UNIVERSAL
LAWS

How to Harness the 21 Unwritten Laws of the Universe to Succeed in the Game of Life .

BY ANTHONY HUSTLE

Universal Laws

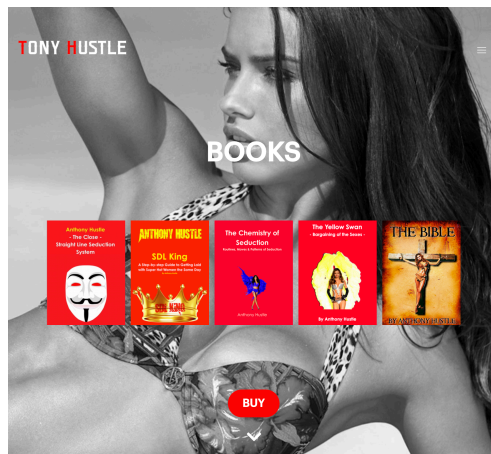-   How to Harness the 21 Unwritten Laws of the Universe to Succeed in the Game of Life -

By Anthony Hustle

For more information go to anthonyhustle.com

Why I Wrote this Book

There are sextillion (7x10^22) stars in the universe. Even if only an extremely small percentage of those stars hosted intelligent life, one would still end up with a very large number of alien civilizations. This would imply that in our galaxy alone, the Milky Way, we have a vast number of planets that can host intelligent civilizations. Second, the universe is 13.8 billions years old. Even if we assume that intelligent civilizations were to colonize their star system using interstellar technologies that are similar to those currently available to mankind, it would only take 50 million years to explore the galaxy. Planet earth is about 4.5b years old. Hence, if we assume that intelligent life has formed in the time period from 4.5b years ago until today, we are begged to ask the question: where are the aliens? Astrophysicist Fermi originally asked this question decades ago. Why did he ask this question? Because it was obvious that even if we cannot find the aliens, they should be able to find us. Aliens may have no desire to explore space, but

they would still send out probes to explore space. Every individual is entitled to their own opinion, but we are all bound to the same set of facts. Under rational argumentation, it is difficult to reconcile these statistical facts with the lack of evidence for alien life. As a matter of fact, the statistics are so rational that Frank Drake specified a concrete formula to calculate the number of alien civilizations that should be able to communicate with us based on probabilistic arguments: even for my taste, it's a funky equation, but it's hard to argue with Drake's approach. Drake's equation is the following:

The number of civilizations in the universe that can communicate with aliens equals the average rate of star formation in our galaxy, times the fraction of stars that have planets, times the average number of planets that support life per star that has formed, times the fraction of planets that develop life, times the fraction of planets with intelligent life, times the fraction of civilizations that develop detectable communications systems, times the length of time for such civilizations to

release detectable signals into space. If one plugs a range or reasonable numbers into this equation (there is an agreed range of acceptable inputs available), we find out that there should be around 1,000 to 100,000,000 such civilizations in the Milky Way alone.

Again, this begs the question: why have we not encountered any evidence of alien life? Attempting to answer this question, we come to some scary realizations: one possible explanation is that all civilizations hit a point in their life cycle at which an extinction event happens and this occurs before a civilization is capable of producing technology that enables it to permeate the universe/galaxy. This is called the Great Filter Theory: all civilizations hit a filter, some event during which the civilization is wiped out. It could be an external event such as a meteor hit, or an internal event such as a nuclear war or a computer-dominated doomsday scenario in which intelligent life becomes slave to an artificial general intelligence. The Great Filter Theory is not a new idea. Einstein expressed some form of this theory in his famous quote: "I do not know with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones." Another obvious argument that we can make is the idea of living inside of a simulation.

What do we mean by that? It's pretty simple: we live inside a computer game. We are all some form of Super Mario and Princess Peach. Seems unlikely? Bear with me: think back to the computer games from the 1980s, if you can. They had games like Pong and Spacewar. Basically, they were basically monochrome polygons that we could manipulate using a clunky piece of hardware. Now compare those games to today's virtual reality games and you will understand how much progress we made simulating reality. If you can't picture it, take a second and look at YouTube videos of Pong and compare that to the latest Virtual Reality or Augmented Reality games. It is blatantly obvious that we have advanced technology far enough so that we can partially trick our brains into believing that simulated VR is base reality. By base reality, I mean the reality that is real and not simulated. Now the two missing facts that we need to consider is that this technological advancement has happened in a matter of 4 to 5 decades. Now let's put these 50 years of technological advancement in perspective by comparing it to the fact that planet

earth is over 4b years old. As we already know, it is extremely likely that intelligent life is likely to have existed since the galaxy was born; hence, these civilizations had the ability to improve simulation technology over that same time span. If you assume any rate of technological improvement, no matter how minuscule it may seem, through the power of compounding it would be inevitable that this technology would be indistinguishable from reality. Do the math: what's a 1% improvement over 4b years? It's an astronomical number.
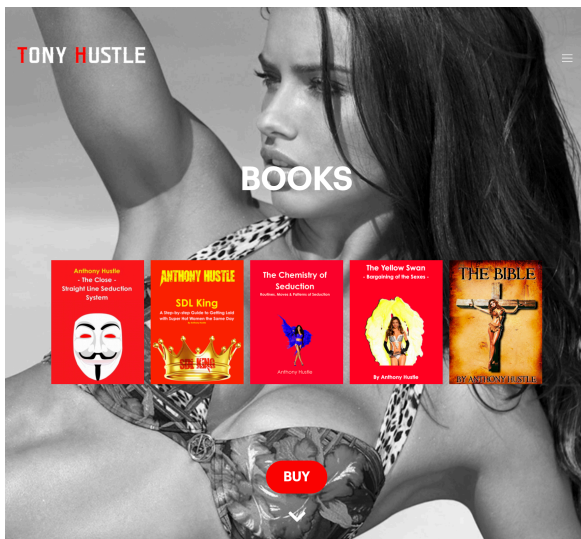
Let's keep going with this argument - what happens at the limit of this idea? Ray Kurzweil's law of accelerating returns dictates that an advanced intelligent species will eventually be able to produce computers that are the size of a few atoms and as powerful as the largest supercomputers of today, while costing nearly nothing to produce (we are currently computing based on silicon substrate, but our next compute platform will require a technological paradigm shift: it might be operating based on quantum computing). Anyway, back to the technological progress argument: every single being that is part of a civilization that experienced billions of years of technological progress would be able to run simulations that are indistinguishable from reality. That is, every single human being would be able to run a computer game that you wouldn't be able to distinguish from base reality. The argument then becomes a purely statistical one. Given that it is likely that billions of beings in our galaxy can run simulations that are indistinguishable from base reality, how likely is it that we are living in base reality? The answer is: one in billions. We

