

A  
GUIDE  
BY  
ROBERT GREENE  
FOR  
THE LAWS  
OF  
HUMAN  
NATURE

# How To Read This Book: A Guide By Robert Greene for The Laws of Human Nature

In the the nearly quarter century that I have been been writing and researching the relationship between people and power and strategy, I've read thousands of books in that time (over 300 biographies and novels and non-fiction books in my bibliography for this book alone), interviewed hundreds of people and spent countless hours consulting and advising clients. This book then is a summation of all of that knowledge into one book. I've tried to write something that the average reader can simply pick up and enjoy.

However, if you're interested in experiencing something deeper, in getting *everything* that went into creating it, then this guide will serve as a tool for doing so. Because my ambition for you the reader of *The Laws of Human Nature* is that it has the same impact that writing it, that immersing in the material, had on me. I want this book to become a new lens for looking at the world.

Writing this book and getting so absorbed in the material changed how I look at people, it changed how I judge people, and it changed how I interact with every single person and idea I encounter. If you read this book like you do any other, you risk losing the impact I poured two decades in trying to understand. If you, reader, read this book diligently, you too will start to see the world differently, you will see yourself and others differently, and you will see with greater clarity how to navigate life. That's what I want for you. That's what I committed two decades of reading and researching to. And that's why you can't read this book like you do others.

So how must it be read? Here is my guide to reading

*The Laws of Human Nature:*

## **First Read - Deep Cover To Cover Reading**

Approach your first read through *The Laws of Human Nature* as you would any other serious book. Get your pen out, your notecards or post-its, your highlighter - your tools of choice for the following:

- + Take notes as you're reading it, underlining passages that resonate, jotting thoughts in the margins or in the book, as you would do typically.
- + Take note when a passage or chapter applies to people that you know, personally, in the news, anyone you can put a name to.
- + Take note when a passage or chapter reminds you of something you've personally done, you've experienced, or you've been a victim of.
- + A third of the chapters have character traits - try and think of people that you know that fit these types, you can even write this in the book as you're reading it or on note cards.

I have spoken before about my own methodology for reading this way and I know Ryan Holiday, my former research assistant has followed with his own similar process. For instance, many of the books I've read of a notation AF in them, which stands for amor fati. Many of the quotes and stories featured in my books started off in a similar form--they were patterns I noticed or repetitions I took the time to notate. It's important to note that I didn't get bogged down when I discovered them and that's why I am suggesting on this read that you merely *note* (or fold pages or use post it notes) when something catches your attention. Do not let this process slow

down your momentum. I want you to read carefully and considerately but not at the expense of getting cover to cover.

It's also been called to my attention that many readers don't read my books linearly, they pick and chose chapters based on what they are currently going through or looking for. While that can work for this book as well, I do suggest you get through *all* of it first or in short proximity to each other because many of the ideas are related and interdependent.

## **Second Read - Deep *Self-Reflection and Analysis***

After reading the chapters listed below, analyze yourself precisely as I lay out. In a notebook or a word processor, whatever your preference, be honest without filter, be self-aware without rationalizing, be vulnerable without fear. See the degree of your own self-absorption, see when you tend to not listen to people, see the shadow side of you, see the moments when aggression leaked out, see how you deal with envy, see yourself deeply and completely, in a way you've never before taken the time to.

The point is I want you to read the book with an open eye toward how *you* are either guilty of or have been ignorant of these laws in your own life in the past. Look at the book and really see how it applies to you even the things you think only apply to other people. It's much easier to analyze and dissect other people's behavior, but it essential that you apply that scrutiny to yourself first.

- + Chapter 1: Master Your Emotional Self - *The Law of Irrationality*
- + Chapter 2: Transform Self-Love into Empathy - *The Law of Narcissism*
- + Chapter 6: Elevate Your Perspective - *The Law of Shortsightedness*

- + Chapter 9: Confront Your Dark Side - *The Law of Repression*
- + Chapter 10: Beware the Fragile Ego - *The Law of Envy*
- + Chapter 11: Know Your Limits - *The Law of Grandiosity*
- + Chapter 12: Reconnect to the Masculine or Feminine Within You - *The Law of Gender Rigidity*
- + Chapter 13: Advance with a Sense of Purpose - *The Law of Aimlessness*
- + Chapter 14: Resist the Downward Pull of the Group - *The Law of Conformity*
- + Chapter 16: See the Hostility Behind the Friendly Façade - *The Law of Agression*
- + Chapter 17: Seize the Historical Moment - *The Law of Generational Myopia*
- + Chapter 18: Meditate on our Common Mortality - *The Law of Death Denial*

Each of these chapters is about strong currents that run through everyone, but again, I want you to be reading and interacting with the examples with the intent to examine their role in *your* life. This book is about not just understanding what you feel, but trying to see why you feel a certain way. For instance, don't just accept that you're angry or don't just accept that you're resentful. Look at why and where it comes from. Use it to gauge your decisions in life, the main ones you have that you can look at -- were they governed by irrational forces, were you really looking far ahead, were you locked in the moment and excited by something right in front of your nose but not seeing the long term consequences, were you being grandiose, taking on a project that was well beyond your means. Deepen your knowledge of yourself in action. You're not going to get anywhere with this book in your self-deceptive phase of it's only other people who are like this.

