have your mind expanded and your heart opened by Brian Johnson’s remarkable new book. *Areté* is a masterpiece that is certain to be read and revered by millions, and passed down from generation to generation. In a world where shallow superficiality seems supreme, Brian’s book is a beacon of deep truth, wisdom, and inspiration—a call to arms for anyone with the courage to pursue their dreams, no matter how audacious they may seem. Put every other book away and dive headfirst into the pages of *Areté*. You’ll emerge with a renewed sense of purpose, a deeper understanding of yourself, and the tools you need to make a lasting impact on the world.”

— **Jim Huling**, Executive coach, former Global
Managing Consultant for Franklin Covey,
bestselling author of *The 4 Disciplines of Execution*

ARETÉ

ACTIVATE YOUR HEROIC POTENTIAL

BRIAN JOHNSON



**HEROIC
BLACK
STONE**
PUBLISHING

This book is dedicated to YOU,
the hero we've been waiting for.

And...

To my wife, Alexandra,
our kids Emerson and Eleanor,
and your families and kids.

Heroic families unite
it's time to raise the next
generation of heroes
and change the world together.

451 IDEAS^o

TO ACTIVATE YOUR HEROIC POTENTIAL

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PHIL STUTZ SAYS...

FOREWORD

I've been a psychiatrist for 45 years. That's a long time doing the same thing. Many of my colleagues have retired, worn down by the grind. What keeps me going is my patients. I've been fortunate enough to have a practice comprised of unusual people. They are not unusual because they've succeeded in conventional terms—even though most of them have.

They're unusual because they refuse to be defined by any single accomplishment. Their identity is based on a process of endless possibility. They don't stop creating. Working with these people can be profound but it's also a lot of fun.

Because I live in L.A., many of them are in show business—which also means they are famous. Eventually that rubbed off on me and I was designated as the “shrink to the stars.” I cringe when I hear that phrase. Yes, I have treated a lot of actors but I've treated a lot of others in business, politics, the arts, medicine, etc. They all wanted the same thing: to unleash as much hidden potential as possible.

Just the way a seed holds inside it the potential to become a tree, every human being has a soul that holds inside it a vision of a future self. But that vision won't emerge by itself. Your soul has to be trained until it is strong enough to have an impact on the world. My job is to guide and encourage my patients as they move through this soul training. Rather than

being the shrink to the stars it would be more accurate to call me the “shrink to the soul.”

You’re about to read an extraordinary book written by an extraordinary person: Brian Johnson.

I say that without hesitation because I have worked with Brian every week for years. At each meeting, I poured into him the totality of everything I had learned over 45 years on any topic. I had done this with many others but no one even approached his ability to absorb information at dizzying speed and then make it his own.

But that’s only half the story. Training the soul is mostly a process focused on the individual. Brian is also a genius at connecting people and nurturing a collective soul force.

In short, I know greatness when I see it and Brian’s greatness just keeps on growing.

Brian has a profound impact on everyone who crosses his path. In today’s digital media world he’s considered an “influencer.” But when I hear that term I think of someone with a lot of Twitter followers or someone who is plugged into the design and fashion worlds. The driving force for that kind of person is the fear of not being “cool,” which is ultimately the fear of being left out.

Brian had no interest in working on this superficial level—it barely scratches the surface of what a human being is capable of. He would accept nothing less than the unlocking of the hidden potential in each human being. And just the way this potential goes unexpressed in each of us, the entire human race has its own hidden potential.

Brian's goal was to uncover this collective potential. Without it our survival as a planet is severely compromised.

But to guide our whole species to its highest potential is a daunting task. It requires no less than the ability to inspire every single human being. This may sound grandiose, even impossible, when you read it in the pages of this book. But when you're in Brian's physical presence you can feel a boundless, almost supernatural enthusiasm that makes anything seem possible.

Brian is a dreamer and he dreams big. What sets him apart is that he is disciplined and practical in pursuit of those dreams. Most self-help books are products waiting to be sold. They have little ambition beyond catching the attention of potential readers. We read them to give ourselves a non-specific sense of hope. Brian doesn't criticize others but he would never publish a book with such modest goals.

Especially now. Because right now we face a challenge so all-encompassing that it puts our very existence at risk.

The challenge comes from an enemy that wants to destroy us. This enemy is invisible but its effects stare us right in the face. Take a hard look at the institutions that form the foundation of modern society.

Government, education, the church, science, finance, media, medicine, the judiciary, etc. In every area there is a lack of discipline, leadership and transparency.

This is a picture of a world that is falling apart. A world of chaos, fear and darkness. And only if we put that world back together again will we be strong enough to defend ourselves. Sounds bleak and overwhelming. Enter: Brian Johnson.

He didn't know it, the world didn't know it, but he had been preparing for this moment all his life. The moment when the two sides of his soul, his two major talents, would work in harmony to defeat the enemy that had turned our world into a living hell. A force that could overcome evil.

Here are the two sides of Brian Johnson.

1. His drive to bring out the HEROIC potential of the individual. The state of functioning you'll need to reach if you want to do anything big and frightening. He presents this as a modern form of the hero. In a war the hero runs toward the battle. The more conflict around him (or her) the more inspired the hero becomes.

2. His drive to UNIFY the human race. As a unified whole the human race is capable of anything. The problem is that evil works to prevent unification. It focuses on the differences between us, not the common ground.

Brian has proven to me (and to his thousands of followers) that you can stay focused on the unique path toward your personal potential and at the same time live within a structure that applies to all human beings. He calls the values and habits that have this universal relevance "Virtues." The cardinal virtues Brian leans on have been present throughout all cultures across all time, including: Love, Courage, Wisdom and Discipline.