have one base reality and billions of possible simulations. Again, imagine it like this: if each human being on planet earth alone was able to produce one computer game that is just as good as reality, how sure can you be that you are living in base reality? Well, since there is one base reality and 6 billion humans, and therefore virtual realities, and since you cannot distinguish between the two, your chance of living in base reality would be one in six billion. Once you extrapolate this to a universe in which many civilizations exist each with billions of individual entities capable of running simulations that are indistinguishable from base reality, it becomes pretty clear that it is very likely that we are currently living inside a simulation. Scary, isn't it? And it is even scarier when you realize that there are no good arguments against this simulation theory, other than the Great Filter scenarios I laid out above. Looking at it this way, we should hope that we are living in a simulation. The simulation argument I am referring to was brought forward by philosopher Nick Bolstrom. I personally would add something to this entire argument: it seems

perfectly human to me to believe that some higher form of intelligence that we may call god has devoted its life to create us and the universe. I think that's a typical egotistical thought pattern that humans have depicted over and over again (remember, we used to think that we are the center of the universe - I mean, the sun is revolving around the world at the end of the day). To me, this type of thinking is equivalent to a goose believing that it is special among all animals on the farm just because the farmer weighs it more regularly the closer ThanksGiving is.
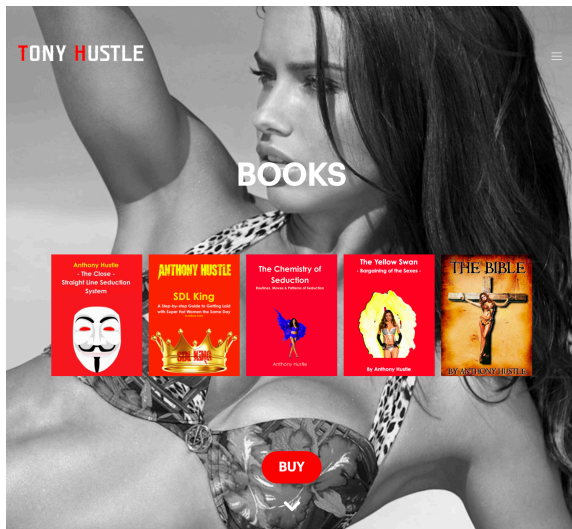
This being said, how does it help us to understand that we are most likely living in a simulation of something extremely intelligent that doesn't give a crap about us? If we live in a virtual reality that was created by intelligent life that's orders of magnitude smarter than us, then this is already bad news. Hence, we need to clutch at any straw. So what do we know that is very likely true. We know that this reality needs to follow certain laws, just like a computer program follows laws written in code. The intelligent being must have constructed the universe using laws, rules or algorithms that are based on some form of logic. At least we have very good evidence that this is the case: mathematics is eerily good at describing what is going on around us. We shoot rockets to the moon based on mathematics and it works every time. So in a way, understanding the universe and its laws is the same as understanding the code a computer program was written in. And we know, the best way to manipulate software is to write programs that

change the source code: the code that makes up the game. If you can do that, you can change the rules of the game.

In a strange way, living in our universe is similar to an animal that is kept in a zoo or a computer character that is inside a computer game. Let's go with the zoo. The animal may not logically comprehend that it is being held captive, yet it is constraint to its cage. The difference between humans and the animal in a zoo is that our cage is defined by the laws of the simulation. For example, we are born with a limited lifespan and certainly we cannot escape gravity. As a matter of fact, we don't even know why gravity exists. Just like the tiger is unaware of its lack of intelligence or inability to communicate with the zookeeper, we might be unaware of our lack of intelligence and inability to communicate with the universe's creator (or, more likely, their lack of interest or awareness of us). But we are smarter than the tiger - we are self-aware. If we conjecture that there are certain laws that the universe follows because it was created by an intelligent being,

then at least we know that even if we may never fully understand the universe and its laws, we can deduct some of the laws and gleam important insights. The best we can hope for is to understand the laws of the universe better so we can get closer to the source code of the simulation. Ultimately, the better we are at understanding the source code, the better we are able to influence the simulation and the closer are to its creator. Einstein expressed this view on god and the universe as follows:

"We are in the position of a little child, entering a huge library whose walls are covered to the ceiling with books in many different tongues. The child knows that someone must have written those books. It does not know who or how. It does not understand the languages in which they are written. The child notes a definite plan in the arrangement of the books, a mysterious order which it does not comprehend, but only dimly suspects. That, it seems to me, is the attitude of the human mind, even the greatest and most cultured, toward God. We see a universe marvelously arranged, obeying certain laws, but we understand the laws only dimly."

