Dedicated to all men who defy mediocrity.
May your kingdom flourish and thrive.
CONTENTS

Introduction

The Twenty Essential Mindsets 1

The S Words 47

Conclusion, Special Bonus, and Final Thoughts 49

About the Author 54

Also by Min Liu 55
THE KING’S MINDSET

INTRODUCTION

“I am, indeed, a king, because I know how to rule myself.”

-Pietro Aretino

Welcome to The King’s Mindset.

This book is for men who reject the unrelenting pressures of the world for him to live an ordinary life, and who are willing to do anything necessary to defy the siren call of mediocrity and instead, join the pantheon of kings. Or, if you haven’t already decided this for yourself, I hope this book will persuade you to embark on what I call “The King’s Journey”.

Living a life like a king is not a life for everyone. As you will see later in this book, living like a king is, at its heart, not about glory, wealth, or luxury.

Rather, living like a king is largely about massive discipline, persistence, mental strength, and action. You will have to live like nobody wants to, so that you can one day live like nobody can.

If you are not willing to commit yourself to such a path, you should return this book and read something that makes you feel nice and warm inside. How about “The Secret”? Feels great when you’re reading it, but once you put it down, it mostly feels a bit empty.

I know you’re reading this book because YOU desire the challenge (and the rewards) of becoming a king. The path to becoming a king in today’s world is a treacherous path, akin to scaling a mountain the size of Everest. Let’s face it, just like reaching the peak of Everest and seeing its view has only been the privilege of a select few men on Earth, not every man even desires to or can complete The King’s Journey.

If you are ready to answer the call of The King’s Journey, then let’s begin.

What does it mean to be a “king”?
In today’s world, what does “living like a king” mean? Ultimately, the concept of living like a king is very personal to and uniquely different for each and every one of you. I cannot tell you what your journey and destination looks like exactly for you, but in this book, I will provide you with some guideposts. Here’s one of them.

Maybe its easier to start with what living like a king DOESN’T look like. This is the life of a somewhat average, mediocre man in our society:

- He graduates from college with a degree in a major of dubious value with the burden of heavy student loan debt. He couldn’t get into a decent public school in his state, so he decides to attend a mediocre private school. He chooses his major because his parents thought it might be a good idea, and he didn’t oppose it because he didn’t want to think about the future at age 17. It’s just too far away to think about!

- During college, all his buddies want to go drinking every weekend, so he applies for as many credit cards as he can get during “Welcome Back to School” week. The credit card companies have kiosks everywhere staffed with cute girls and they promise him free t-shirts and water bottles if he signs up for the credit cards. So, he signs up. At 23.99% interest rates. But hey, they’re interest free for 60 days! And, the BPA-lined water bottles are hella sweet!!

- Every weekend during college, being cashless, he charges over $100.00 of drinks to his credit card because he and his buddies like to drink until they’re completely blitzed, and well, he feels the pressure to buy drinks for all his buddies and girls he meets at the bars. None of them actually go home with him.

- After graduation, he gets engaged to his college sweetheart. He met her because she was part of his small social circle during college.

- He doesn’t have any savings so when he gets engaged, he takes out a high interest loan because his fiancée wants an engagement ring big enough so it won’t be embarrassing for her to post pictures of it to her Facebook. She tells him not to bother unless he gets a ring at least $10,000. He complies.

- His fiancée wants the wedding to be at least as nice as their friends’ weddings, so he takes out yet another high interest loan for the wedding expenses. Same story for the honeymoon. The pictures (costing another $5,000) are great though, and got a whopping 27 likes on Facebook.
-Because he didn’t choose a major that gives him strong job prospects, he ends up working at whatever job he’s able to find.

-He’s “lucky” enough to find an office job, so he works twelve hour days in a soul sucking job that, from time to time, gives him cost of living pay raises of 1-3%. During all the years he works there, he is constantly praying that the company doesn’t go under because the management seems quite incompetent. At the same time, he is ordered around by an unreasonable, hen-pecking, emotionally unstable boss. Sometimes, he has to work weekends too because she wants him to. On the Mondays afterwards, he realizes she doesn’t even bother to look at what he worked on over the weekend until the following week. He doesn’t say anything though and keeps his head down. Rinse and repeat.