This is only the foreword, not the book. I couldn't begin to cover all that you'll find as you read further. But understand the opportunity that you (and I) have been given. We are present at the inception of a new way to work with human beings that is

exactly what is needed right now. Its timeliness comes from the extraordinary amount of conflict, confusion and fear spreading without resistance over our world.


What Brian has developed is much more than a bunch of coping mechanisms for the over-stressed modern person; although that would be an improvement for most of us. He's developed a training program for the soul.

Commit to this training and you will gain the ability to transmute your biggest problems, your darkest days, into unstoppable courage, endless enthusiasm and an unshakable faith in the future.

This book will change your life. And, if enough of us commit, it will change the world.

PHIL STUTZ, MD

Los Angeles, California

- 
- I KNOW THE ULTIMATE GAME**
 - II FORGE ANTIFRAGILE CONFIDENCE**
 - III OPTIMIZE YOUR BIG 3**
 - IV MAKE TODAY A MASTERPIECE**
 - V MASTER YOURSELF**
 - VI DOMINATE THE FUNDAMENTALS**
 - VII ACTIVATE YOUR SUPERPOWER**

NICE TO MEET YOU

IT'S DAY 1. LET'S GET TO WORK!

Hi, this is Brian. I appreciate you taking the time to open this book. I wish we could spend some time together so I could get to know you more.

What I do know is that we're both busy and I like to share more wisdom in less time, so let's get straight to work.

I want to start by telling you a little story.

But... First, let me briefly introduce myself and give you a little context.

In addition to being the Founder & CEO of a company called Heroic Public Benefit Corporation (which I'll tell you more about), I'm the proud dad of a couple of kids (Emerson and Eleanor) and married to my best friend, Alexandra.

We live on a little ranch in the country outside Austin, Texas with three dogs (Zeus, Zap and Wags—two of which adopted us), a cat (Heroic the Stoic, who also adopted us), and nine chickens (including Happy the Rooster and his hens).

Now... My ten-year-old son Emerson recently got into chess. And, when I say got into chess, I mean he REALLY (!) got into chess.

Less than a year ago we were introduced to a great website called ChessKid.com that features one of my all-time favorite teachers (Mike Klein, also known as FunMasterMike) who has figured out a way to teach chess while helping kids have fun and fall in love with the game.

We home-school Emerson so he has a lot of time to spend studying chess. And ... Over the last ten months, he's spent HUNDREDS and HUNDREDS (!) of hours playing and practicing and all that.

To put it in perspective, he watches the Chess World Championships with the same enthusiasm I watched Major League Baseball's World Series when I was ten!

In short: He absolutely (!) loves everything about chess. He won the Texas Chess State Championship for his division and his current big dream is to become a chess Grandmaster.

That's the context.

I'm writing this on a Saturday afternoon. I'm putting the final touches on the book and thinking about how I want to introduce you to the concept of *Areté*.

I think THIS little sequence of events from this morning might just be the THE best possible way I can bring this wisdom to life.

So... Without further ado... Let's get to work.

P.S. Before I forget and so you know... The word *Areté* (we'll define it in a moment!) is pronounced "are-uh-tay."

Say it with me now:

Areté

=

Are-uh-tay

P.P.S. Speaking of spending time together and getting to know one another more, I'd love to connect with you on our Heroic social training platform.

You can connect with me (and the rest of our Heroic community!) and get a bunch of other goodness by visiting [HEROIC.US/ARETE](https://heroic.us/arete)



ARETÉ

EXPLAIN IT LIKE I'M 10

I'm a pretty disciplined guy and have a pretty structured way I approach every day of the year.

This morning, I cut my normal morning work protocol short to focus on my love protocol.

The special occasion?

A chess tournament with Emerson at the Austin Grandmaster Chess Academy.

So... I leave my office early and step into the kitchen all fired up about the day ahead.

And... Emerson tells me he doesn't want to go.

Me: "Really? What's up, buddy?!"

Emerson's wilted flower posture response: "I don't know. I just don't want to go."

Me: "Hmm. Interesting. How about we go on a quick walk and talk about it?!"

Emerson: "Okay."

We head out to hit the trail on our property.

Eleanor and Mommy follow.

Before heading the opposite direction on our little trail, Mommy says: "He says he doesn't want to go because he doesn't think he will win! You might want to talk about that."

Me to myself: "Fascinating. We'll definitely want to talk about that."

I reach out to hold Emerson's hand as we start our walk.

I squeeze it tight and tell him “I love you” in our little made-up language we call squeeze-eze.

He tells me he loves me back via a little squeeze.

Me: “So, Mommy says you don’t want to go because you’re not going to win the tournament?!”

Emerson: “Yah.”

Me with a chuckle: “Dude. OF COURSE you’re not going to win the tournament. You’re going to play against guys that are INSANELY GOOD.

Remember what Nick [his coach] said yesterday when he was invited to play at an elite tournament that HE knew he wouldn’t win?”

Emerson: “Yah. He said he was super excited because he KNEW he’d be playing REALLY good players that would challenge him and help him get better.”

Me: “EXACTLY. Win or learn. And learning is winning so let’s go, right?!”

Emerson: “Yep.”

Now...

That part of our chat was on the first half of our loop. Right after we established the opportunity to win or learn, we ran into Mommy and Eleanor who were headed the other direction.

We gave them a high five and then continued our chat.

Me: “Hey buddy. You know that voice in your head that was telling you all the reasons you DIDN’T want to go to the chess tournament?”

Emerson: “Yes.”

Me: “Well...”

And I stopped walking and got down on a knee and looked him straight in the eye as I said...

“We ALL have that voice in our head.”

“And... I want you to listen really closely right now...”

“If you run your life making decisions based on what THAT voice in your head tells you then...”

Pause.

“You will NOT create the life you want.”

“PERIOD.”

