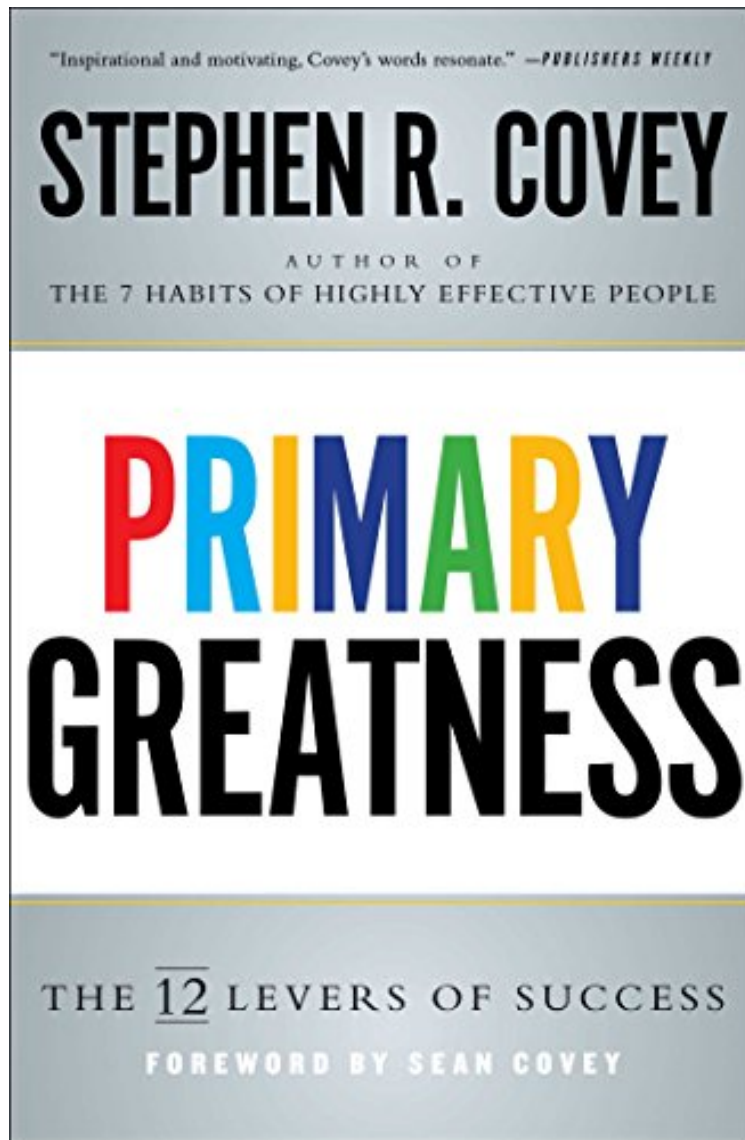


(Download pdf) Primary Greatness: The 12 Levers of Success

## Primary Greatness: The 12 Levers of Success

*Stephen R. Covey*

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**Stephen R. Covey : Primary Greatness: The 12 Levers of Success** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Primary Greatness: The 12 Levers of Success:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. A Great Book I feel so Inspired! By Kindle Customer A great compilation of some unpublished articles of Dr. Stephen R. Covey into a new book that highlights the key differences of Primary Greatness (Success with depth and meaning through integrity, character and contributions, etc.) versus Secondary Greatness (Success through superficial types of fame, PR images and material gains or financial achievements, etc.), while also laying out the 12 Levers for achieving Primary Greatness as a much higher form of