All of this is of course philosophical, but it helps me explain why I wrote this book. The aim is of course not to explain the universe in its entirety. I will leave the trivial tasks to others. However, I hope to make people aware that we are living inside a simulation. Further, having a dim understanding of the universe and its laws, an understanding that is just slightly better than that

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of the rest of humanity, is not only a moral duty, but it gives us a huge edge. An edge that we can use to live a more fulfilling life, a more successful life and more enlightened life. To me, understanding and seeing at least some of the universal laws feels like being Neo in the Matrix: the simulation seems to slow down and we can manipulate reality, bending it our way. When you are completely oblivious to what is going on in their surroundings, like so many others are, life seems either stressful, fast and confusing, or people start daydreaming through the simulation. I don't think I am on a power trip when I express my wish for being capable of slowing down time to dodge bullets or stop them in their tracks: given a choice, I want to be Neo. I am definitely not smart enough to unravel a ton of new laws of the universe that get us closer to deciphering the source code. However, I am smart enough to realize that while we are not capable of rewriting the simulation, we are yet capable of manipulating it. We are the monkey in the zoo that knows that he is in captivity, while the other monkeys are oblivious to the fact. The aware monkey therefore

can create advantages for himself: for example, he knows exactly where and when the zookeeper comes to drop off food so he can always position himself perfectly at the right time. To me, the person that realizes that we are in a simulation that follows laws is a superhero compared to the ignorants. We have super powers. It is this advantage that allows us to excel and achieve our dreams. Yes, we are still caged in a zoo like a tiger and we won't escape the cage. But look at it this way: if you are the only player without a blindfold in a game of Pin the Tail on the Donkey, you are still trying to pin the tail on the donkey, but at least you are winning the game. This is what this book is all about: explaining to you how to become better than the rest by pinning the tail on the donkey. If this sounds like a waste of time, I can't blame you. Simply put down the book and go back to sleepwalking through the simulation.
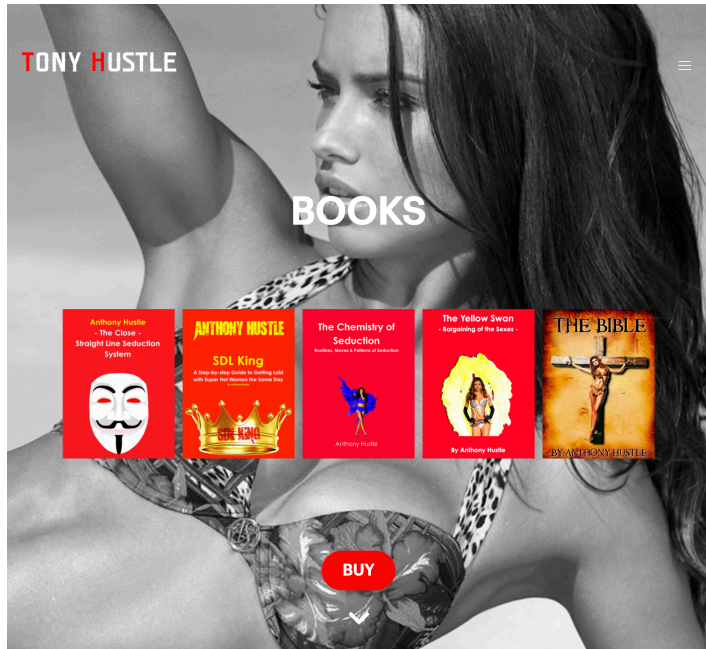
When I first started out writing this book, I had the chapters cleverly arranged so that they would build on each other in a logical sequence. I dismissed that format because I feel it is better to simply write down the universal laws as they come to mind. Some of them hang together and others are removed from each other. I do believe that some laws are more powerful than others, but I haven't ordered them in this book. What is certain in my mind is that if several universal laws act together in the same direction, they increase

exponentially in power. Charlie Munger called this a Lollapalooza Effect. As a matter of fact, the Lollapalooza Effect is a Universal Law.

The other reason I wrote this book is that it is immensely helpful to think of life as a game or simulation. Once you regard life as a game with rules you stop taking it so seriously. You start controlling your emotions more and this is very useful because you make decisions that are much more rational. This is so because humans are inherently risk averse. This is so due to evolutionary pressure - it just didn't pay off to take risks such as breaking a leg. It could end in death. However, in today's society and with today's support systems, risk is mitigated. Our monkey brain just hasn't caught up with this reality. Let's imagine you are playing GTA on your Playstation - if you don't know what it is, watch a YouTube video. What would you do? You would steal cars, try to get the stripper girl and take drugs. Why? Because this is how the game becomes fun. You wouldn't sit on a park bench, relax for three hours before you go back to your average life. However,

in reality all these activities would have huge repercussions. Yet, it shows you what you would do if you were completely free from consequences. Of course, I am not recommending to take drugs and steal cars - never mind the strippers. What I am saying is in today's society we are brainwashed into risk-aversion and prevents us from living a fulfilled life. We are told to get a good education, marry a reasonable (not an exciting) person, get a good job and take a mortgage. This certainly ends in boredom and definitely does not promote growth - it's playing it too safe. In reality, the risk of quitting your job, starting a new business and creating the option to get really rich is much lower than it feels to us. Due to this psychological bias we are renting out your time to work a boring job for a linearly increasing paycheck that is never quite enough to quit. We should consider how bad it can really get: what's the worst case scenario? This is the stoic perspective. You could lose the person that you had a bad relationship with for the last 10 years. You could lose the job that you have hated and you could be unable to pay for your

fancy vacations that are truly uninspiring. Maybe you would have to live in a smaller house, wear less expensive clothes and mayeh you won't be able to talk to your friends about your heroic promotions year after year anymore? What could you gain? Time - something you can never get back. The ability to create a company and work on something inspiring? So what's more important to you: holding on to all those things you dislike or don't really need or the freedom to chase your dreams? Our dreams are way more valuable than our safe lives that we live because society pushed us into this zone of fearfulness. Taking the perspective on life of living inside a simulation helps us to understand that life is not as risky as we perceive it to be. Most people would do well with a little dose of Tyler Durden (Fight Club) inside them. The only thing you are risking when not chasing your dreams is sleepwalking through life.

TONY HUSTLE

BOOKS

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- The Close -
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System

ANTHONY HUSTLE

SDL King

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with Super Hot Women the Same Day

The Chemistry of
Seduction

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- Bargaining of the Sexes -

By Anthony Hustle

THE BIBLE

BY ANTHONY HUSTLE

BUY

Law #1: Persuasion Machines

I start out with this chapter because I originally wanted to write a book about persuasion: I wanted to write up my findings from interacting with humans and apply them to the broader concept of persuasion. Why? Because persuasion is a great teacher for life in general and a lot can be deducted from it.

