The One Thing – Gary Keller

**What’s the one thing you can do such that by doing it everything else would be easier or unnecessary?**

**Main Ideas:**

* *Going Small* – ignoring all the things you could do and doing what you should do. It’s recognizing that not all things matter equally and finding the things that matter most. It’s a tighter way to connect what you do with what you want. It’s realizing that extraordinary results are directly determined by how narrow you can make your focus.
* *The Domino Effect* – Getting extraordinary results in your life is all about creating a domino effect in your life.
* Highly successful people line up their priorities, find the lead domino, and whack away until it falls
* Success is sequential, not simultaneous. What starts out linear becomes geometric. You do the right thing and then you do the next right thing. The key is over time – success is built sequentially, one thing at a time!
* *Passion and Skill* – Passion for something leads to disproportionate time practicing or working at it. That time spent eventually translates to skill, and when skill improves, results improve. Better results generally lead to more enjoyment, and more passion and time is invested!
* *The 6 Lies Between you and Success*

1. Everything Matters Equally – When everything feels urgent and important, everything seems equal. We become active and busy, but this doesn’t actually move us any closer to success.
   * Activity is often unrelated to productivity and busyness rarely takes care of business.
   * Achievers always work from a clear sense of priority
   * Trade to-do lists for success lists. To-do lists are long, and only get you through the day. Success lists are short, and help you take the correct steps to success.
   * 80/20 Principle – a minority of causes, inputs, or efforts usually lead to a majority of the results, outputs, or rewards.
     1. Selected effort creates almost all of the rewards
   * Think big, but go small – pg40
2. Multitasking – pg 45,50 You can do two things at once, but you can’t focus effectively on two things at once. Technically, you can multitask, but you cannot multi-focus.
3. *A Disciplined Life –* Success is actually a short race – a sprint fueled by discipline just long enough for habit to kick in and take over
   * You can become successful with less discipline than you think, for one simple reason: Success is about doing the right thing, not about doing everything right.
   * Aiming discipline at the right habit gives you license to be less distracted in other areas. When you do the right thing, it can liberate you from having to monitor everything.
   * Takes around 66 days for a habit to form – then the hard stuff becomes habit, and the habit makes the hard stuff easy.
   * Don’t be a disciplined person – be a person of powerful habits and use selected discipline to develop them
     1. Build one habit at a time
   * Achievement isn’t an action you take but a habit you forge into your life
4. *Willpower is Always on Will-Call* – The more we use our mind, the less minding power we have – we must manage our willpower because we have a limited amount
   * Make doing what matters most a priority when your willpower is its highest
   * Pg 70 – what uses willpower
5. *A Balanced Life* – Nothing ever achieves absolute balance. What appears to be a state of balance is something entirely different – an act of balancing. Balance doesn’t exist.
   * Purpose, meaning, significance – these are what make a successful life
   * The act of living a full life by giving time to what matters is a balancing act. Extraordinary results require focused attention and time. Time on one thing means time away from another. This makes balance impossible.
   * Knowing when to pursue the middle of work/life and when to pursue the extremes is in essence the true beginning of wisdom
   * The solution is to counterbalance. Go long and less counterbalancing in work, go short and more counterbalancing in personal – pg 83
   * When you act on your priority, you’ll automatically go out of balance, giving more time to one thing over another.
   * Magic happens at the extremes – when you try and balance, you can’t give enough attention to what matters.
6. *Big is Bad* – When we connect big with bad, we trigger shrinking thinking.
   * Thinking big is essential to extraordinary results. Success requires action, and action requires thought/ The only actions that become springboards to succeeding big are those informed by big thinking to start with
   * Thinking informs actions and actions determine outcomes
   * Think as big as you possibly can and base what you do, how you do it, and who you do it with on succeeding at that level. Pg 89
   * Don’t fear big. Fear mediocrity. Fear waste. Fear the lack of living to your fullest.

* *The Focusing Question* – what’s the one thing I can do such that by doing it everything else will be easier or unnecessary?
  + The quality of any answer is directly determined by the quality of the question. Looking for better answers in your life? Start asking better questions!
  + Life is a question, and how we live it is our answer
  + Anyone who dreams of an uncommon life eventually discovers there is no choice but to seek an uncommon approach to living it

Big Picture – What’s my One Thing?