success that leaves legacy and positive impact for the good of others. I must congratulate the Covey's teams in launching such a great book since the departure of Dr. Covey. This book is relatively easy to read and understand, helping readers to do deep soul searching on one's existence and meaning. It is not about 7 Habits or the 8th Habit, making it less theoretical, yet still philosophical, with less jargons, yet more depth and less self-help in tonality. This book truly makes me think and reflect, upon a turbulent world that we live in nowadays. We are enslaved by the internet, social media, gadgets, and smartphones. We are more hooked into both quick-fixes and superficialities, while getting less and less in touch with our true inner voices. I cannot stop reading this book, once I got both the Kindle and Audible versions of it. Frankly speaking, for the past 4 to 5 years, I am mostly disappointed with the so-called new books published by Franklin Covey, since they are getting more and more commercialized, always repeating the same old stuff, especially spinning off from the "7 Habits brand franchise". But this time, when I read this new book, I found it more like the books of Dr. Covey in his earlier years (probably condensed from many of his older articles!), by which are more deep and in touch with our hearts, rather than just theoretically appealing to our heads. Even just by reading Sean Covey's preface, I was so touched by it, and I kept reading, fully inspired by the importance of pursuing Primary Greatness in one's life for deeper meaning, achievements and happiness. Hope you will be inspired by it too!

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Bunch of Big Ideas. By Brian Johnson[[VIDEOID:57ce3b6be317a283ca95c8f305a6b347]]

ldquo;According to Dr. Stephen R. Covey, primary greatness is the kind of success that comes from contribution. By contrast, the trappings of success—position, popularity, public image—are secondary greatness. When you see the actions and behaviors of celebrities, famous athletes, CEOs, movie actors, or whatever, you're seeing secondary greatness. Primary greatness is on the inside. It's about character. Secondary greatness is on the outside. As Dr. Covey taught, "Many people with secondary greatness—that is, social recognition for their talents—lack primary greatness or goodness in their character. Sooner or later, you'll see this in every long-term relationship they have, whether it is with a business associate, a spouse, a friend, or a teenage child going through an identity crisis. It is character that communicates most eloquently. As Emerson once put it, "What you are shouts so loudly in my ears that I cannot hear what you say."~ Stephen R. Covey's colleagues from the Preface to Primary Greatness

Stephen Covey is one of my favorite teachers. In fact, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* was *literally* the first book I ever read that introduced me to the idea that we could actually improve our lives and make a difference in the world. On the first pages of my book, I share this quote from *7 Habits* as it so powerfully captures the essence of my work: "I believe that a life of integrity is the most fundamental source of personal worth. I do not agree with the popular success literature that says that self-esteem is primarily a matter of mind set, of attitude—that you can psych yourself into peace of mind. Peace of mind comes when your life is in harmony with true principles and values and in no other way." (Which came right after this Nietzsche quote, btw: "This is my way; where is yours?"— Thus I answered those who asked me "the way." For the way—that does not exist.")

Stephen Covey passed away in 2012. This book was published posthumously and features a collection of wisdom focusing on the fact that private victory precedes public victory. Primary greatness. It's all about what's on the INSIDE. I'm excited to share some of my favorite Big Ideas:

1. The 12 Levers of Success - Here they are.
2. *Esse Quam Videri* - "To be rather than to seem."
3. Virtues: Meet Your Parents - Humility + Courage.
4. Say "YES!!" - If you want to be able to say "No."
5. High-Tech Power Saw - = Next purchase. That's how we want to live—with primary greatness ever in mind. More goodness—including Philosophers

Notes on 300+ books in our *\*OPTIMIZE\** membership program. Find out more at [brianjohnson.me](http://brianjohnson.me).

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. all great thinkers and philosophies come back to this single thing

By Customer I have always been impressed by Steven R. Covey. To publish this years after his death - wow! Consistent with his other work it helps us focus on what matters, what is primary. While not his original thought, all great thinkers and philosophies come back to this single thing. By connecting and becoming living examples of correct principles we become ambassadors for the things that are important, that protect ours and following generations. The consequences of not doing this are cataclysmic, just look around.

