**Manuscript Found in Accra**

By Paulo Coelho

Book Summary Excerpts

In the cycle of nature, there is no such thing as victory or defeat; There is only movement.

And within that cycle there're neither winners nor losers; There are only stages that must be gone through.

Losing a battle or losing everything we thought we possessed will bring us moments of sadness. But when those moments pass, we will discover the hidden strength that exists in each of us, a strength that will surprise us and increase our self-respect.

Only he who gives up is defeated. Everyone else is victorious.

Defeat ends when we launch into another battle. Failure has no end; It is a lifetime choice.

Solitude is not the absence of company, but the moment when our soul is free to speak to us and help us decide what to do with our life.

The act of discovering who we are will force us to accept that we can go further than we think.

…Religion was created in order to share the mystery and to worship, not to oppress or convert others.

Don't try to be useful. Try to be yourself; That is enough, and that makes all the difference.

The people who really help others are not trying to be useful but are simply leading a useful life. They rarely give advice but serve as an example.

Do one thing: live the life you always wanted to live. Avoid criticizing others and concentrate on fulfilling your dreams.

If we are happy, we are on the right road.

“Difficulty” is the name of an ancient tool that was created purely to help us define who we are.

Religions teach us that faith and transformation are the only ways of drawing nearer to God.

Faith shows us that we are never alone.

Transformation helps us to love the mystery.

And to those who believe that adventures are dangerous, I say, try routine; That kills you far more quickly.

Outer beauty is inner beauty made visible, and it manifests itself in the light that flows from eyes.

The eyes are the mirror of the soul and reflect everything that seems to be hidden; And, like a mirror, they also reflect the person looking into them.

If we resist the temptation to allow other people to define who we are, then we will gradually be able to let the sun inside our own soul shine forth.

Beauty exists not in sameness but indifference.

…Enthusiasm is the sacred fire.

We are used to thinking that what we give is the same as what we receive, but people who love expecting to be loved in return are wasting their time.

Love is an act of faith, not an exchange... We love because we need to love.

…with every farewell comes ahead and hope... It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all.

Love is only a word, until we decide to let it possess us with all its force... Love is only a word, until someone arrives to give it meaning.

No one can go back, but everyone can go forward.

…suffering is not a virtue.

In sex, relaxation and tension go hand in hand, as do pain and pleasure and shyness and the courage to go beyond one's limits. How can such opposing states exist in harmony together? There is only one way: by surrounding yourself... Because the act of surrender means: “I trust you.”

For most people, generosity consists only in giving, and yet receiving is also an act of love. Allowing someone else to make us happy will make them happy, too.

See sex as a gift, a ritual of transformation.  And as in any ritual, ecstasy will be present to glorify the end, but it is not the sole objective. What matters is that we have traveled a road with our partner that led us into unknown territory, where we encountered gold and incense and myrrh.

We were born alone, and we will die alone. But while we are on this planet, we must accept and glorify our act of faith through other people.

Anyone who does not share his moments of joy and discouragement with others will never fully know his own qualities and his own defects.

You will be loved and respected only if you love and respect yourself. Never tries to please everyone; If you do, you will be respected by no one period.

 Seek friends and allies among people who believe in what they're doing and who they are.

Love accepts its companion unconditionally and allows each to grow in his or her own way.

Love is an act of faith in another person, not an act of surrender.

Avoid at all costs those who are only by your side in moments of sadness to offer consoling words. What they're actually saying to themselves is: “I am stronger. I am wiser. I would not have taken that step.”

Stay close to those who are by your side in happy times, because they do not harbor jealousy or envy in their hearts, only to see you happy.

Avoid those who believe they are stronger than you, because they are actually concealing their own fragility.

Stay close to those who are not afraid to be vulnerable, because they have confidence in themselves and know that, at some point in our lives, we all stumble; they do not interpret this as a sign of weakness but of humanity.

Avoid those who talk a great deal before acting, those who never take a step without being quite sure that it will bring them respect.

Stay close to those, when you made a mistake, never said: “I would have done it differently. They did not make that particular mistake and so in no position to judge.

Avoid those who seek friends in order to maintain a certain social status or to open doors they would not otherwise be able to approach.

Stay close to those who are interested in opening only one important door: the door to your heart. They will never invade your soul without your consent or shoot a deadly arrow through that open door.

Avoid those who say: “That's it, I'll go on no further.” What they have found the grasp is that neither life nor death has an end; they're merely stages of eternity.

Stay close to those who say: “Everything is fine as it is, but we still need to move on.” They understand the need to avoid keep going beyond the known horizon.

Avoid those who meet up to discuss, seriously and pretentiously, any decisions that the community needs to take. They understand politics, they impress others and try to show how wise they are. What they don't understand is that is impossible to control so much as the fall of a single hair on your head. Discipline is important, but it needs to leave doors and windows open to intuition and the unexpected.

Stay close to those who sing, tell stories, and enjoy life, and whose eyes sparkle with happiness. Because happiness is contagious and will always manage to find a solution, whereas logic can find only an explanation for the mistake made.

Stay close to those who allow the light of Love to shine forth without restrictions, judgments, or rewards, without letting it be blocked by the fear of being misunderstood.

Elegance is not an outer quality, but a part of the soul that is visible to others.

The simpler the pose, the better; The more sober, the more beautiful.n

The simplest things in life are the most extraordinary. Let them reveal themselves.

When we are walking on our chosen path, we walk elegantly, emanating light.

Elegance is accepted and admired because it makes no effort to be elegant.