“Your Grandpa Phil calls that ‘Part X.’ We ALL have that voice. It’s NEVER (!!!) going to go away.”

“And... One of THE most important things you will ever learn to do is learning how to deal with that voice.”

Emerson: Eyes big. Focused. Locked in. Fully registered.

I stand up. We continue our walk.

I grab his hand again.

Me via squeeze-eze: “I love you.”

Him via squeeze-eze: “I love you, too.”

Me: “Now... Here’s how you deal with that voice.”

“First, you need to recognize that Part X is talking to you. You’ll usually know because you will be whining or complaining or making up stories about why you don’t want to do something you kinda know you actually DO want to do.”

“Just notice the voice is there.”

“Then practice Targeted Thinking by asking yourself, ‘WHAT DO I WANT?!’”

We make eye contact. He’s fully present and tracking.

Me: “So... What do you want in your life?”

Emerson: “Well... I want to be happy and ...”

Me: “Exactly.”

I pull up the sleeve on my sweatshirt and show him the (one-inch-tall, five-inch-wide!) tattoo on my left forearm.

“You want to be HEROIC and show up as your best self and create a great, joyful life in which you’re giving your gifts to the world.”

He nods his head and says: “Yah!”

Me: “And... You know HOW you will do that?”

Him: “By helping people?”

Me: “GREAT answer. Yes. Exactly. And ... In this situation, you need to...”

Then I pull up the other sleeve on my sweatshirt to show him the (one-inch tall, four-inch wide!) tattoo on my right forearm.

“You need to live with *ARETÉ*.”

“You remember what that means?!”

Him: “Sort of...”

Me: “It’s an ancient Greek word. We translate it into English as ‘virtue’ or ‘excellence,’ but it has a deeper meaning. Something closer to ‘expressing the best version of yourself moment to moment to moment.’”

Then I stopped again and held up my right hand about eye level so it was parallel to the ground.

Me: “You see that line? That’s you being your absolute best self.”

Then I held up my left hand about a foot below that, also parallel to the ground.

Me: “You see THIS line? That’s you *not* being your best self.”

“Now... You see that GAP between THIS line and THAT line?”

Emerson nods his head.

“Well... You know how you feel when there’s *that* big of a gap?”

Emerson: “Not very good?!”

Me: “EXACTLY.”

“Now... What if we CLOSED THE GAP between who we are capable of being and who we are actually being as we show up as the best version of ourselves?! How do you think *that* feels?!”

Emerson: “It feels good!!”

Me: “NO!”

“It feels GREAT!!”

“And THAT is the ultimate game we’re all playing all day every day. When we close the gap and choose to do the things that help us show up as the best version of ourselves, we feel a deep sense of joy.”

“The ancient Greek and Stoic philosophers had a word for that as well. They called it *eudaimonia*.”

Emerson nods his head, letting me know he gets it.

We continue walking.

Me: “And guess what?! Remember that voice that was telling you all the reasons why you shouldn’t go to the tournament today?”

Emerson: “Yah!”

Me: “He wasn’t helping you make the best decision, was he?”

Emerson: “No!!”

Me: “And THAT is why I have this HEROIC tattoo and this *ARETÉ* tattoo.”

Me via squeeze-eze: “I love you.”

Him via squeeze-eze: “I love you, too.”

And that, my fellow Hero in training, is one way to teach a kid the power of *ARETÉ*.

Helping you operationalize THAT wisdom so you can activate YOUR Heroic potential is what this book is all about.

HOW TO CLOSE THE GAP

INTRODUCING TARGETED THINKING

Now that I've introduced you to my family and to the ultimate game of life, I want to introduce you to THE most powerful practice we can engage in to close the gap and live with *ARETÉ* as we activate our Heroic potential.

It's called Targeted Thinking.

Let's go back to the trail and continue our chat with Emerson ...

That part of the conversation we just discussed took us about ten minutes to complete—one half-mile loop on our property.

Here's how we started our second loop.

Me: "Alright. Living with *Areté* so we can be HEROIC is the ultimate game of life. Now it's time to talk about chess."

I smiled and looked at him.

He smiled back.

Me: "Tell me ... What do you want when it comes to chess?!"

Emerson: "I want to be a Grandmaster."

Me: "I know. I love it. And I think you can do it."

I squeeze his hand yet again. He squeezes mine back.

Me: "So ... If you want to become a Grandmaster in chess, what do you need to do?"

Emerson: "Keep on practicing hard!"

Me: "Definitely! And ... What ELSE do you need to do?"

Emerson thinks for a minute then says (as a light bulb goes on): "Play in a lot of tournaments!"

Me: "EXACTLY!"

Wink and a squeeze from me. Smile and a squeeze right back from E.

Me: “Now... When that voice in your head was telling you all the reasons why you shouldn’t go to the tournament today, was he helping you do what you need to do to achieve what you want to achieve?”

Emerson: “No!!”

Me: “EXACTLY!”

Wink and a squeeze from me. Smile and a squeeze right back from E.

Me: “That’s what we call Targeted Thinking. You’ve gotta know what you want and what you need to do to get it AND you need to pay attention to when Part X takes over your brain and tries to take you in the wrong direction.”

I look at Emerson.

“Right?”

He looks back and says...

“YES!”

Me: “So... Ready to dominate the tournament and win or learn today?”

Emerson: “YES!”

Me: “LET’S GO, HERO!!”

Of course, none of this is about my son.

It’s about YOU.

What do YOU want in your life?

Remember the ultimate game.

Hint: *ARETÉ* = HEROIC.

And...

Remember Targeted Thinking.
Know what you want.
Know what you need to do to get it.
Tell Part X to settle down.
And go do what you're here to do.
Close the gap.
Give us all you've got.
TODAY.