Humans are persuasion machines: we persuade and are being persuaded every day whether we realize it or not. It's very much like Poker: if you wonder who the patsy is, it's most likely you. We use persuasion all the time. Whether it is as a child asking our parents to stay up longer to watch a movie, or whether it is as a couple deciding what movie to watch after dinner. It's a negotiation. But more than that: after school we start job interviews, persuade our parents to study abroad and try to convince the cute girl sitting next to us in class to come out for a drink later. But the usefulness of the persuasion skill doesn't stop here. From the 20s we start building

businesses, climb the job ladder and build wealth to provide for our families. I think it's redundant to mention that persuasion skills are critical for building a business and climbing the job ladder: you need to be able to get it your way or else you will fall behind very quickly in either of these endeavors. Finally, when we approach retirement (I hate that word. I will never retire, because I never worked in the first place), we negotiate how we will divest our savings and pension fund, where we will live and how often we can therefore see our children and grandchildren. Further, as we have hopefully amassed a lot of wisdom from making mistakes and observing other people's mistakes, we are in a position to advise and protect our families - the problem is that the young generation doesn't want to listen to the old generation. Clearly, if we have strong persuasion skills, our probability of influencing our children and grandchildren is much higher. Since the happiness and success of our children and grandchildren is the most precious thing we have in life, I think it's quite clear that we are better off if we harness the power of persuasion. As we can

see, the ability to persuade people is one of the most important skills in life - we use it from the second we are born a crying baby to our death bed.

I personally stumbled upon persuasion very early in life. I wasn't aware of it, but I was being trained in persuasion. In particular, I was being trained in dealing with objections, handling objections and in handling the randomness of outcome when trying to persuade people. How is that? The explanation for that is simple. My parents raised me in an upper middle-class environment. My dad made a very solid living and my mom stayed at home for the kids. As a child, I was given a lot of material things such as nice holidays, good clothing and anything else I needed for my education. However, relatively to my parents income, I would definitely not consider myself a spoiled child. I had friends with richer parents - those guys were wearing $5000 watches by the age of 18 - I wasn't. What was quite distinct about my parents style of raising kids was their lacking in clear and logical rules and decisions: in

general, with respect to going out, partying and having fun (i.e. all things that did not involve my parents money directly), my parents were generally relaxed. However, when it came to spending money and decisions that involved material things, I would sometimes be allowed to do something or buy something and other times I wouldn't be allowed. For example, at the age of 16 and older I wasn't allowed to stay alone in my parents ("precious") home when they went on vacations to which I didn't want to come. Other times I was allowed to borrow their car to see my girlfriend and then again I wasn't. Every time something was at stake that I desperately wanted and for which I needed my parents permission, I had to negotiate. It was often a clear no, but it was never a clear yes. Additionally, the decisions didn't follow any clear logic. A child needs principles that it can rely on such as: you can't do A, because of B and this will never change. With my parents the answers to my materially-oriented demands were randomized. All parents exhibit this behavior, but with my parents it was distinctly volatile - I had many friends as a child and even

backward looking, this behavior was uncommon. Of course, as a child you don't accept no as an answer. This led to me sometimes being successful in persuading my parents to get what I wanted and other times to not being successful. Today, we know that variable rewards motivate humans to try even harder - Professor Skinner researched this area widely. Further, since I only had to negotiate when something important was at stake, I felt the losses very heavily. To make matters worse, I knew I had succeeded before. This further motivated me to keep trying - Charlie Munger coined this behavioral phenomenon deprival-superreaction. Imagine trying to take a nice big bone out of a pit-bulls mouth and you get the idea of this behavioral pattern.

Law #2: The Tree of Knowledge

The first book I ever read that really struck a chord with me was "Rich Dad Poor Dad" by Robert Kiyosaki. I read this book when I was an impressionable 17 year old. I devoured the book in one go on an off-road trip to the Grand Canyon. I must have read it three times or so. I may disagree with some of the presentation and promises made in the book, but to this day, I think the key lessons from the book are very powerful and far outweigh anything I ever learned at school or university. This includes a PhD in Finance from one of the best universities in the world. However, the most important lesson I learned from Rich Dad Poor Dad was not what was actually taught in the book. Much more important was where it led me to. Towards the end of the copy of the version I read there were book recommendations. There was a reference to Peter Lynch's "Beating the Street". That is the only one I remember. So I branched out: I went to the public library and rented the book. I read it, but it was beyond my teenage level of understanding. However, Rich

Dad Poor Dad had sparked a fire inside me - a very strong fire.
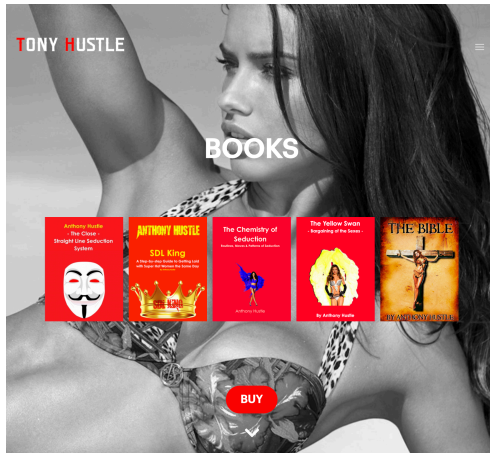
Law #3: The Power of Inductive Experimentation and Intuition

I was subjected to deductive reasoning for the better part of my twenties. Everything at university is derived deductively. Hypothesis testing in the spirit of Karl Popper is deductive: this is my general theory, now let me try to find one specific case to disprove this general theory. Only if I can't falsify my hypothesis is my general theory true, or, more appropriately, not falsifiable. The famous example is the following: all swans are white, this is a swan and therefore it must be white. Then, one black swan comes along and therefore I cannot claim that all swans are white anymore. The counterpart for seducing women is the following: all guys that are older and not physically attractive cannot seduce young attractive women. This is an older guy that is less physically attractive and therefore he cannot seduce attractive young women. This is how the deductive scientific process works and, as I will explain, this is poison when it comes to mastering any skill and chasing your dreams.