From Stephen R. Covey—the late, legendary author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*—a set of principles for achieving a happy and fulfilling life of primary greatness. Many of us are hurting. We have chronic problems, dissatisfactions, and disappointments. Although we generally make it through the day, a lot of us feel overwhelmed by burdens we carry. We try to "lift the load of life" each day and sometimes it's just too much. The idea of living a "great life" seems a distant dream. Stephen R. Covey believed there were only two ways to experience life: primary greatness or secondary greatness. Through his books and speaking, he taught that the intrinsic rewards of primary greatness—integrity, responsibility, and contribution—far outweighed the extrinsic rewards of secondary greatness—money, popularity, and the self-absorbed, pleasure-ridden life that some people consider "success." In this posthumous work, Covey lays out clearly the 12 levers of success that will lead to a life of primary greatness: Integrity, Contribution, Priority, Sacrifice, Service, Responsibility, Loyalty, Reciprocity, Diversity, Learning, Teaching, and Renewal. For the first time, Covey defines each of these 12 qualities and how they can be leveraged and enacted in your daily life to lead you to success and

happiness. Featuring his trademarked wisdom that is beloved and has inspired countless readers and leaders, Primary Greatness once again delivers classic Covey advice in a concise and reader-friendly way.

"When life weighs us down with problems and disappointments, we sometimes feel that we are not successful and it is difficult to move forward, let alone make progress toward reaching our goals. In this book, Stephen Covey provides us with 12 principles to live by that can help us have the character, courage and confidence to push past life's difficulties to create our very best life."—Muhammad Yunus, Nobel Peace Prize Winner, 2006

"Primary Greatness teaches that what some may consider greatness—money, power, social prominence—is far less important than a life of honesty, love, and contribution. It is in fact, personal integrity that is the foundation for all success. In this powerful set of essays, Stephen Covey shows that you cannot deliver value without values."—Indra Nooyi, CEO, PepsiCo

Dr. Covey's teachings have been instrumental in shaping both my personal and professional life. The 12 levers outlined in Primary Greatness outline a clear path for anyone to achieve success. This is a wonderful book filled with incredible nuggets and wisdom."—Kevin Turner, COO, Microsoft

"In these remarkable early essays by Stephen Covey, you'll find the core principles of genuine success—and the seeds of the famous seven habits. With his trademark clarity, Covey emphasizes the importance of integrity and intrinsic rewards and makes a powerful case for life our live more from imagination than memory. PRIMARY GREATNESS is an ideal book for anyone looking for guidance in how to live a truly successful, worthwhile life of service."—Daniel H. Pink, New York Times bestselling author of DRIVE, TO SELL IS HUMAN, and A WHOLE NEW MIND

"The essays in this book are still so timely, even though Covey wrote them many years ago. In this book, he continues to remind us that what we do every day in our personal and professional relationships—how we treat others—reflects our loyalty and commitment to building lives of character. Thank you, Stephen, for providing us with these pearls of wisdom."—Kimo Kippen, Chief Learning Officer, Hilton Worldwide University

About the Author: Recognized as one of Time magazine's twenty-five most influential Americans, Stephen R. Covey (1932–2012) was an internationally respected leadership authority, family expert, teacher, organizational consultant, and author. His books have sold more than twenty-five million copies in thirty-eight languages, and *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* was named the #1 Most Influential Business Book of the Twentieth Century. After receiving an MBA from Harvard and a doctorate degree from Brigham Young University, he became the cofounder and vice chairman of FranklinCovey, a leading global training firm.

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Primary Greatness CHAPTER 1 THE SECRET LIFE

If you look the right way, you can see that the whole world is a garden. —FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT

We all live three lives: public, private, and secret. The secret life is where your heart is, where your real motives are—the ultimate desires of your life. It is also the source of primary greatness. If you have the courage to explore your secret life, you can honestly question your deepest motivations. Are you prepared to rescript those motivations—to realign your life to the core principles of true success? The secret life is the key to primary greatness.