-Because he has no other job prospects or skills, he lives in constant fear of losing his job. But because he is lazy and unmotivated, he does next to nothing to improve his skills or marketability. Well, maybe once a year, he reads some useless eBooks (just kidding).

-He decides to buy a house with his wife. The house amounts to financial slavery because both of their incomes are required to make ends meet. After paying for all home related costs, there is little to nothing left for discretionary spending or savings. They buy this house because all their other friends are buying houses, and it wouldn’t feel right if they all had houses and they didn’t. The new house is on the outskirts of suburbia (the exurbs), so they can have a bigger and fancier house than their friends. They choose the model home. Yeah, it was a bit more expensive but it looks amazing. He endures a 1.5 hour commute each way to work every day.

-Even though his marriage seems a little rocky, he and his wife have kids after a few years of marriage, well, because everybody else around them are having kids, so how could they not? The kids spend most of their time in daycare and after school programs because both mom and dad have to work to make ends meet.

-Meanwhile, the ever increasing cost of living, homeowners dues, property taxes, healthcare costs, childcare costs, student loan, credit card, and other loan debt make it hard to get ahead. They have no cash buffer and very little retirement savings after many years together. Private companies no longer provide defined benefit pension plans, so his retirement plan is solely based on his own contributions, which he generally fails to make.
THE KING’S MINDSET

-He then takes a loan against what retirement funds he has to remodel the house because his neighbor recently did that, and hey, his neighbor seems like a smart guy.

-Everyday after work, he comes home to endless domestic chores (cooking, dishes, yardwork, diapers, garbage, etc), and when that’s done, he turns to alcohol, the occasional joint, and ESPN for a temporary “escape”. ESPN is especially necessary because what else will he talk to the guys at work about?

-Over time, these escapes satisfy less and less, so he gets a car loan to buy a BMW. Every day while driving from the exurbs to work and back, he sits in traffic baking his balding head under the sun in his convertible BMW.

-In the late evening every night, he is reminded that he has a sexless marriage. He doesn't remember the last time his wife gave him a blowjob. Maybe college? Rinse and repeat.

-Because he has forgotten how to talk to women (or actually never knew how to), he lives in constant fear of his wife leaving him. So, he appeases her every whim, thinking this is how he will keep her around.

-On weekends, his time is taken up by being dragged to baby showers and kids birthday parties. He rarely has time to see his high school and college buddies. He might see them once a year, if even that.

Yes, I know. That’s a DEPRESSING, Kafkaesque picture. How do you think this story ends up? Some men end up clinically depressed, some end up divorced, some lose their will to live and thrive, and all of them end up unfulfilled and die mostly a broken man.

Note that there are many types of men in our society, but for the purposes of discussion, I am just relaying the story of the average man that I am well familiar with. Other unremarkable men have different stories, but very few of those stories are any more optimistic.

One of the kings discussed later in this book, Napoleon Bonaparte, wrote: “Death is nothing, but to live defeated and inglorious is to die daily.” I read these words a few years ago, and they haunted me for a long time after that. It was back then when I had the idea to write this book.

Let’s face it: Most men on this planet end up living defeated and inglorious, and they end up this way due to a number of reasons which we will discuss shortly.
THE KING’S MINDSET

Are you okay being one of these men? If so, you have lots of company and misery sure loves company!

But, let me give you some truth: Yes, it’s a difficult road to become a king, but to live inglorious and defeated is not any easier. I hope you realize this if you sit on the fence about what kind of life you want.

Your choice.

What’s the solution?

Too many men these days live defeated and inglorious and to make matters worse, there are not enough positive masculine role models for men in today’s society to show them a different way, to provide them the necessary environmental exposure to masculine ideas and ideals.

As such, we need to look to men of a different era as role models because there is another way for men to live, the way of the king.

This book represents wisdom, knowledge, and experience accrued during my over forty years on this Earth, but more importantly, it weaves the wisdom, knowledge, and experience of the most powerful men in history, the monarchs, conquerors, and sovereigns of the nations of Earth, men who have reached the pinnacle of power and glory in their respective nations and eras.