Luckily, we are born dream chasers. We are born learning the right way. Nature is ingenious. In reality, we learn inductively. A child doesn't set out some general theory about how a bicycle may work and then tries to fail every possible way to prove that bicycles can't be ridden. I yet have to see a mother that says: "Look, Jon, you tried riding that bicycle for 3 months now. Let's call it a day - riding bicycles is just not your thing." As a matter of fact, the idea of falsifying hypotheses goes way beyond this almost reasonable example. A more absurd and yet appropriate analogy would be the following: the deductive scientific process would require the child to learn to ride the bicycle and then to ride it down the highway in the opposite direction to traffic - if it crashes and dies we would have to conclude that kids can't ride bicycles. Imagine the mother: "Ok, Jon, you showed me that you know how to ride the bicycle in a straight line. Now let's step it up a notch. You see that big truck coming your way at 100km/h? Try to ride that way and see whether you can make it through. If you come out in one

piece, I guess we can conclude that you really learned how to ride a bike now." Law #4: Outcome Qualification

Strongly linked to the idea of inductive reasoning is the concept of Outcome Qualification. The universe is structured such that it hugely rewards Outcome Qualification: the more we can pre-qualify an outcome before we attempt it, the better off we will be. This is so, because with most objectives in life, the risk-return is asymmetric on the upside and the chance of a positive outcome is small: i.e. if we lose, which we most likely will, we don't lose much, but if we win, which we most likely will not, we win a lot. Think of it as a gamble with 1 in 1,000 chance of winning and a payoff of $1,000,000: the expected payoff is $1,000 (1/1000 * $1,000,000), which is great as the bet is almost free (let's assume you pay $10 each time you paly). In expected terms, every time you play you get a 100x (expected) risk-reward ratio. You bet $10 to get exposure to $1,000 in expected payoff. If you played the game 1,000,000 times you would almost certainly win the $1,000,000.

This is due to the law of large numbers. This is not a theoretical exercise: if you open your mind, you will see that life is constantly throwing these bets at you, but you rarely ever swing. Think of all the attractive women you really fancied but never approached. Think of all the business ideas you had, but never worked on because you didn't have the courage (also, think about the bet you are taking every morning in terms of risk-reward when you go to that office you hate). These are just two examples. We don't swing because we are too busy pursuing other bets - bets that are most likely bad risk-rewards. But hold on, how do I judge whether a bet that is now being pitched is better than the one I am looking at? The answer is: you don't. So what's the solution? The solution is Outcome Qualification: you need a process in place that measures and throws out bad bets as early as possible. Why? Because our irrational monkey brain uses commitment bias, vividity bias, social proof. wishful thinking to name a few handicaps that keep us focused on the bet at hand, while ignoring all other bets. But if we adopted a rational approach, we would use

Outcome Qualification to assess the risk-reward ratio of each and then switch bets as soon as we come to a clear conclusion. And we would do that in an inductive fashion: starting with the smallest possible test and working our way up the achievement ladder. We would start with a small inductive test such as saying hello to the girl or writing a small computer program to see whether a business idea works. Only if that small bet pays off would we go forward - if it doesn't we throw it out. Of course, this is nothing else but inductive reasoning. However, Outcome Qualification is further up on the spectrum: Outcome Qualification requires hard evidence of success at any given step to legitimize further investment on our side. So if a business idea shows little signs of working out, given we have worked on it with passion and persistence, and given we have put the appropriate Outcome Qualification in place, we have to dismiss it. Why? Because the time and money could be invested in other, higher risk-reward bets. Look at it this way: it's great for me to write this book. However, it's a million times better with this book than it was with the first book

I wrote: I know that I will get paid for writing this book. I have hard evidence in terms of numbers. I have Outcome Qualification. I didn't have that when I wrote my first book. This also applies to other start-ups: using inversion, what you want to avoid is developing a product that costs thousands of dollars and months of hard work to test whether anyone is interested in it - this is the type of thing that happens when people fall in love with an idea (and all other types of biases are working their brain to mush). The same for dating women: I want to date women that reciprocate my sexual advances: too often are men spending time with women that have no interest in them beyond their wallet and the good food they are being served. What are they missing? Outcome Qualification: they miss to tell the girl that she is very attractive, they miss to touch and they miss to make their intent clear: that's wishful thinking and avoiding the harsh truth that she might not be into us. As the old saying goes: "Denial is not a river in Egypt." But when we are in denial, we waste resources on bets that have terrible risk-reward ratios; and this time around it is our fault

because we could simply practice Outcome Qualification to reveal the risk-reward ratio and throw such bad bets out immediately. To sum it up, Outcome Qualification is the process of measuring a desired outcome every step along the way in order to dismiss bets with low risk-reward ratios as early as possible. The reason it is a Universal Law is that practicing Outcome Qualification allows us to maximize our expected payoff from bets with high risk-reward ratios harnessing the law of large numbers. Outcome qualification is the only process that allows us to fully embrace the high risk-reward bets that the universe is pitching us every day.
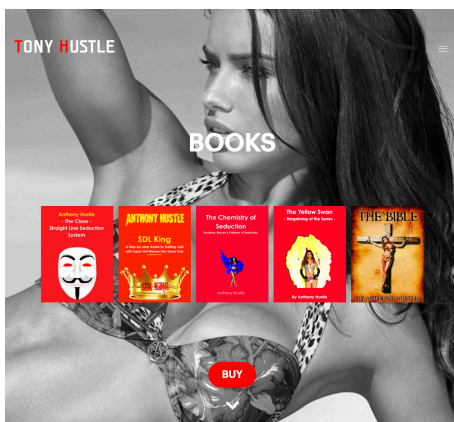
Law #5: The Rational Dream Chaser

Mae West famously said: "You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough." Life is simply too short to waste it doing things that are not important to us, things that we don't love. Yet, there are many reasons why we do things in life that are not important to us. We may have spent a long time studying a subject that our family more or less forced us to focus on when we were teenagers: now we are earning a living off it (e.g. lawyer, surgeon, architect, engineer, etc). We may have a wife that depends on our financial support and we are not happy with the relationship. We may own things that require us to earn money (e.g. house, car, gadgets, trophy wife etc.). And we may enjoy the social status that comes with a certain profession (e.g. professor, CEO, social media fame, fashion model etc.). Thinking about it more deeply, we are prioritizing things in life that are not really important to us. They may be important if we want to keep up a socially acceptable image, but they are not important to us. However, we do not question those things.