In New York City, I attended the Broadway play *The Secret Garden*. The play was particularly poignant for me, because my mother had just died. The Tony Award-winning musical is the story of a young girl whose mother and father die of cholera in India as the play begins. She is sent to live with her uncle in a large British manor. The old house is filled with romantic spirits. As the restless girl explores the grounds of the estate, she discovers the entrance to the magical secret garden, a place where anything is possible. When she first enters the garden, she finds that it appears to be dead, much like her cousin, a bedridden boy, and her uncle, still haunted by memories of his lovely wife who died giving birth to the boy. In harmony with natural laws and principles, the girl faithfully plants seeds and brings new life to the garden. As the roots are warmed and the garden cultivated, she brings about a dramatic transformation of her entire family culture within one season. In my many years of teaching and training, I have seen several such transformations brought about by proactive people who live by principles of greatness in their secret, private, and public lives. When I returned home the next day to speak at my mother's funeral, I referred to *The Secret Garden*, because for me and many others, my mother's home was a secret garden where we could escape and be nurtured by positive affirmation. In her eyes, all about us was good, and all that was good was possible.

Our Three Lives In our public life, we are seen and heard by colleagues, associates, and others within our circle. In our private life, we interact more intimately with spouses, family members, and close friends. The secret life is part of the other two. The secret life is the mainspring that motivates the other two lives. Many people never visit the secret life. Their public and private lives are essentially scripted by whom and what precedes and surrounds them or by the pressures of the environment. Thus, they never exercise that unique endowment of self-awareness—the key to the secret life—where you can stand apart from yourself and observe yourself. Courage is required to explore your secret life because you must first withdraw from the social mirror—the reflection of ourselves that society feeds back to us but may have little to do with our inner selves. We get used to the view of ourselves in the social mirror. And we may opt to avoid self-examination and idle away our time in a vacuum of reverie and rationalization. In that frame of mind, we have little sense of identity, safety, or security. Examine Your Motives The most critical junctures in my life take place when I visit my secret life and ask, "What do I think? What do I believe is right? What

should my motives be?rdquo; These are times when I deeply visit my secret life and choose my motives. ldquo;Wait a minute,rdquo; I say to myself. ldquo;It's my life. I can choose how to use my time and energy. I can choose whether to get up in the morning and exercise. I can choose to get angry or not. I can choose whether I want to make reconciliation with this person or not. I can choose my own motives.rdquo; One of the exciting fruits of the secret life is the ability to consciously choose your own motives. Until you choose your own motives, you really can't choose to live your own life. Everything flows out of motives and motivationmdash;they are the root of our deepest desires. The question is, which motives will we put first in our lives? When I face a frustrating or perplexing situation, I enter into my secret life. That's where I face myself and ask, ldquo;Will I live by correct principles, or will I surrender to the demands of secondary greatness?rdquo; As I learn to be proactive in exploring the secret life, I tap into self-awareness, imagination, conscience, and into the exercise of free will to choose my motives. For example, when thinking about your career, you might ask, ldquo;Now, what is my real motive?rdquo; N. Eldon Tanner, former Speaker of the Alberta Legislative Assembly and former Cabinet member, once said, ldquo;Whenever I had a big career decision, I had to visit my heart and ask, 'Am I totally prepared to put first things first'and in this position, will I keep my priorities straight?rdquo; He said, ldquo;I had to struggle with that question until it was settled.rdquo; Once he had made that decision, he would look at the assignment and ask, ldquo;If it would build the causes most dear to me, I will go and serve there.rdquo; He became well respected throughout his country. I met with this great man once when I was serving on a search committee for a new university president. When I entered his office, he left his desk and came around, sat next to me, and said, ldquo;What do you want me to understand?rdquo; He listened to me with much intensity and sincerity, then said, ldquo;I want you to know how much I respect you.rdquo; It deeply impressed me. People who regularly explore their secret life and examine their motives are better able to see into the heart of others, practice empathy, empower them, and affirm their worth and identity. A healthy secret life will benefit your private and public lives in many ways. For example, when I'm preparing to give a speech, I read aloud a favorite discourse that is inspiring to me because it helps me clarify my motive. I lose all desire to impress. My only desire is to serve. And when I go to a public setting with that motive, I have great confidence and inner peace. I feel more love for the people and feel much more authentic myself. Executives I have consulted with tell me, ldquo;This is the first time in many, many years that I've done any soul searching. I've seen myself as if for the first time, and I've resolved that my life is going to be different. I'm going to try to be true to what I really believe.rdquo; Over the years, many people have written me to say, ldquo;Your principles have made the difference. I never really thought about some of them before, but I resonate with them.rdquo; That's because these principles reside in their secret lives. And yet, most of us spend our busy days privately doing our thing, never pausing long enough to enter the secret life, the secret garden, where we can create masterpieces, discover great truths, and enhance every aspect of our public and private lives. A healthy secret life is the key to primary greatness.