FEAR & LAZINESS

WISDOM FROM GRANDPA PHIL

I'm kind of enjoying this time together on our trail so let's walk another loop together.

So far, we've used Emerson's resistance to going to a chess tournament as the context to chat about *Areté* and closing gaps and Targeted Thinking and how to be Heroic.

I skipped an important early part of our chat.

Before we got to the whole *Areté* = Heroic, close-the-gap goodness, we talked about the TWO things that Phil Stutz (my spiritual godfather and Emerson's god-grandfather!) says gets in our way of experiencing all the joy we want to feel in this precious life of ours.

Pop quiz ...

What do YOU think the TWO things are?

(Insert jeopardy music here ...)

Answer ...

Phil Stutz, citing *his* favorite teacher, Rudolf Steiner, says that FEAR and LAZINESS are the two biggest obstacles to activating our Heroic (!) potential.

I repeat ...

The two primary obstacles that are getting in the way of YOU activating YOUR Heroic (!) potential are very very very simple.

FEAR and **LAZINESS**.

With that in mind, if you feel so inspired, pause for a moment. Think about all that you want to create in your life.

Who are you at your best?

See it. Feel it.

Now... What's getting in the way of you closing the gap and BEING that best version of yourself?

If you're honest with yourself, you'll see that, more often than not, it's not the stuff outside of yourself that is limiting you.

It's your own fear and laziness.

Can you see that?

Know this: Heroes have strength for two.

Our secret weapon is love.

So... For whom will YOU do the hard work to conquer YOUR fear and laziness so you can give us all you've got?

Seriously.

For whom will YOU do the hard work to conquer YOUR fear and laziness so you can give us all you've got?

I'm committed to working hard and conquering MY fear and MY laziness for my wife, my kids, my friends, my team, our community and...

YOU.

Day 1. All in.

Let's go, Hero.

CHARACTER VS. DESIGN FLAWS

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME OF LIFE

Now that we've mined some wisdom gems out of my morning with Emerson, how about one more gem from the evening and then we'll carry on?

For curious souls, Emerson wound up having a great day of chess. He won two games and won two more via lessons he learned in a couple of losses to some superior players.

We decided to stop at the laser tag place on the way home as a little celebration of the day and as a celebration of a milestone he hit on chess.com.

So... We show up at Blazer Tag in Austin excited to have some fun.

And... Apparently, we just missed getting into the group that was about to start. Eek.

The start time for the next group was so late that we wouldn't be able to make it.

The guy running the show says he'll get us in, but we'll be missing part of the briefing in which everyone is told how to play the game.

Emerson had played earlier that week and he knew how to play. I hadn't played laser tag in roughly forty years.

I'm thinking: "It's laser tag. Can't be that hard."

I say: "Perfect. Thank you!"

We head in to the final part of the briefing. Then we put on the gear. Then we head into the laser tag arena.

And...

I'm *absolutely* TERRIBLE.

Laughing.

As in, I'm really *really really* bad.

To put it in perspective, earlier that week, Alexandra played with Emerson and she was so bad that she got a -99 score.

The guy who runs it said he'd NEVER seen anyone do that bad. We laughed about it as a family that night.

And...

Ten minutes into the twenty-minute game, I had a -100 score.

Facepalm.

My mental toughness was eroding quickly.

(Laughing.)

Self-talk: "Wow. I'm really bad at this. I think I should just quit playing and find the exit. This is embarrassing."

Then I look a little closer at the little stats dashboard on the laser thing.

Right above my Hall-of-Shame-worthy "-100" score, I see some data on my ammo. I have 1,000 units of laser tag ammo.

Now, that's a little weird because I'm pretty sure I started with 1,000 units of laser tag ammo and, trust me, I've been trying to use those laser tag ammo units. My trigger finger is sore from squeezing that thing so hard.

Then...

Somehow, as I fiddled with everything, I stumbled upon a little button at the end of the laser.

I press it while squeezing the trigger and...

A laser fired.

I heard it!!

A sound has never been so beautiful.

Long story slightly shorter, now I get to work channeling my inner SEAL and start having a ton of fun. I end the game with 400-and-something points—right behind Emerson.

And...

You know what I thought of?

I thought of BJ Fogg.

As you may know, BJ runs the Behavior Design Lab at Stanford University.

He's done some of the research that inspired James Clear's *Atomic Habits* and Charles Duhigg's *Power of Habit*.

And, he wrote his own book called *Tiny Habits*.

I'm going to walk you through some of the best, most life-changing ideas from all those books as we turn you into a habit-installing (and -deleting!) ninja, but for now I want to emphasize the distinction from his book that I was thinking about as I took my laser tag gear off.

In short, BJ tells us that if you've struggled with changing your behaviors in the past, you might want to consider the fact that it wasn't a CHARACTER flaw, but a DESIGN flaw.

In other words, nothing was wrong with YOU per se, you simply didn't know HOW to effectively change your behavior.

Laser tag is a LOT easier and a LOT more fun when you know how to play the game. So is life.

It's time for the "How to play the game of life" briefing we never got.

P.S. Alexandra told me that I need to tell you that *she also* missed the part of the briefing in which they teach people how to shoot a laser, because she was chasing Eleanor at the time. Which meant that she had the *exact* same experience of not knowing how to shoot a laser. Haha. #soulmates

OVERLOAD

WHEN IN DOUBT, DO THIS

Admiral William H. McRaven is one of my heroes.

As a Four-Star Admiral, his final assignment was as Commander of all U.S. Special Operations Forces.

You may have seen his commencement speech at the University of Texas at Austin called “Make Your Bed.”

He’s written a number of great books including one based on that talk (*Make Your Bed*), a memoir called *Sea Stories*, and another great book called *The Hero Code*.

