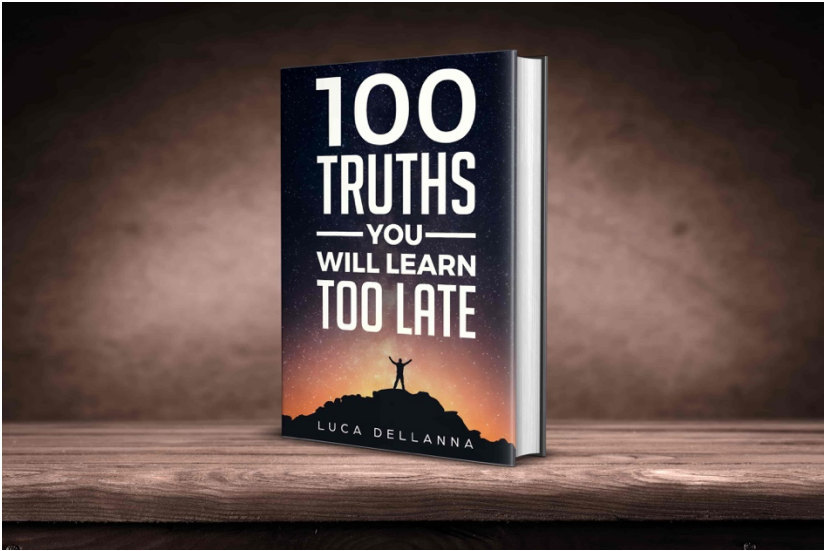


100 Truths You Will Learn Too Late



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Introduction

RULE #001: YOU CAN CHOOSE THE GAME YOU PLAY, BUT NOT ITS RULES

Most frustration and unhappiness in your life will come from disrespecting the rules of whatever “game” you are a participant of – be it love, business, health, or social life.

Perhaps, you did not know about the existence of such rules because no one explained them to you. In this case, you might think that the world doesn't make sense and that people are irrational. That's what I thought when I was 14 and did not understand why some girls were so fond of the “bad boys” in my school.

Or perhaps, you knew about some of such rules but chose to disrespect them because you didn't like their implication. For example, everyone knows the two rules to lose weight: eat healthily and exercise. However, most do not act on them because they're uncomfortable practicing them day after day or do not have the time or energy to do so.

We cannot live happily wishing the world followed the rules we are comfortable with. Or, at least, we cannot do it for long. The universe relentlessly punishes those who do not follow its rules.

Paraphrasing Paulo Coelho, **failures are life's way of teaching us its rules. In particular, those we do not want to learn.**

IN THIS BOOK,

You will find 100 rules that apply to the most important areas of your life.

I call them rules because breaking them has consequences. In the words of bestselling author Stephen Covey, **while we are free to choose our actions, we cannot choose their consequences.**

Apart from the few unfortunate cases in which something bad happened to one of my loved ones, every single time I felt hurt, it was because I broke one of the rules of life. **Pain, sadness, and frustration result from not having learned the rules by which the world works or having chosen to disrespect them.**

Over the years, learning from my mistakes, I internalized these rules. Now, I have a fulfilling life of which I'm proud and for which I highly respect myself.

With this book, I entrust you with the rules I learned through experience, allowing you to learn from them without first having to experience on your skin the consequences of breaking them.

Prioritizing your growth

Rule 2

THE VERY IMPORTANT NEVER FEELS URGENT

The most common regret people have on their deathbed is to have spent their life chasing the urgent, neglecting to do what was actually important.

Family meals, drinks with friends, learning, and taking care of our health are all very important activities. And yet, we often skip them to attend meetings and other urgent errands.

Because the very important does not have a deadline, we have the impression that we can delay it for a few days. It is a huge mistake. Delaying something once opens the door to delaying it forever.

If you think about it, the very important never feels urgent. Instead, **most of what feels urgent is important for someone else, not for you.**

Why do people acknowledge the very important only on their deathbed? Because, finally, facing death, the very important has a deadline. On the verge of leaving this world, the very important becomes urgent.

ACTION:

You do not have to wait for your life to near its end. Make the very important urgent, now. Incorporate it within your schedule. Treat your family time, friends time, learning time, and workout time as if they were meetings with clients. Give them slots in your calendar and be inflexible about them. After all, your schedule is where your real priorities show up.

Soon, you will respect yourself more for having done what is important. That will be the engine that will give you the motivation and energy to persist.