**Self-Affirmation** A key to having a healthy secret life is self-affirmation. Among the most important bits of communication are messages of affirmation you give yourself and others. A good self-affirmation has five characteristics:

- It's personal, meaning it is written in the first person.
- It's positive rather than negative, meaning that it affirms what is good and right.
- It's present tense, meaning you are doing it now or have the potential for doing it.
- It's visual, meaning you can see it clearly in your mind's eye.
- It's emotional, meaning you have strong feelings attached to it.

The following two examples of affirmation will serve to illustrate these five principles.

**OVERREACTION.** Suppose a parent who overreacts to spilled milk decides he has the potential for improvement. Thus, he resolves to respond with wisdom, love, firmness, fairness, patience, and self-control in stressful situations. He then writes his resolve in the form of an affirmation: ldquo;How deeply satisfying (emotional) it is to me (personal) to respond (present tense) under conditions of fatigue, stress, pressure, or disappointment (visual conditions) with self-control, wisdom, firmness, patience, and love (positive).rdquo;

**PROCRASTINATION.** Suppose an individual desires to improve in the area of procrastination. Because she compulsively puts things off and manages by crisis, she selects as her desired behavior to be on top of things, to be current and value-driven. Her affirmation becomes: ldquo;How satisfying and exhilarating it is to be in charge of myself, guiding my own destiny, by taking time to plan, to work my plan, and to delegate to others.rdquo;

**Power of Self-Affirmation** Norman Cousins, author of *Anatomy of an Illness and Human Options*, showed the world how the power of affirmation enables us to release within us our frequently untapped emotional strengths. Within a week of returning home from a trip abroad, Cousins found himself almost unable to move his neck, arms, hands, fingers, and legs. Soon hospitalized, he was diagnosed as suffering from a serious disease of the connective tissues. His doctor told him, ldquo;Your chance for full recovery is one in five hundred.rdquo; At first, Cousins allowed his doctor and the hospital to do their thing. Medication was administeredmdash;often in excess. Tests were performedmdash;both routinely and redundantly. All these medical procedures, plus his doctor's unfavorable diagnosis, gave Cousins a great deal to think about. ldquo;It seemed clear to me,rdquo; he later wrote, ldquo;that if I were to be that one in five hundred, I had better be something more than a passive observer.rdquo; Familiar with research detailing the negative effects of negative emotions on body chemistry, he asked: ldquo;Wouldn't positive emotions produce positive effects? Is it possible that love, hope,

faith, laughter, confidence, and the will to live have therapeutic value?rdquo; Reasoning that if the negative is true, then the positive must also be true, Cousins soon formulated a plan for the pursuit of affirmative emotions. His plan drew upon medical resources, supportive professionals, laughter, and the love of his family. He then walked out of the hospital, secured a room in a hotel, hired his own nurse, and watched Marx Brothers movies and television comedies. Ten minutes of a deep belly laugh, he found, provided him with two or three hours of pain-free sleepmdash;the first in months. He discovered that the mind is a walking apothecary, a carry-it-with-you drugstore. Week by week, Norman Cousins gained strength. Year by year, his mobility improved. And in spite of speculation by some that his efforts had nothing to do with his recovery, that he would have recovered had he done nothing or that he was simply the beneficiary of an experiment in self-administered placebos, Cousins believed that his experience was, and is, proof of the power of the will to live and the power of imagination to release and unleash enormous powers innate in us. Three Helpful Practices I have found the following three practices to be very helpful in the process of self-affirmation.