Simply put, no man has been able to reach such pinnacles in life without possessing some exceptional traits, and this book seeks to crystallize what those traits are for your benefit, so that you can begin to piece together WHAT your life can look like, and HOW you can get there, i.e. the “King’s Journey”.

Why are kings appropriate role models for men?

Simply put, kings are appropriate models for men because they have reached the height of power and deeds, unlike 99.99999% of men that have ever lived in this world.

For men, power is the most important asset. More important than muscles, IQ, and even more important than money. Just to be clear, by power, I don’t mean military might, and I’m not really referring to political power or social capital (although those things are quite useful in life).
THE KING’S MINDSET

What I mean by “power” is PERSONAL POWER. The power to see pitfalls in societal expectations that don’t benefit him (and defy them), the power to dictate one’s path in life, and the power to stay firmly on one’s path even in the face of adversity, obstacles, and external expectations, and most importantly, the power to dream and conceive of a beautiful kingdom for oneself.

The “typical” man I described previously could easily be said to have become that way because of his lack of personal power. He failed to define a path for his life of his own choosing, and he failed to identify and resist certain pressures that would have made his life easier and happier.

I would argue that the kings discussed in this book became who they were not because of their political power or military might, but ultimately, because of their own PERSONAL POWER. It was their personal power that was the foundation of all their other powers. Without that personal power, they would not have been able to grab their other powers.

By these mere facts alone, kings are our most ideal role models. Luckily, history has recorded the most prescient wisdom of many great kings, and this book seeks to extract useful lessons from those kings using their quotes and stories.

Aren’t many kings in history “bad” or “evil”? 

Yes, history has not been kind to many kings, since it is no surprise that power corrupts. Most kings have, at one point or another in their lives, done something that most people today would consider abhorrent. In order to come into power, every king makes and destroys enemies.

However, that does not mean there is nothing to learn from kings that have perpetrated evil deeds. In fact, there are many things to learn even from despotic and tyrannical kings.

Frederick the Great, whose quotes run throughout this book, wrote in his book “The Anti Machiavel”: “There is a real injustice in concluding that the rotten apples are representative of all of them.”

This book is not about conquering foreign lands and war, but in building one’s metaphorical “kingdom”. In The King’s Mindset, we will train our focus on the positive, and not negative, lessons that we can learn from historical kings.
Why did I choose the specific kings included in The King’s Mindset?

This was an extraordinarily difficult exercise as there is probably something to be learned from every king in history who has ever reached the height of power in a way other than by birth.

And there is the fact that most, if not all, kings can be viewed as evil or despotic by somebody. If we were to exclude kings that were “evil”, this would be the shortest book in history. So, even if a certain king could be viewed as evil or despotic, my goal was to extract from them lessons that are useful.

In this book, I will use examples of "great" monarchs and “benevolent dictators” throughout history to illustrate the mindsets necessary for a man to become a "king". Some of these monarchs or dictators were philosopher kings, some were benevolent, and some were despotic.

Even a few despotic kings were included, especially in respect of the chapters dedicated to power and the wielding of it because they were so skilled at wielding power, this book would have not been as illuminating without including them.

Some kings don't have a large historical record of quotes in English and some rarely wrote or spoke about mindset, and so those kings, even if they were great, were excluded out of necessity.

I also wanted to include a few kings who were considered “enlightened monarchs”, which were those kings who fostered education and allowed religious tolerance, freedom of speech, and the right to hold private property.

In addition, I also wanted to include at least one “philosopher king”, those fictional kings that Plato referred to in his writings. While Plato was referring to fictional kings, I chose one real life emperor who I believe embodies the idea of a philosopher king.

Note that I also add a few world leaders who were not kings, but whose leadership abilities and power at the height of their “rule” were so inspiring, their mindsets need to be studied to make this a complete work.