Rule 3

PROBLEMS GROW TO THE SIZE THEY NEED FOR YOU TO ACKNOWLEDGE THEM

Jack Kent tells us the story of a little boy, Billy, who, one day, finds a dragon the size of a cat in his bedroom. Billy's mother ignores it – after all, there is no such thing as a dragon. Day after day, the dragon keeps growing, ignored. One day, it grows so much that it wrecks Billy's house with its size. Faced with a destroyed home, Billy's mother acknowledges the dragon. Finally, it starts shrinking. At the end of the story, Billy's mother asks: "Why did the dragon grow so big?" Billy answers: "I'm not sure, but I think it just wanted to be noticed."

Problems grow to the size they need for us to acknowledge them.

There are many reasons for which problems appear. However, there is a single reason for which they grow: if we ignore them.

By acknowledging a problem and its consequences, the risks of letting it grow become clear and, therefore, urgent. You will be compelled to act immediately. Acknowledging problems is the first step toward solving them and regaining mental peace. Instead, if you ignore your problems, you deprive yourself of the very fuel you need to act.

The simple act of taking a pen and writing down the list of problems affecting you and the ways they negatively impact your life will often be all you need. If this is too much, choose a single issue and write about that one only. But **do write about it**. Simply thinking about it will not be enough. Your unconscious mind needs material proof that you acknowledged the problem and its consequences.

ACTION:

Do it **right now**.

Put down the book, take a pen, and write.

What problems are you facing? How will your life be affected if you do not address them immediately?

You do not need to write about how you will solve the problem. Just write about the problem itself.

The goal of this exercise is not to figure out how to solve your problems but to acknowledge them. This is the first necessary step towards regaining control of your life and transforming it into the life you want to live.

Rule 4

**PROBLEMS ARE NOT SOLVED BY ADDRESSING
THEIR SYMPTOMS,
BUT BY ADDRESSING THEIR ROOT CAUSE**

Look closely at some friend, relative, or colleague who has been struggling with the same problem for months. They are probably stuck because they spend their efforts relieving the symptoms of their problem rather than tackling the actual problem once and for all.

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A man in a sinking ship has a problem: water in the boat. However, taking a bucket and throwing the water overboard will not improve his situation. At least, not until he solves the root of that problem: the hole in the ship. Unless he fixes the hole, the water he throws away will be replaced by more water spilling in from it.

Similarly, solving a problem without solving its root cause will only improve your situation temporarily. Until you solve the root cause, you will constantly be presented with more (of the same) problems.

Solving a problem without solving its root cause is like taking a step forward and then one back. Many enjoy the dance but then complain it doesn't bring them anywhere. Don't be like them.

Solving the root causes of your problems might not feel urgent but is the only way forward.

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Fact: you will have to face problems all your life.

Also a fact: you can decide whether they will be the same ones over and over.

ACTION:

Think about a recurring problem of yours. What have you done so far to solve it? Will it prevent *any further occurrence* of such a problem? If not, you need to stop doing what you are currently doing to address that problem and do something else instead.

Write down, NOW, what you will do to ensure that the problem will *never* show up again.

If acting on what you wrote down would take less than half an hour, do it immediately. Put this book down and do it. Otherwise, take your calendar (do it **now!**) and schedule the action.

Rule 5

MAKE A NOT-TO-DO LIST

Billionaire Warren Buffett used to give the following advice to his subordinates. Make a list of the top 25 actions you should take during the next three months, ordered from the most impactful to the least. Then, select the top 5 items: these become your to-do list. Finally, select the bottom 20 items: these become your *not-to-do* list. You are not allowed to work on your not-to-do list until the to-do list is completed.

Without a not-to-do list, you might spend your time and energy on the most comfortable actions (busywork), not the most impactful ones. Instead, using the not-to-do list, you remain focused on what's important.

The enemy of productivity isn't laziness but busywork. Not-to-do lists are your solution to it.

ACTION:

Implement a not-to-do list for yourself:

1. Make a list of the top 25 actions you should take during the next months.
2. Order the list items from the most impactful to the least impactful.
3. Then, select the top 5 items: these are your to-do list.
4. Finally, select the bottom 20 items: these are your not-to-do list.

Once you're done, pin both lists (the to-do one and the not-to-do one) somewhere you can regularly check them.

If you find yourself transgressing (by working on some of the not-to-do items before having finished the to-do ones), ask yourself: what should I tweak, in my environment or in my way of working, so that I will not transgress again?

Rule 6

DO YOUR ACTIVITIES MAKE YOUR LIFE BETTER?

American History X is one of my favorite movies. Academy Award nominee Edward Norton plays the role of a young adult who spent years in gangs with toxic acquaintances and professing toxic political beliefs. A turning point in the movie, in which the main character begins to consider setting his life straight, is when his history teacher from high school asks him: “Did any of those things make your life better?”

We often engage in activities that are not good for us, especially if done too much. Some examples include drinking, frequenting friends who are still fleeing from responsibilities even after their 20s, watching TV or playing video games until 2 AM on a weekday, complaining, and so on.