- 1.nbsp;USE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES TO PLANT AFFIRMATIONS. Affirmations canrsquo;t achieve effective results in the rush of everyday living. The mind and the body must slow down. By learning to relax, we can learn to slow down. When we are in a deeply relaxed state, our brain waves become very slow; they are then highly suggestible. Through visual and emotional affirmations, we can plant ideas and images deep within us. The challenge, of course, is to learn to relax. There are many techniques for relaxing. One of the best is to consciously tense your muscle groups and then relax them. The theory behind this technique is that if you can tense a muscle, then logically you should be able to relax it. Another technique is to mentally relax so that you see yourself as limp as a rag doll. Or you visualize all of your muscles becoming limp and long. You see yourself in your mindrsquo;s eye becoming heavy from your feet up through your legs, your torso, and your arms, to your neck, your back, and your face. During the twilight periodsmdash;upon arising and just before retiringmdash;the brain waves are much slower. This becomes a prime programming opportunity, because the subconscious mind is more receptive than at any other time of day. I have used the principle of relaxation as it applies to affirmations with my own children and have seen dramatic results.
- 2.nbsp;USE REPETITION TO ENSURE SUCCESS. If you desire to use your affirmation to initiate change or to prepare yourself for some future event, you must experience it over and over again. Say it, see it, feel it. Make it a part of you. Remember, you are programming yourself. You are eclipsing and subordinating the earlier scripts written into your makeup. Instead of living the scripts given by your parents, your friends, society, the environment, or genetics, yoursquo;re affirming; yoursquo;re living the new scripts yoursquo;ve chosen for yourself. By repeating affirmations, you can grow and change.
- 3.nbsp;USE IMAGINATION AND VISUALIZATION TO SEE THE CHANGE. In any affirmation, the more details you can see in your mindrsquo;s eye, and the more clear and vivid the detailsmdash;the color of your office drapes, the texture of the floor on your bare feet as you serve breakfast, the opened planning book on your desk, your daughterrsquo;s report cardmdash;the less you will view your affirmation as a spectator and the more you will experience it as a participant. The more senses you can employ in visualizing a change, the greater chance of actually rescripting your life. Most of us neglect this creative power. We live too much out of our memories, too little out of our imaginationmdash;too much on what is or has been, not enough on what can be. Thatrsquo;s like trying to drive forward by looking in the rearview mirror. In manned space programs, part of the astronautrsquo; training includes many hours in spaceflight simulators, training or programming their minds and bodies to accomplish tasks in situations no human has experienced. When the astronauts were ultimately faced with these new challenges in space, they performed unbelievably well because of their simulated experiences. Imagination and creativity had provided the mental images for events that would take place in the future. Their minds, unencumbered by conventional sensors, were free to become flexible, adaptive, uninhibitedmdash;truly creative and innovative. Use the power of self-affirmation daily, in your secret garden, to cultivate your own meaningful life.

Application Suggestions

- bull;nbsp;Consider keeping a personal journal in order to track your progress toward primary greatness. Many of the application suggestions in this book encourage you to record thoughts and create written plans.
- bull;nbsp;Write in your personal journal the answers to these questions: bull;nbsp;In what ways have you been chasing secondary greatness at the expense of primary greatness? bull;nbsp;Ask yourself: ldquo;What do I believe is right? What are my deepest moral convictions? What should I do with my life?rdquo; Write down what you discover about yourself.
- bull;nbsp;One of the exciting fruits of the ldquo;secret gardenrdquo; is the ability to consciously choose your own motives. What motives do you need to change? Record your best motives and what you can do to actualize them.
- bull;nbsp;Consider the steps to create a good self-affirmation statement. Write the script you usually tell yourself. Now rewrite that script. What can you affirm about yourself? Whatsquo;s good or even great about you and about the contribution you can make?