This is life and it is what it is. We get up every morning jumping on the iron horse, grinding through the routine to feed the beast we are slaves to. Why are we spending time on activities that are not important to us? The number one reason is that these activities are symptoms of the human condition. Symptoms, you may wonder? Yes, they are symptoms and their root cause is deeply ingrained into our brain in the form of our psychological predisposition. The human mind, or more appropriately, the prefrontal cortex, is much less in control than we think it is. In reality, our large rational brain that differentiates us from our monkey brothers is slave to the amygdala, the reptile brain. Think about it, almost everything we direct our logical mind to focus on serves some rather reptile ends: sex, food, drink, saftey, status to name a few. Do we do all these things because we choose to or are they automatic responses? Let me ask you differently, do you think it is by chance that a set of large breasts is usually presented next to expensive items of male desire (e.g. cars, watches, suits etc.)? Exactly. Your monkey brain looks at the watch and associates it

with female breasts. Then your logical brain gets a direction from the reptile brain: "Want to touch large breasts. Guy with an expensive watch has girl with large breasts. Need to buy expensive watch to get girl with large breasts. Go to Rolex store and buy watch now." This is called classical conditioning and the marketing industry exploits it to sell us stuff. Of course, we are subject to auto-responses that determine our daily agendas. Those auto-responses were hardwired into our brains over thousands of years of evolution and as much as we would like to think that we are making conscious decisions, we are remote controlled by psychological auto-responses. The **Universal Law that we will derive from this observation is that a large proportion of our decision making is driven by auto-responses.** We need to be aware of this or else we will not make rational decisions. As a matter of fact, we will not make the decision after all - evolutionary auto-responses will make the decision for us. Now I don't want to tune out the vegetative nervous system: it's good to feel hungry and to feel fear. But, when it comes to logical long-term decisions,

which is what life's most important decisions all are, you can gain an edge by realizing that you are subject to psychological biases.

Law #6: Setting the BHAGs

Once we are on our path to chasing our dreams, we need to set goals. Goals are odd animals. The higher you set them the more you achieve. As the old saying goes: "It's better to aim high and miss, than to aim low and miss." Most people set goals that are way too mundane. Again, there is a good reason for that. We are told by our parents to be humble and considered. The intention is that people will like you more if you are not bragging and understatement is a "cool" thing to do these days anyway. It is, however, undeniable that some people achieve extreme success by taking on big audacious goals. That's why it's called a BHAG: Big Hairy Audacious Goal. Look at Michael Jordan, Steve Jobs, Jeff Bezos or Donald Trump. They have all achieved extreme success and all in different fields. When we talk about these people with our common peers they are characterized as follows: genius, talent of the century, lucky genes, born rich and the alike. Nobody uses phrases such as: hard working, persistent, never gives up, always positive,

winner, failed a million times, loves what he does, champion and the alike.

We have to be careful with what our friends, family and parents say about these people. There are three main reasons why our parents in particular do not want us to admire and strive after the achievement of these heroes (most people would not call Donald Trump a hero, but most people haven't built a real estate empire, become a TV star and the President of the United States in one life either: never mind his character, in terms of achievement, he is a hero and that's what this chapter is about). First, it's a natural human condition to envy others. Admitting that others have started with the same set of opportunities, but achieved vastly more hurts us as we have to admit defeat, which provokes envy. As a result, we resolve these cognitive dissonances by re-evaluating the situation: how can we justify that we are not as far ahead in the simulation of life as Donald Trump? The simple solution is to claim that this person started from a different point in the game. They had better odds

at winning. They were dealt a better hand and therefore we cannot compare ourselves to them. Hence. we are not losers that wasted their potential. You can tell yourself that, but that's absolutely untrue and wishful thinking. Taking this position is not only inaccurate, but it also results in stagnation and a fixed mindset. I won't get into specifics, but laughing into the face of evidence of extreme achievement results in a fixed mindset, which stops us from achieving our potential.
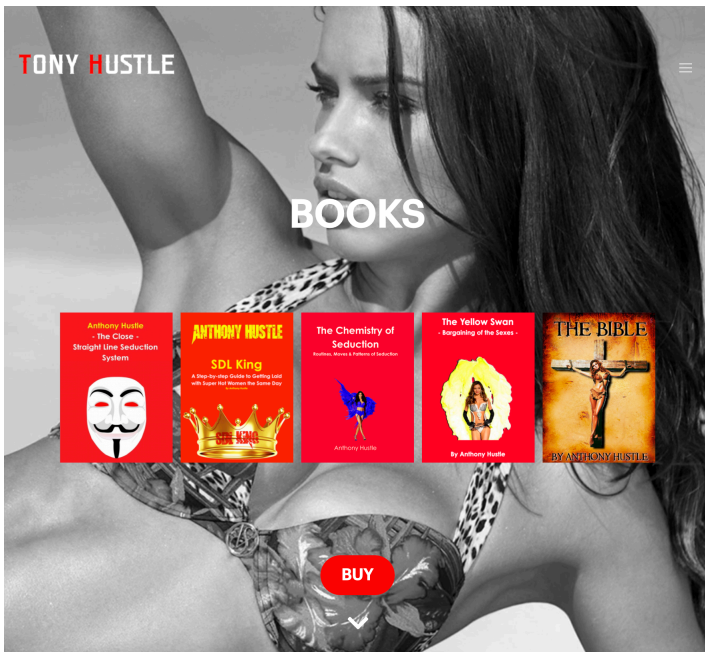
Law #7: Be a Contrarian