The key question is: **did any of these activities make your life better?**

If not, it is time to stop. **It is the landmark of addiction to repeat something bad for us** knowing it is bad for us. Do not behave like an addict.

ACTION:

What activity do you regularly engage with, even if it does not improve your life? Any chance you can substitute it with something more likely to improve your life?

Do not focus on stopping the former. Focus on substituting it with the latter.

Which emotions do you regularly engage with, even though they worsen your life? Is there any activity you are undertaking that summons them (e.g., looking at your ex’s social media feed)?

Rule 7

**MOST MISTAKES ARE FORMS
OF CLINGING TO THE PAST**

By examining myself and my story, I noticed the following.

Every mistake I ever made was a form of clinging to the past.

Clinging:

- To who I was
- To what I was doing
- To what I knew how to do
- To who I knew how to be
- To what made me feel good
- To what made me feel safe

You do not have to be your past. You can be someone else without anyone having to give you permission.

Authorization to change is mostly an illusion. **Most changes that last are bottom-up, initiated without someone else's permission.** The consent is usually formalized after the change takes place. Give yourself permission to change.

Yoga teacher Heeki Park used to conclude her lessons reminding her students that, as they leave the room, they don't have to be the same person they were when they entered it. Similarly, as you walk through your day, **you don't have to be the same person you have been.**

ACTION:

What would you do if you didn't feel obligated to act like the person you've been?

Rule 8

THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION

“If you keep doing what you are currently doing, how will your life be in 10 years?”

ACTION:

Answer the question above. Honestly.

Then, if you are not satisfied with the contents of your answer, make the necessary adjustments to how you spend your days.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Prioritizing your personal growth is vital for your success and happiness. This is because, as you will eventually learn through experience, all long-lasting changes to your personal life occur indirectly.

You will not attract a great partner with a bold approach and some well-chosen words. Instead, you will attract them by having worked on yourself so that you have become a partner of value.

Nor will you get a great job by acing a job interview or asking a favor of the right person. Instead, you will get a great job by having worked on yourself so that you have become a professional worth being employed and sought out by great companies or great individuals.

Shape yourself so that your world reshapes upon you in a way you like.

END OF THE EXCERPT

You can purchase the full book at gum.co/100Truths or at amzn.to/32pbump

About the Author



An automotive engineer by training, after having led large teams and consulted for large multinationals, Luca quit his corporate job to become an independent researcher and author.

Luca dedicates his career to researching the topic of emerging behavior and communicating his findings and their implications.

After having lived in Spain, Germany, Kazakhstan, and Singapore, Luca recently moved back to his hometown of Turin (Italy). He spends his days consulting, teaching, and conducting his independent research from his home, a coffee bar, or a park.

Luca also consults corporations, startups, and individuals on behavioral change and antifragile operations. Once per year, he teaches a Risk Management module at Genoa University. He also regularly holds private workshops for entrepreneurs, operations managers, plant managers, and CEOs / COOs. His courses **Antifragile Organizations** and **Managing Remote Teams** run a few times a year.

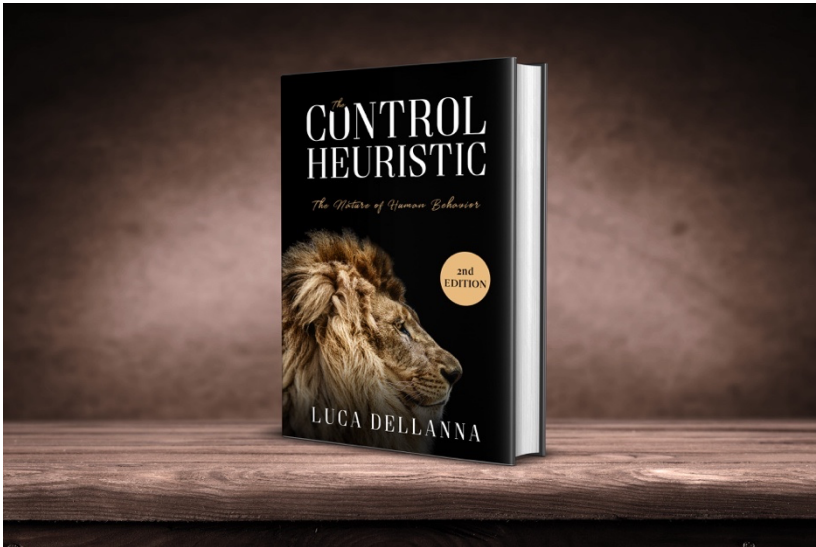
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“This book is like a magnificent suspension bridge, linking the science of the human brain to the practical craft of applying it in everyday life. I loved it.” – Rory Sutherland, Ogilvy’s Vice Chairman