Small Focus – What’s my One Thing *right now?*

* The big picture/small focus mentality allows us to find the right direction in life, and then finding the right action to take
* *The Success Habit* – apply the focusing question to achieve extraordinary results and lead a big life. Apply it to the most important areas of your life – spiritual, physical, personal, key relationships, job, business, and financial. Each one is a foundation to the next.
  + *Examples* – pg 115
* *The Path to Great Answers* – Make sure the questions you ask are BIG and Specific
  + Benchmark and trend – research and trail blaze
* *Extraordinary Results* – 3 P’s: Purpose>priority>productivity>profit –– pg.133
  + Your big ONE thing is your purpose and your small ONE thing is the priority you take action on to achieve it.
  + You can only see productivity and profit, but that is always driven by purpose and priority! What you see is determined by what you don’t
* *Live with Purpose –* Purpose determines who we are – it sets out priority and our priority determines the productivity our actions produce
  + *\**Who we are and where we want to go determine what we do and what we accomplish
  + Happiness happens on the way to fulfillment – Seligman believe there are 5 factors that contribute to our happiness: positive emotion and pleasure, achievement, relationships, engagement, and meaning
  + Any end that you seek will only create happiness for you through the means it takes to achieve it
  + What’s the one thing I can do in my life that would mean the most to me and the world, such by doing it everything else would be easier or unnecessary?
* *Live by Priority* - Live with purpose and you know where you want to go. Live by priority and you’ll know what to do to get there
  + Purpose without priority is powerless
  + Our past is but a former now, our future is but a potential one
  + Hyperbolic discounting – the farther away a reward is in the future, the smaller the immediate motivation to achieve it
  + Goal setting to the now – pg 150 Connect today to all the tomorrows it will take to achieve goals
* *Live for Productivity* – Productive action transforms lives
  + Putting together a life of extraordinary results simply comes down to getting the most out of what you do, when what you do matters
  + If disproportionate results come from one activity, then you must give that one activity disproportionate time
  + Be a maker in the morning and a manager in the afternoon
* *The Three Commitments*
  + 1. Follow the Path of Mystery – Mastery means you are a master of what you know and an apprentice of what you don’t – 10 years>250 workdays a year>4 hours a day
  + 2. Move from E to P – Entrepreneurial to Purposeful pg 180-181
    - E is our natural approach – seeing something that we want to do or that needs attention and doing it P says a different result requires doing something different – doing whatever it takes and what is unnatural
    - If the path of mastery is a commitment to be your best, being purposeful is the commitment to adopt the best possible approach
  + 3. Live the accountability cycle – there is a connection between what you do and what you get. Actions determine outcomes and outcomes inform actions.
    - Be clear about your role in the events of your life
* *The Four Thieves* –
  + 1. Inability to say NO – When you say yes to something, it’s imperative you understand what you’re saying no to.
    - A request MUST be connected to my ONE thing for me to consider it
  + 2. Fear of Chaos – Focusing on the ONE thing has a guaranteed consequence: other things don’t get done!
    - When you strive for greatness, chaos is guaranteed to show up
  + 3. Poor health habits – Meditate/pray, eat right, exercise, hug, kiss, laugh, set goals, plan, calendar, time block
    - When you spend the early hours energizing yourself, you get pulled through the rest of the day with little additional effort
* *The Journey* – Extraordinary results require you to think big, but go small.
  + Wolf Analogy – pg 211
  + A life worth living might be measured in many ways, but the one way that stands above all others is living a life of no regrets
  + Life is too short to pile up woulda, coulda, shoulda’s. “But those woulda, coulda, shouldas all ran away and hid from the one that did.” – Shel Silverstein
  + Success is an inside job. Put yourself together and your world will fall in place.

**Quotes:**

* “Where I’d had huge success, I had narrowed my concentration to one thing, and where my success varied, my focus had too.”
* Time is the currency of achievement.
* There can only be one most important thing. Many things may be important, but only one can be the most important. – Ross Garber
* Multitasking is merely the opportunity to screw up more than one thing at a time – Steve Uzzell
* It ain’t what you don’t know that gets you in trouble. It’s what you know for sure that just ain’t so. – Mark Twain
* It’s not enough to be busy, so are the ants. The question is, what are we busy about? – Henry David Thoreau
* The rung of a ladder was never meant to rest upon, but only to hold a man’s foot long enough to enable him to put the other somewhat higher. – Thomas Huxley
* The key to success isn’t in all the things we do but in the handful of things we do well
* Don’t put all your eggs in one basket is all wrong. I tell you – put all your eggs in one basket, and then watch that basket – John D Rockefeller
* How do you know which basket? The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks and then starting on the first one. – Twain and Carnegie
* People do not decide their futures, they decide their habits and their habits decide their futures. – F.M. Alexander
* Life isn’t about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself. – George Bernard Shaw
* I believe financially wealthy people are those who have enough money coming in without having to work to finance their purpose in life
* Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now – Akan Lakein
* Efficiency is doing the thing right. Effectiveness is doing the right thing. – Peter Drucker
* When you lift the limits of your thinking, you expand the limits of your life. It’s only when you can imagine a bigger life that you can ever hope to have one.