In his most recent book on leadership, *The Wisdom from the Bullfrog*, Admiral McRaven shares eighteen military aphorisms that have guided his life.

One of them is called: “When in Doubt, Overload.”

Let’s set some context and then we’ll connect the wisdom from *that* book to the structure of *this* book.

As you may know, when aspiring U.S. Navy SEALs want to see if they have what it takes to join one of the most elite military forces in history, they have to go through what’s known as BUD/S.

BUD/S is short for Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training.

Of course, that training is an extraordinarily challenging mental and physical trial. Only twenty percent of those who start finish.

Now... A little more context...

On June 6, 1944, General Dwight D. Eisenhower led the invasion of Normandy that turned the tide of World War II.

According to the Eisenhower Library: “The invasion force included 7,000 ships and landing craft manned by over 195,000 naval personnel from eight allied countries. Almost 133,000 troops from the United States, the British Commonwealth, and their allies, landed on D-Day.”

Pause for a moment and imagine the extraordinary commitment of all of those troops AND their families—willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to protect the freedoms that we enjoy today.

And, if you feel so inspired, pause for another moment and feel into the equally extraordinary commitment of military servicemen and women AND their families who are *currently* protecting the freedoms that we enjoy today.

Note: It’s easy to take those freedoms (and the warriors who protect them) *for* granted rather than *as* granted.

As we’ll discuss, the wisest among us (and each of us in our wisest moments) appreciate the sacrifices these loving and courageous men and women make for us as we strive to give back in equal measure.

Now... Before the troops could get their three thousand landing craft on the five beaches of Normandy, you know who showed up in the darkness of the previous nights to clear the way?

Some of the very first U.S. Navy SEALs.

They were “underwater demolition” experts who found and destroyed the underwater barriers that had been set up to prevent that landing.

All of which leads us to McRaven's sixteenth leadership principle from his great book and one more question ...

You know what U.S. Navy SEALs are taught as they calculate how much explosives they need to use to blow up the underwater obstacles they're tasked with destroying?

As McRaven puts it: Whenever they were in doubt about the amount of explosives to use, they were told to "*always overload*. Always put more energy, more focus, more power into the situation than seemed necessary. It was the only way to guarantee success in the face of uncertainty and doubt."

That's what I had in mind as I decided how I would structure this book.

I could have delivered a standard 200- to 300-page book with a few dozen (or even one hundred) potentially life-changing ideas.

I decided to OVERLOAD and give you a 900+ page book with 451 potentially life-changing ideas.

I want you to FEEL the potential explosive power of the ideas in this book as we get to work blowing up everything that may be in the way of us actualizing our potential so we can win the ultimate war between vice and virtue we are ALL waging all day every day.

Remember: When in doubt, we overload.

It's time to activate our Heroic potential.

451° ACTIVATION ENERGY

Have you ever heard of “activation energy?”

It’s a chemistry thing. The dictionary tells us that it’s “the minimum quantity of energy that the reacting species must possess in order to undergo a specified reaction.”

Mundane examples: Water only boils once it reaches its activation energy point of 212° Fahrenheit. 100° certainly won’t do it. 200° won’t do it. Not even 210° or 211° will do it.

Simmering but not boiling.

Want to boil? Then you need to get the heat all the way up to 212°. Then you’ll undergo the “specified reaction” and boil.

Same rules apply with fire.

Carbon and hydrogen atoms are hanging out in paper all day every day. And, of course, oxygen is hanging out in the air all day every day.

But ... They won’t combine to set the paper ablaze until a certain threshold is reached. We need 451° of heat to create enough energy to catalyze the magical dance that is fire.

400°? Nothing. 449°? Nothing. 450°? Nope. Nothing. 451°? BAM! Let there be fire.

That’s activation energy.

And that’s why this book has 451 ideas—any one of which might help you go to the next level. In aggregate? If all goes as planned, we’ll activate your Heroic potential.

READY AT HAND

YOUR PHILOSOPHICAL ARMAMENTARIUM

Epictetus is my favorite teacher.

He was a former slave who taught (and practiced!) Stoic philosophy in ancient Rome. He trained the guys who trained the emperor-philosopher Marcus Aurelius. He's also the primary influence for the guys who created the modern cognitive behavioral therapy movement.

One of his students took really good lecture notes (thanks, Arrian!) and captured his wisdom in a manual called the *Enchiridion*.

The Greek word *enchiridion* is translated as “handbook.” But it's important to note that the word literally means “within” (*en*) + “hand” (*kheir*).

To put it in perspective, the word was used to describe a hand dagger.

Epictetus's wisdom (and the wisdom of *all* great ancient philosophers) was less like a *guidebook* you held in your hand and more like a *sword* (or a tool) (or a Navy SEAL's explosive!) you held in your hand—wisdom that was *ready at hand* and could be used to meet life's inevitable challenges.

As we'll discuss, the Stoic philosophers told us that we needed to be WARRIORS of the mind, not mere librarians of the mind cataloging interesting ideas. They had an entire collection of weapons/tools in what was known as their “armamentarium.”

That's how I'd like us to think about this book.

451 ideas to help us move from theory to practice to mastery together—closing the gap between who we're *capable* of being and who we're *actually* being as we activate our Heroic potential and give the world all we've got.

Not someday.

TODAY.

LEARNING 101

INTERLEAVING & SPACED REPETITION

As a professional philosopher for the last fifteen years, I've distilled over five hundred of the absolute best books on ancient wisdom and modern science into what I call "Philosopher's Notes."

I've also created over fifty hour-long master classes in which I distill the best ideas from those great books to help you optimize every facet of your life.

In the Heroic app, we have classes on everything from Purpose 101, Productivity 101 and Confidence 101 to Nutrition 101, Sleep 101 and Love 101.