If you do this, you will leave the book with the most important trait a leader or a business person or an artist can have--an understanding of themselves, greater *self-awareness*.

### **Third Read - Deep Analysis of Others**

Just as you analyzed yourself, perform the same deep analysis on others. This is an exercise in developing empathy, in stepping outside yourself and looking through the lens of people you come in contact with in everyday life. Try to understand the circumstances of the people around you - friends, colleagues, bosses, strangers, enemies,

- + Are you able to see the points of view of other people? Take people that you don't like, that you find distasteful within reason and force yourself to see their point of view, force yourself to try and see their circumstances.
- + Look at other people and their character. Gauge whether they are strong or weak, their attitudes, find examples of other people leaking out their shadowside, find examples in your life when you've been victim of people's envy.
- + Take all the people that you know from your own personal realm and scrutinize them through this lens.
- + Your leaders or your boss, are they able to take the long view, what kind of leader are they in relation to the book? How would they be better if they could?
- + Try and make yourself react differently to people in situations. When you're engaged with people and there's something going wrong, you're going to

get emotional and personal, but step back from that and look at yourself without getting emotional, without taking it personal.

- + Try to do this every single day with every moment of resentment that you feel. Break your patterns and react with people differently.

### **And Beyond...**

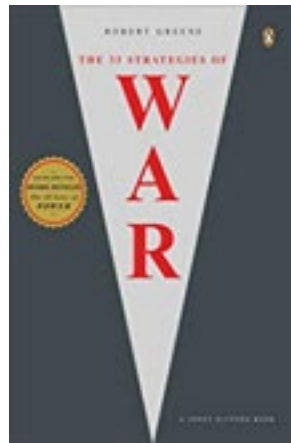
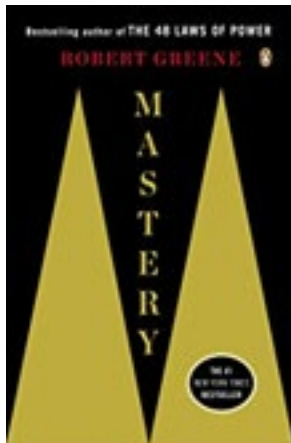
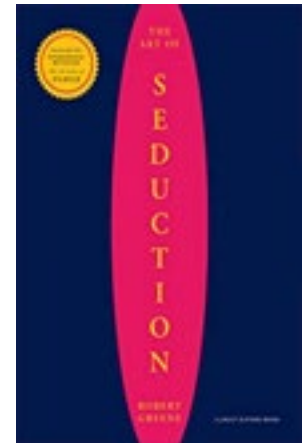
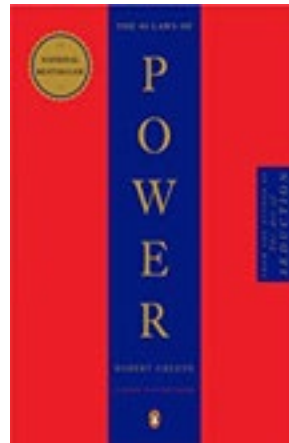
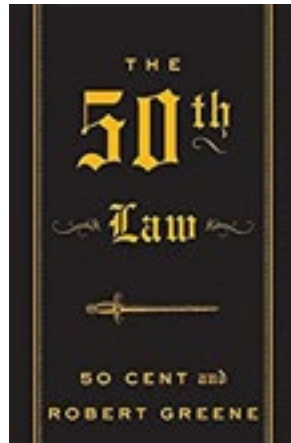
I know that I am asking a lot by suggesting you read this big book and then re-read it alongside these time-consuming exercises. But this investment is not without its rewards. The problems we face in today's world primarily result from our poor understanding of human nature. This is a timeless problem that has become particularly acute. Indeed, I have come to say that the ultimate law of human nature is our *denial* of human nature. This has immense consequences and causes needless conflict, loss, mistakes and pain.

Writing this book had a big change on how I interact with people, it altered my whole perspective because it taught me about the forces at work in the world. To ignore these forces is to be a kind of slave in darkness. I wrote this to free you from that, to produce the kind of revelation that came slowly through my years of research. It was a process that was so arduous and painstaking for me that my health suffered. Every chapter, every page, was an immense amount of mental labor, trying to figure out what is really the reality and how to express it so I want you the reader to go that extra step as you consume it. In this way you are lucky to get a synthesized form. Please take it seriously.

If you do, it will become your way of looking at the world. Human nature is not just something on the surface, it's inside of you. I want this book to transform you from the inside out. As I said, it's very grandiose, but you know when you read the [Stoics](#), you're forced to confront their philosophy and you either react against it or it becomes part of how you start looking at the world. I want you to not look at the world the same way after you read this book. I want you to stop being so reactive and so emotional and so personal and allowing everything to make you turn inward. I want it to pour you outward as a kind of therapy to look at people and see who they are and what they're really about.



*Explore more of Robert Greene's books*



*and much more..!*

[powerseductionwar.com](http://powerseductionwar.com)