Work is the manifestation of Love that binds people together. Through it, we discover that we are incapable of living without other people, and that they need us just as much.

The person making the Offering is always rewarded. The more he shares out his affection, the more his affection grows.

Fate is never unfair to anyone. We are all free to love or hate what we do.

When we love, we find the same joy in our daily activity as do those who one day set off in search of their dreams.

No one can know the importance or greatness of what they do. Therein lies the mystery and the beauty of the Offering: it is the mission that was entrusted to us, and we, in turn, need to trust it.

Success is not come from having much work recognized by others. It is the fruit of a seed that you lovingly planted.

To he who knocks, the door will open... He who asked will receive... He who consoles knows that he will be consoled.

Success comes to those who do not waste time comparing what they're doing with what others are doing; It enters the House of the person who says, “I will do my best every day.”

You must always have a goal in mind, but as you go along it costs nothing to stop now and then to enjoy the view around you.

At such moments it is important to ask yourself: “Are my value still intact? And my trying to please others and do what they expected me, or my really convinced that my work is a manifestation of my soul in my enthusiasm? Do I want success at any price, or do I want to be a successful person because I manage to fill my days with Love?”

Do not try to make the road shorter but travel it in such a way that every action leaves land more fertile and a landscape more beautiful.

Do not try to be the master of time…respect the time between sowing and harvesting. Then await the miracle of transformation.

What is success?... It is being able to go to bed each night with your soul at peace.

Love lasts because it changes and not because it stays the same and never faces any challenges.

As long as we are intensely connected to the present moment, we will always be waiting anxiously for someone or something.

Anxiety was born in the very same moment as mankind. And since we will never able be able to master it, we will have to learn to live with it - just as we have learned to live with storms.

…although anxiety is a part of life, never let it control you... If it comes too close, say: “I'm not worried about tomorrow, because God is there already, waiting for me.”

“Excessive caution destroys the soul and the heart, because living is an act of courage, and an act of courage is always an act of love.”

Loving means being open to miracles, to victories and defeats, everything that happens each day that was given us to walk upon the face of the Earth’

Our soul is governed by four invisible forces: love, death, power, and time.

When you are going through difficult times, remember: you might have lost some major battles, but you have survived and you're still here... That is a victory. Show your happiness and celebrate your ability to go forward.

Love does not need to be understood. It needs only to be shown.

…what the future holds for you depends entirely on your capacity for love.

But those who truly want the best for us want us to be happy, even if they can't understand what we're doing, and even if, at first, they try to stop us from going ahead by means of threats, promises, and tears.

And precisely when everything seems to be going well and your dream is almost within your grasp, that is when you must be more alert than ever. Because when your dream is almost within your grasp, it will be assailed by terrible guilt... You will see that you are about to arrive at a place where very few have ever set foot, and you will think that you don't deserve what life is giving you…You will forget all the obstacles you overcame, all that you suffered and sacrificed. And because of that feeling of guilt, you could unconsciously destroy everything that took you so long to build.

Only someone capable of honoring each step he takes can comprehend his own worth.

We are all prisoners of the sands of time, and we have no control over them.

Where there is loyalty, weapons are of no use... All weapons are instruments of evil because they are not the instruments of the wise man... Loyalty has its roots in respect, and respect is the fruits of Love. Love drives out the demons of the imagination - which distrust everything everyone - and, instead, returns purity to our gaze.

Wise men often defeat warriors, but warriors also defeat wise men. To avoid this, it is best to seek the peace and repose that exist in the differences among human beings.

When you forgive, the person who insulted you feels humbled in his error and becomes loyal.

…loyalty must go hand in hand with freedom.

The most destructive weapon is not the spear or the siege cannon, which can wound a body and demolish a wall. The most terrible of all weapons is the word, which can ruin a life without leaving a trace of blood, and whose wounds never heal.

Let us, then, be masters of our tongue and not slaves of our words.

The moment we place ourselves on the same level as some vile adversary, we will be fighting in the dark, and the only winner will be the Lord of darkness.

Loyalty can never be imposed by force, fear, insecurity, or intimidation.

We will all have to face many adversaries in our lives, but the most difficult to defeat will be the ones we fear.

Beware of anyone who tries to please you all the time.

if someone confronts you over ideas or ideals, step up and accept the fight, because conflict is present in every moment of our lives and sometimes it needs to show itself in the broad light of day... But do not fight in order to prove that you're right, or to impose your ideas are deals on anyone else. Accept the fight only as a way of keeping your spirit clean and your will spotless.

... If someone merely wishes to provoke you, shake the dust from your feet, and carry on. Fight only with a worthy opponent, and not with someone who uses trickery to prolong award that is already over, as does sometimes happen.

The most important of wars is not waged with a lofty spirit or a soul accepting of its fate. It is the war that is going on now, as we speak, and whose battlefield is the Spirit, where Good and Evil, Courage and Cowardice, Love and Fear face one another.

Never repay hatred with hatred, but with justice.

The world does not divide into enemies and friends, but into the weak and the strong...The strong are generous in victory…The weak gang up on losers, unaware that defeat is only a transitory thing.

You will spend a few sleepless nights thinking: “I don’t deserve this.” Or thinking the world is unfair because it failed to give you the welcome you were expecting. Or feeling ashamed at the humiliation endured in front of your colleagues, your lover, or your parents…But if you hold fast, the pack of hyenas will eventually move off and go in search of someone else to play the victim.

Your enemies are not the adversaries who were put there to test your courage. They are the cowards who were put there to test your weakness.