We also have a class on Learning 101 in which I share the best ideas from some of the best books on learning including *Make It Stick*, *A Mind for Numbers* and *How We Learn*.

In *that* class, we talk about a concept scientists call "interleaving." The basic idea is simple: If you want to learn something, you're better off varying your practice rather than grooving one identical rep after another.

For example, they've done research on baseball players. If you throw someone fifteen curveballs in a row then fifteen fastballs they'll FEEL like they're doing really well, but they won't actually be improving the skills they need for an actual game when they won't know what's coming.

Scientists call that the "fluency illusion" and it's actually one of the greatest threats to effective learning.

The interleaving approach?

A random assortment of fastballs and curveballs that keeps the batter constantly guessing and, thereby, developing the ACTUAL skills he or she will need come game-time.

Of course, that doesn't always *feel* as good as the easier (more common) approach when you know what's coming. But, alas, that's where the learning occurs.

That's one of the things I had in mind as I mapped out how to best deliver these 451 potentially-life-changing ideas. As you'll see, we're going to deliberately interleave different themes within the chapters in our seven objectives.

We're ALSO going to focus on *another* key aspect of Learning 101 called "spaced repetition."

The basic idea with that is exactly what it sounds like—we want to create a little space between our deliberate repetition of the stuff we REALLY want to make stick.

Speaking of repetition, here's how Dan Coyle puts it in *The Little Book of Talent*: "Repetition has a bad reputation. We tend to think of it as dull and uninspiring. But this perception is titanically wrong. Repetition is the single most powerful lever we have to improve skills, because it uses the built-in mechanism for making the wires of our brains faster and more accurate."

Interleaving and spaced repetition. They do a Hero moving from theory to practice to mastery good.

P.S. You know what else helps us master a concept? Explaining it to someone else. If you feel so inspired, share what you're learning as you go.

P.P.S. I created this book with two other books in mind: *The War of Art* by Steven Pressfield and *War and Peace* by Leo Tolstoy.

Pressfield is one of my all-time favorite writers. His incredibly inspiring and equally practical prose is an inspiration. It's very much how I love to write.

You can read one of the potentially life-changing micro-chapters in his non-fiction books in a minute or three.

That's exactly what I had in mind as I created this book.

Yet...

In addition to creating a SUPER-readable, open-the-book-up-to-any-page-and-potentially-change-your-life-in-a-few-minutes kinda book, I ALSO wanted to make sure the book had a density and gravitas to it.

And, of course, I'm committed to doing everything I can to deliver on Phil's promise from the foreword of the book in which he boldly says: "This book will change your life."

Plus...

We received thousands of notes from our Heroic community about why they were excited about this book—which were remarkably humbling and inspiring. I wanted to do my best to create a book worthy of comments like this...

"Brian is one of the great philosophers of our time. If this book is the distillation of his life's work then it will be worth its weight in gold."

"Humanity's greatest wisdom for living a prosperous life condensed into ONE book—how could anyone not be excited to buy this?!"

“This book will be a classic handbook such as *7 Habits* and *How To Win Friends*. Timeless principles.”

“This will be the best book in modern history for personal development. Period.”

(No pressure no diamonds, right? Hah.)

As I stepped back and felt into what the book needed to be to have a shot at delivering on those expectations, I realized that I wanted to create a book that is basically *The War of Art + War and Peace*.

Pithy micro chapters + dense brick of a book.

You can start from the first page and systematically work your way through the seven objectives (with the interleaving and spaced repetition!).

Or you can open up to any page and, hopefully, get inspired by one of the 451 Ideas° in a minute or three.

Choose your own adventure, Hero.

LET’S GO!

THE 7 OBJECTIVES TO ACTIVATE YOUR HEROIC POTENTIAL

All that's nice and warm and fuzzy, eh?

And... It begs the question: "HOW are we going to activate your Heroic potential?!"

Before we get into the details, I'd like to step back for a moment and tell you a little bit about me...

As I briefly mentioned, I'm the Founder & CEO of a company called Heroic Public Benefit Corporation. Our mission is to help create a world in which 51% of humanity is flourishing by the year 2051.

I've spent half of the last 25 years as a Founder/CEO and the other half as a philosopher.

As a Founder/CEO I've raised over \$25 million, made crowd-funding history, and built and sold two social platforms.

As a philosopher and teacher, I've helped millions of people from around the world and created an app and a protocol that have been scientifically shown to change lives.

You may be wondering: "What is Heroic?"

My friend and mentor John Mackey, the co-founder and former CEO of Whole Foods put it succinctly when he graciously said, and I quote, that "Heroic is the best self-development platform in the world."

We've been fortunate to serve some of the most elite performers in the world—including best-selling authors, Fortune

100 executives, military officers, athletes and coaches. We've also trained over 10,000 people from 100+ countries with our Heroic Coach certification program.

With the Basic Training program in our Heroic app and the Mastery Series that is the foundation of our 300-day Heroic Coach program, we integrate ancient wisdom, modern science, and practical tools into SEVEN objectives.

This book features 451 potentially life-changing ideas that are loosely organized into the seven objectives that are the foundation of our protocols that have been scientifically shown to change lives.

Let's take a quick look at how we frame the seven objectives when we're training our Heroes in the app and training Coaches going through our certification program.

OBJECTIVE I: KNOW THE ULTIMATE GAME

The first thing we need to do is step back and make sure we're playing the right game. Fact is, in such a profoundly sick society, we almost certainly aren't.

We'll invite the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle and leading positive psychologist Martin Seligman to the party as proxies for ancient wisdom and modern science and ask them about the ultimate meaning of life.

We'll save the details for our discussion in a moment but know this: They'll give us the *exact* same single-word ANSWER.

By the end of our first Objective you'll know the ultimate game you want to be playing AND how to play it well.