The second reason we do not achieve our potential is that achieving your potential requires going against the grain or the crowd - it requires being contrarian. Yes, contrarians are outliers. Yes, these people are uncommon. You want to achieve your potential? Get comfortable with being the odd person out. When people tell you: "You are overdoing it. That's crazy. That can't be healthy." You know you are on the right track. Again, those people don't want to protect you: they are afraid that you succeed and disrupt their reality by doing what they don't have the discipline and courage to do. Again, jealousy plays a huge role as well. What's the best strategy? Tune them out. There is a great saying by Howard Marks of Oaktree Capital Management: "You need to think differently and better." His book "The Most Important Thing" is a great read and it fully explains the perspective of a contrarian. Being contrarian requires a certain degree of arrogance. You need to believe that your thinking is not only different but better than that of 99.9% of the

people around you. Of course, that's hard because there is power in the wisdom of the masses: it's called collective intelligence. Being contrarian is therefore lonely by definition. It doesn't make you the most popular kid in school. If you are wrong, everyone will laugh at you. If you are right, you will be labelled "smart ass". As it is our tendency to strive to be liked by others, most people don't like being contrarian. Further, most people that think they are contrarian, are not really contrarians. What most people think is contrarian is in reality an attempt to look smart or good in front of a lot of others - in reality, that's simply seeking admiration. A true contrarian doesn't care what others think of him. He only cares about being right.

Law #8: Win Time by Harnessing the Power of Delayed Gratification

Law #9: Extreme Work Ethics

Law #10: Hard Work is Genius

Law #11: Be Willing to Die When Nobody is Watching

Law #12: Hierarchy of Decision Making & The Pursuit of Happiness

Law #13: Building Habits Through Discomfort

Law #14: Be Mindful Of Asymmetric Bets

Law #15: The Concentrated Punch Card Approach

Law #16: Managing the Monkey Brain

Law #17: Focus (Compounding, Growth Mindset & Network Effects)

Law #18: Experimentation Speed

"The best part is no part, the best process is no process, if it schedules long it's wrong, if it schedules tight it's right." Elon Musk

We ended the last section talking about Edison and his quest for the perfect light bulb. Perfection in particular is often misunderstood. Perfection is something worth striving for. Or is it? What are things that we consider perfect? Often they are things that we admire greatly such as great performances of professional athletes, an amazing product such as the iPhone or the creation of a new service such as Uber. When people talk about these extraordinary achievements they often use words such as "genius", "gifted", "one in a million", "lucky", "overnight success", "in the right place at the right time" and the alike. I don't want to dispute the achievements and I certainly realize that such achievements are extraordinary in the sense that they are rare. What I do take issue with is the claim by outsiders that outstanding things an be

achieved "overnight". This is a simple misconception - to be accurate, it's the human way to deal with cognitive dissonance: it's envy, weakness and fear hiding behind passive aggression. I will get back to that in a little bit. Further, the word perfection in itself rests on flawed assumptions. Perfection means that there is no way to improve something further. Perfection implies stagnation. In the age of the Law of Accelerating returns, we know that technology evolves from paradigm to paradigm in an S-shaped curve. Once one technology has achieved global adoption (e.g. mobile phones), the next technology will come along - the new technology has a much higher performance per dollar spent and hence pushes the old technology out (e.g. virtual/mixed reality platforms). For example, the once so famous walkman is history today because we carry music around in our smartphones. Let's go back to the so kindly labelled concept of "misconception" that innovations get invented overnight. Let's think about Thomas Edison's light bulb. The light bulb is about as "genius" as it gets. Literally, before

Edison invented the light bulb, we were living in the dark.

Law #19: The Blackbox Approach

The first day I entered the lecture theatre when I started my PhD studies, I was anxious. I had basically no math skills and I was attempting a PhD in a quantitative field. All my fellow PhDs had studied math at Oxford, Cambridge or a top French engineering school. One even had a PhD in math from a top UK university I remember. The lecturer started the first session talking about the separating hyperplane theorem. Naturally, I felt inadequate at first. The good news was that I had no chance of catching up with those people - they had decades of knowledge and experience. I simply could not make up for it even if I wanted to. So filling in the gaps was not an option and this was clear to me from day one. This forced me to go a different route: if I couldn't compete, I had to find a loophole in the game and exploit it. Of course, math is like a language and if you don't speak it, you can't communicate. But I soon realized that most of my fellow PhD colleagues' knowledge was excess knowledge. They only used a small part of their knowledge. I felt that I

could probably focus on understanding this small part of knowledge to some degree that would allow me to pass exams and conduct experiments. The rest of the PhD was more about having good intuition and ideas and a strong will to persist. This is when I first realized that we don't need to understand everything - actually, we can't understand everything.

Law #20: Harnessing the Power of People

The next two Universal Laws we deal with are the two most difficult constraints that the creator of our simulation imposed on us. The two aspects are deeply interlinked, but let's deal with them in separation. Here is a fun fact: the mass of all ants around the world is about as much as the mass of all humans. So if you put all humans on one side of a scale and all ants on the other side of the scale, the scale would balance. The average human weighs about one million times more than an ant so I leave up to you to calculate how many ants are on planet earth. Why am I bringing up ants? Ants epitomize the idea of organization, power in numbers and selfless sacrifice for the sake of the greater good. Because ants adhere to these principles, they are a formidable force in the animal kingdom. As a matter of fact, when driver ants' food supplies become short entire super colonies start to march in the search for food. Anything that gets in the way of the ant army gets eaten; even small mammals. There are a ton of documentaries out there on driver ants and they

are worth watching. The obvious point I am trying to make is that one ant by itself achieves nothing. However, when a bunch of ants act in accord this changes. Tasks are assigned to specialists that carry out their duty irrespective of personal consequences. The rigorous organization of this large number of specialists unleashes an incredible power: the entire power of the colony is much greater than the sum of the power of all ants individually. In this way, while a little ant individually may get stepped on by a large animal like an elephant, an entire ant colony is capable of killing an elephant if it doesn't run away.