Keep in mind that the list of kings included is short, as it would be impossible to discuss every king throughout history, and I fully acknowledge that there are many great kings that were not included, and perhaps some kings that people would agree should not have been included.
I ultimately settled on the following short list of historical kings and world leaders:

Napoleon Bonaparte
Frederick the Great
Winston Churchill
Justinian
Alexander the Great
Lee Kwan Yew
Cyrus The Great
Claudius
Pericles
Titus
Trajan
Augustus Caesar
Julius Caesar
Marcus Aurelius
Tang Tai Zong (Li Shimin)
Peter the Great
Chandragupta Maurya
(through the words of his greatest advisor, Chanakya)

Again, the goal of this book is merely to illustrate essential “kingly” mindsets and not necessarily to celebrate or denigrate any specific king. The goal was not to identify who the “greatest” kings in history were, as such a list is truly impossible to achieve, and I will leave that exercise to people much smarter and knowledgable than I am.

The goal was also not to argue that the kings and leaders discussed in this book were beyond reproach. In fact, I am sure many of them did things that were morally ambiguous or morally decrepit.

Again, the goal of this book is to extract positive lessons that ordinary men can apply from a broad cross-section of historical kings.
THE KING’S MINDSET

What does it mean to be a king and to have your own “kingdom”?  

At the beginning of this introduction, I wrote about what a king doesn’t look like. So, what does being a king actually look like? 

Let’s start with this:  

You need to start seeing yourself and your life as a “kingdom”, a kingdom that you need to conceive, build, grow, and protect.  

All men have a “kingdom”, but for most men, this kingdom is cobbled together like the “ordinary” man I described above. For most men, like my mediocre man illustrated above, his “kingdom” is not a beautiful kingdom that he has conceived of and taken deliberate measures to create, but one that was **created by default** by the world imposing its will on him, instead of the other way around, i.e. HIM imposing HIS will on the world.  

This book will teach you the mindsets that great kings have used to build their beautiful, deliberately constructed kingdoms.  

In today’s world, it is easier to build your own “kingdom” than ever. What I mean by this is you can live almost anywhere you want in the world, make a living independently of corporations or traditional employment, and you can choose what kind of life you want.  

All of this is possible, but you have to make deliberate choices to obtain the life you want, or you will end with a “life by default”.  

To illustrate the difference, here are the characteristics of a typical ordinary man versus the characteristics of a theoretical modern day king:
Unfortunately, obtaining a life that looks like that of the right column is not very likely for most men, given their lack of commitment, self-love, and ambition, and also external pressures to conform to the “safe” and ordinary path.

In order to obtain the life of a king, i.e. a life that looks more like the right column than the left column, a man needs to have The King’s Mindset and take the King’s Journey.

Keep in mind that the characteristics listed above are just ideas. I am not suggesting that a “king” needs to have all of those characteristics, and I am not suggesting that if you have any of the characteristics in the left column, that you are mediocre. Think of these things on a spectrum, and not as binary. We all have different circumstances and desires. The key is to be aware of and open to the many possible opportunities and choices you
have, and not to let decisions be made for you. Not everything on the right hand column is for everybody, and that is okay.

Look at what’s possible today! However, before you get too excited, many threats to your sovereignty lurk. These threats can easily conspire to deprive you of the life you want to live and often does deprive most men of the lives they can only dream of. You must learn to defy these “enemies”, and construct your life deliberately. The prize of defying these enemies and constructing your life deliberately? You get to live as a king.

By the words “living as a king”, I don’t mean riding chariots, living in a castle, and sporting a crown. I don’t even really mean the right hand characteristics above. Characterizing a king in this manner gives short shrift to these historical men of accomplishment.

Being a king doesn’t necessarily mean mansions, private jets, exotic cars, and fast women. It doesn’t necessarily mean corporate boardrooms, offshore banking accounts, or real estate and investment portfolios. Maybe it means those things to you personally, but those things do not define a “king”.

**Being a “king” in today’s world means defining and living life on your own terms and ruling yourself and your own world.** Based on this prism, it’s up to you to define the parameters of your kingdom.

I am sure you are now aroused, but in order to live life as a king, the first and most important step towards that goal is to develop one’s mindsets into those that befit a king.

Before we start your King’s Journey, I want you to go to the beginning of this chapter and read the quote by the Italian author Pietro Aretino again. Let it sink in and internalize it. For the next couple months, I want you to keep repeating this to yourself.

**Becoming a “king” starts with learning to “rule” yourself.**

To your budding kingdom,

Min Liu