If your experience is like the thousands of people I've personally trained, this may be life changing.

OBJECTIVE II: FORGE ANTIFRAGILE CONFIDENCE

Once we've established the ultimate game we're playing it's time to learn how to play it well—which leads us to our second Objective.

We're going to Forge Antifragile Confidence.

By the time we're done working together, we'll move from being Fragile to Resilient to ANTIFRAGILE such that the more life kicks us around, the stronger we get.

That requires confidence.

Which leads us to another etymological pop quiz. Do you happen to know what the word *confidence* literally means?

It means "intense trust." Not that everything will go perfectly in your life but that it DOESN'T MATTER how things go because YOU have what it takes to deal with whatever arises.

That's Antifragile Confidence. Cultivating even 10% of your capacity here will change your life.

How do we build "intense trust" in ourselves? The same way we build trust in any relationship: We DO what we say we will do.

More specifically for our purposes, with the Heroic app we help you develop a protocol—a set of behaviors that you engage in on a day-to-day basis that keep you plugged in to that best version of yourself.

But ... Here's the secret sauce: We're going to help you write a new algorithm for your life.

It goes like this: “The WORSE you feel, the MORE committed you are to your protocol.”

What do most people do when they feel a little off or overwhelmed?

They STOP doing the very things that would have kept them plugged in and capable of showing up powerfully.

Not us. The WORSE we feel, the MORE committed we are to our protocols.

This is your ticket to invincibility. You’ll still have ups and downs because you’re human, but... Your highs will be higher AND your lows will be higher. And that’s heroically awesome.

OBJECTIVE III: OPTIMIZE YOUR BIG 3

Once we’ve established the game we’re playing and learn Rule #1 on how to play it well, it’s time to simplify self-development.

That’s what we’ll do with our third Objective as we optimize what we call your Big 3: Energy, Work, and Love.

As you’ve almost certainly experienced if you’ve spent *any* time in the self-development world, it can very quickly get overwhelming.

There’s SO much we can work on. Where do we begin?

Well, Freud tells us that a good life comes down to two things: Work and Love. This is one of the few things on which I agree with the dear doctor but...

If your ENERGY is sub-optimal because of poor lifestyle

choices, you're going to have a *really* hard time showing up powerfully in *either* your Work *or* your Love.

Enter, The Big 3: Energy, Work, and Love.

We're going to systematically help you get more Energized than you've ever been such that you can be more Productive than you've ever been and, at the same time, more Loving and connected (to yourself and to your Loved ones) than you've ever been in your life.

That's how to simplify self-development so you can more consistently show up as the best, most Heroic version of yourself.

OBJECTIVE IV: MAKE TODAY A MASTERPIECE

From there, it's time to get the fact that TODAY'S THE DAY to move from Theory to Practice to Mastery.

We're going to help you become a master at creating Masterpiece Days.

We'll start with your AM and PM Bookends and we'll teach you the fact that, somewhat paradoxically, a great day begins with the END of your prior day.

We'll talk about the simple, key behavioral changes that can literally change your life overnight and then we'll systematically install the highest-leverage behavioral changes that will help you show up powerfully in your Energy, your Work and your Love ALL DAY EVERY DAY.

That, my Heroic friend, is how we're going to help you become more energized, productive and connected than you've ever been.

OBJECTIVE V: MASTER YOURSELF

All of which leads us to our fifth Objective in which we'll master the three disciplines of self-mastery: structural discipline, reactive discipline, and expansive discipline.

We'll also tap into the art and science of behavioral change so you can become a master at installing and deleting the behaviors that will help you become who you aspire to be.

The #1 thing to know? It's all about using your willpower wisely to install habits that run on autopilot via algorithms.

If you feel so inspired, now might be a good time to pause for a moment and ask yourself: What's the ONE thing I KNOW I could be doing that, if I started doing it TODAY would most change my life?

Seriously.

What is it? What's the ONE thing you could be doing that, if you started doing it consistently, would most positively change your life?

Fantastic.

Imagine your life with that habit installed. Then imagine your life with your #1 BAD habit deleted.

Then imagine having so much Self-Mastery that you can install and delete habits at will. That's what our fifth Objective is all about.

OBJECTIVE VI: DOMINATE THE FUNDAMENTALS

From there it's time for our sixth Objective. It's time to dominate our fundamentals.

We have seven: Eating, Moving, Sleeping, Breathing, Focusing, Celebrating and Prospering. Each fundamental has a core set of behaviors that we'll train together.

Why does this matter?

Well... If you want to see how tall a building is going to be, look at how deeply they're digging the foundation.

We need to really get the fact that greatness (and becoming the best, most Heroic versions of ourselves!) is all about consistency on the fundamentals.

We'll have a ton of momentum when we get to this point and, again, if you're like the thousands of people I've trained, you'll find that you're suddenly able to easily change some key behaviors across each of our fundamentals—stuff you may have been struggling with for years.

This is exciting, life-changing, and incredibly empowering.

OBJECTIVE VII: ACTIVATE YOUR SUPERPOWER

All of that leads us to our final Objective. It's time to activate your superpower. I call it Soul Force.

Gandhi named it. Martin Luther King, Jr. talked about it in his "I have a dream" speech. It's the force that changes the world.

It's also the ONE thing that ALL of your heroes have in common. And, it's the one thing WE ALL have in common with our heroes as well.

We just need to activate it.

There's a formula for it. We'll dive into the details soon.

For now, know this: When you can get your Energy Focused

on What's Important Now CONSISTENTLY, you will activate your Heroic potential and tap into the infinite power of Soul Force as you win the ultimate game of life and fulfill your destiny.

I can't begin to tell you how fiercely committed I am to helping you do exactly that.

Why?

Because that's precisely how we're going to help you activate your Heroic potential.