Abstracting from ants to us humans, we can reveal some Universal Laws that are incredibly powerful to understand and apply.

Law #21: Emotion Control

In a sense, this entire book on Universal Laws is about controlling yourself so that you can better deal and influence the simulation we live in. Whatever is outside the simulation we live in has ultimate control over our boundary conditions: we were essentially given a set of rules and now we have to play according to those rules. What matters for us is that we are inside this simulation and as soon as the creator decides to turn off the tab, it's game over. Secondly, it is also game over because once we realize that we are inside the simulation and that this simulation follows Universal Laws, we can start manipulating the simulation to our best abilities. Of course, we will always be subject to the simulation constraints: e.g. we can't escape gravity. But we still observe cause and effect and we can reveal the laws that govern our universe. As such, we are in control of the universe to the degree that we can manipulate our environment according to the Universal Laws. Although I am not wildly read I philosophy and other strands of literature that may deal with this

topic, I believe this is the main philosophical contribution of this book, at least for the understanding of the general public: we can change the things around us because they follow specific Universal Laws. We are not helpless.
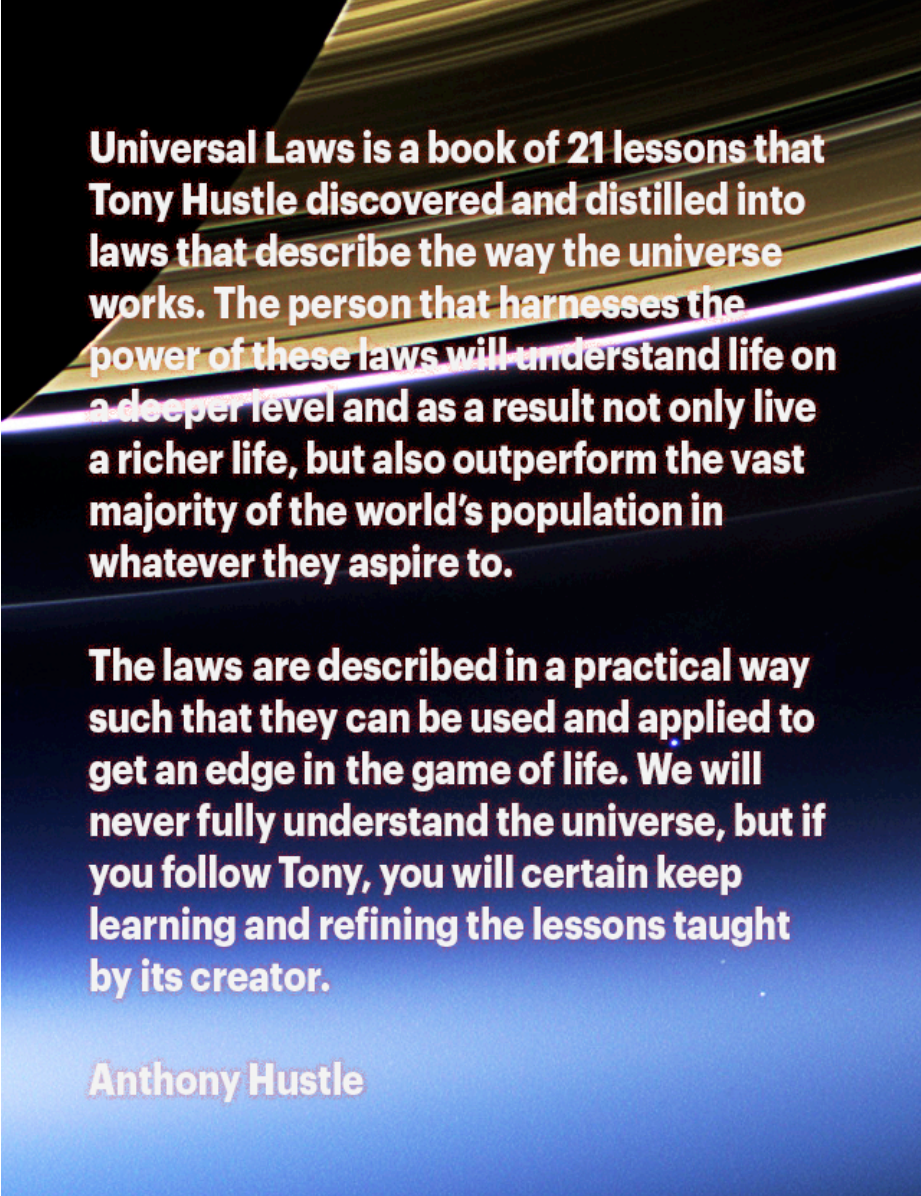
Concluding Remarks

I have nothing more to add. I will review this book in due course when I feel that it's time to check whether my hypotheses were falsified or not. As I am about to publish this book, I have already learned a lot more and I could add more to the book. I won't do that though, as I feel like this chapter of my life is complete now. So instead I will finish with one of my favorite quotes from Masayoshi Son of Softbank:

"I don't have time to waste. One can think as much as he likes. However, I need to act and follow through with my ambition. Because we only live once, I want to do something that will be remembered in history. If I do the same as others do, I will never be able to make history."

For more information go to anthonyhustle.com

Universal Laws is a book of 21 lessons that Tony Hustle discovered and distilled into laws that describe the way the universe works. The person that harnesses the power of these laws will understand life on a deeper level and as a result not only live a richer life, but also outperform the vast majority of the world's population in whatever they aspire to.

The laws are described in a practical way such that they can be used and applied to get an edge in the game of life. We will never fully understand the universe, but if you follow Tony, you will certain keep learning and refining the lessons taught by its creator.

Anthony Hustle