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### Book Review: Seeds of Greatness by Denis Waitley

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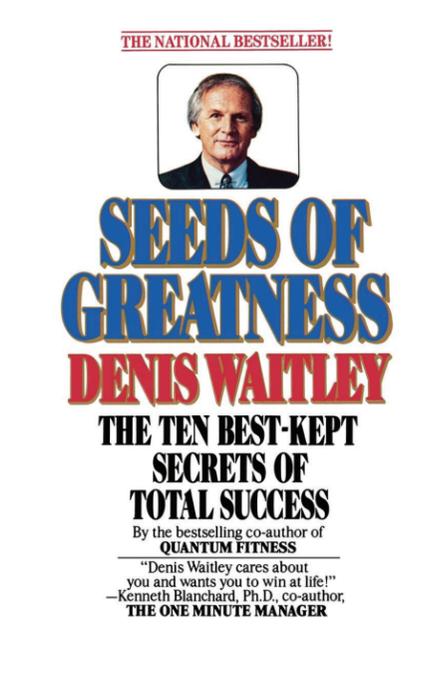
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## Seeds of Greatness

By Denis Waitley

Book Review by Jennifer Maynard

The seeds of greatness are planted within each of us. It is by choice whether or not we harvest success. In his national bestseller, *Seeds of Greatness*, Denis Waitley gives away “the ten best-kept secrets of total success.” By outlining the principles of planted seeds in the context of finding fulfillment in life, his prose, poetry, and storytelling complement any learner’s information reserve.

This Christian author relates successful tips for living professional and faith- and family-centered lives with foolproof happiness. The summaries below preview the analogy that this sought-after keynote speaker and psychologist has shared in his book and with corporate leaders, institutional, and other public audiences on the subject of greatness.

### The Seed of Self-Esteem

He begins with the inside out. The technique of positive self-talk—or affirmations— nurtures self-image and becomes the foundation for future accomplishment. Love, he argues, is the driving force of confidence in one’s own ability to succeed. It conquers fears by understanding and uprooting them, fosters good decision-making, and compels success-seekers “to hang on to their dreams.”

### The Seed of Creativity

Albert Einstein and Napoleon Bonaparte have perhaps one thing in common, Waitley argues. Their inventive and strategic use of imagination. Though the seed of creativity planted in each of them led to different . . . um . . . conclusions, they both professed the importance of creative pursuits over acquisition of knowledge. Why is this so? Because “our minds can’t tell the difference between real experience and one that is vividly and repeatedly imagined.” Leave time to ponder past, good performances. Listen to empowering music or podcasts. Preplay success in your mind. You’ll know what it feels like, every detail. And when success comes, it will be just as you created it to be.

### The Seed of Responsibility

Achievement is founded upon the principles of responsibility. So many people today fall victim to the trap of immediate gratification. They “want love without commitment” and credit without effort. Replace fear and knowledge with the action of striving to find roots of responsibility and wings of independence. Instill in others the same, and fulfillment will be at your fingertips.

### The Seed of Wisdom

“A large vocabulary—which implies broad, general knowledge—characterizes the more successful persons, regardless of their occupation.” Along with expanding intellectual brain power, personal honesty is nestled into the heart of wisdom. Waitley shares with his readers what he calls “The Integrity Triangle,” which consists of three questions:

Is this true?

Is this what I believe I should do?

Is what I say consistent with what I do?

He honors the principles of “practicing what you preach” and studying intentionally.

Laziness should *never* inhibit learning or be an excuse for mediocrity.

### The Seed of Purpose

One of the secrets Waitley reveals is “the reason so many individuals fail to achieve their goals in life is because they never really set them in the first place.” Using the example of a ten-year-old boy, he illustrates that effective personal and professional goal setting is personalized and current, concisely conveys desired destinations, diffuses competitiveness, and realizes the impossibility of perfection while valuing the efforts in striving for it.

### The Seed of Communication

Our concern in speech and body language must be “for the other person, not ourselves.” Find ways to channel the real power that lies in genuine concern for other people into your workspace or schoolspace as you communicate. Listen, seek one-on-one opportunities to talk, and importantly, do not underestimate the value of touch. Shaking hands brings business to a personal level of understanding while maintaining the integrity of professionalism.

### The Seed of Faith

“Life is a self-fulfilling prophecy,” Waitley says. We usually get what we expect. So why do we not expect greatness? As we dwell on positives, our minds are filled with healthy endorphins that propel us to achieve and triumph over obstacles. Be an incurable optimist and a faithful realist. Substitute the unproductive “Why me, Lord?” with the meek and confident “Try me, Lord.”

### The Seed of Adaptability

Stressed? Lighten up and take a breath and You’ll be in a

better position to transform stumbling blocks into stepping stones. Waitley provides interesting historic examples of people who have chosen that route in the past. What we’re left with is the invention of the ice cream cone and the all-American hot dog. He teaches strategies for coping with stress, or rather, seeking the healthy stress of chasing after goals.

### The Seed of Perseverance

Waitley relays an inspiring story of a cripple working to first regain her ability to walk, determining to make the junior high basketball team, making the track team, and racing on to win three Olympic gold medals. The only thing you can do is do your very best. That is the will to win, and “the will to win,” Waitley says, “is everything.”

### The Seed of Perspective

Don’t let the *somedays* of wishful prospects turn into *yesterdays* and two years ago.

The time is now. These *are* the good old days.

At the conclusion of each chapter are ten listed bitesize action steps—quick tweaks in everyday behavior—outlining how to improve in these areas. Following these tips, Waitley poses thought provoking questions that prompt self-evaluation. Insights drawn from interreflection ignite inspiration for good change. Such are the seeds planted for harvesting greatness as change is inspired from within.

If you’re looking for an inspiring read and a sure way to improve personal and people skills, I would recommend not only reading this book, but actively implementing his suggestions, in effect planting those greatness-seeds within you. 🦋