And, that's precisely how we can change the world. One person at a time. Together. Starting with you and me.

TODAY.

YOU ARE THE HERO WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR

As you may have noticed, we're already well into the first Objective.

Before we continue, I'd like to ask you a quick question...

Do you happen to know what the word *hero* means?

It's another ancient Greek word.

Etymologically, the word *hero* doesn't mean "killer of bad guys" or "tough guy" or anything like that it.

It means: "PROTECTOR."

A hero has strength for two. And, very importantly, a hero is willing to do the *hard* work to *have* that strength for two.

And, do you know what the secret weapon of the ancient hero was?

LOVE.

It's love that fuels our commitment to *do* that hard work to *have* the strength for two. It's love that gives us the courage to be willing to act in the presence of fear. It's love that gives us the discipline to do what needs to get done whether we feel like it or not.

And...

If you haven't noticed, our world needs heroes today more than ever before.

We have pandemic levels of anxiety and depression and diabetes and cancer and political polarization and social injustice and environmental degradation.

And the *only* possible way we are going to meet those *historically significant* challenges and create a more noble and virtuous world for ourselves and for our kids and for their kids is if each of us steps up and starts showing up as the best, most Heroic versions of ourselves.

To put it directly...

YOU ARE THE HERO WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR.

We just need you to step up and start acting like it.

It's time to activate your Heroic potential.

THE DOJO DECISION

GOING FOR MASTERY VS. THROUGH THE MOTIONS

Imagine walking into a dojo. You're going to study a martial art. This is your very first day studying this art.

You might already have a dozen black belts in other martial arts, or this might be your very first time ever in a dojo. Either way is great. And, either way, you start in this school with a white belt.

So...

Here's the question.

As you look around the dojo and feel the energy of the place, are you there *going through the motions* or are you there *going for mastery*?

That may not sound like a big distinction, but it is.

If you're satisfied with yourself for simply getting off the couch and showing up and plan to kinda-sorta go through the motions of the class, then you're going to show up with a VERY (!!!) different energy than the version of you that's GOING FOR MASTERY.

If you KNOW that you want to be a black belt in x years, you're ALL IN. You're not just kinda sorta going through the motions. You're using EVERY SINGLE MOMENT of that class to get a little better. You're paying attention, standing up tall and giving your best. Moment to moment to moment.

So... As we begin our journey together, I ask you ...

Are you planning to just go through the motions by simply reading yet another self-development book?

Or...

Are you sitting up nice and tall, with a fierce look in your eye, as you commit to going all in to give the world all you've got?

Of course, either answer is technically fine. And you and I may not be on quite the same page, and/or you may not feel inspired to really commit to going all in with me on this journey—which, of course, is MORE than just fine.

But... Let's not kid ourselves.

THIS ISN'T A DRESS REHEARSAL.

It's time to wake up and give the world all we've got. It's time to quit going through the motions of our lives—mindlessly scrolling through social media feeds and doing what everyone else is doing. It's time to stand up, put the smartphones down and high five our inner souls as we activate our Heroic potential and give the world all we've got.

When?

How about...

TODAY.

PRE-ORDER TODAY!

Areté: Activate Your Heroic Potential is now available for pre-order on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and/or your local independent bookstore.

Hit your preferred link above to place an order for a copy or three or five or ten+ (!) of *Areté: Activate Your Heroic Potential* by Brian Johnson. ISBN: 9798212414074

(Thinking about a bulk order? [Click here.](#))



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brian Johnson is the Founder & CEO of Heroic Public Benefit Corporation. He's 50% Philosopher + 50% CEO and 101% committed to helping create a world in which 51% of humanity is flourishing by the year 2051.

As a Founder/CEO he's made crowdfunding history and built and sold two social platforms. As a Philosopher/teacher, he's helped millions of people from around the world, trained 10,000+ Heroic Coaches from 100+ countries and created a protocol that science says changes lives. He lives in the country outside Austin, Texas, with his wife, Alexandra, and their two kids, Emerson and Eleanor.

ABOUT HEROIC

Heroic is a social training platform that integrates ancient wisdom, modern science, and world-class, scientifically-proven behavioral design tools to help you show up as the best, most Heroic version of yourself.

We're also a history-making, crowdfunded Public Benefit Corporation committed to helping create a world in which 51% of humanity is flourishing by the year 2051 as we strive to run our business the way we think our heroes would—with wisdom, discipline, courage, and love.

Learn more at [Heroic.us](https://heroic.us).

WANT TO INVEST IN HEROIC? **LET'S CHANGE THE WORLD TOGETHER**

I mentioned the fact that Heroic is a history-making, crowd-funded Public Benefit Corporation.

We're on a mission to help create a world in which 51% of humanity is flourishing by the year 2051 and we are blessed to have the support of over 3,000 investors (just like you!) from over 75 countries around the world.

Would you like to help us change the world as a Heroic Investor? You can invest as little as \$100 or as much as \$1,000,000+ when we have an offering open.

Go to Heroic.us/invest to learn whether we are raising funds, and the details of any offering.

And...

Any time we talk about crowdfunding, our attorneys remind us that we need to include this bit of legalese so here we go...

Phil Stutz, Brandon Guyer, Ian Stakiw, Ron Reich, Jonathan Bennett, Kerry Boehner, Ken Steitz, Tara Lorigan, Sean Casey, Michelle Weimer, Jeff Everage, and Chris Beaven are all Heroic investors.

None of Phil Stutz, Brandon Guyer, Ian Stakiw, Ron Reich, Jonathan Bennett, Kerry Boehner, Ken Steitz, Tara Lorigan, Sean Casey, Michelle Weimer, Jeff Everage, nor Chris Beaven received any incentive or consideration of any kind in exchange for their comments relating to, or endorsements of, Heroic.

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