

GREATER THAN — Sample Chapters

From **Greater Than: Simple Equations for Sharper Decisions**
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Foreword (excerpt)

We collect **knowledge about the past**, but we live by **decisions about the future**. The bridge is a mix of **intelligence** (patterns) and **wisdom** (principles). In an age of **infobesity**—too much information and too little reflection—we need simple equations that make tradeoffs explicit. That’s what this book offers: binary clarity with built-in **Antithesis** (when to flip), so you stay wise, not rigid.

1. Consistency > Intensity

The Equation

Choose the small, repeatable step over the heroic sprint—again and again.

Why It Matters

Intensity fades; consistency compounds. Tiny, repeatable actions grow skill, trust, health, and outcomes. Teams built on repeatability outpace teams built on heroics.

Antithesis (when the other side wins)

- **Crisis/launch:** A sharp, timeboxed push is warranted. Repay the sprint debt immediately.
- **Creative ignition:** A single intense burst can help you overcome inertia—then downshift to repeatable steps.
- **Seasonality:** When windows are brief (e.g., fundraising week), intensity anchors attention.

Stories That Stick

- **Personal:** A writer who shipped 200 words a day for a year produced a finished draft; weekend marathons repeatedly burned out.
- **Professional:** A product team that solved one small UX snag daily cut churn more than months of sporadic overhaul.
- **Business:** A sales org that focused on consistent followups (3 touches/week) beat competitors obsessed with irregular big swings.

Decision Filters (20 seconds)

- 1) Can I repeat this **tomorrow**? If not, shrink it.
- 2) Does this step **finish** something small?
- 3) If I miss: can I avoid missing **twice**?

Practice

- Define a **daily floor** (so small it's hard to fail).
- Track streaks by **chains**, not totals.
- End each session by queuing **tomorrow's first action**.

Common Traps (and Fixes)

- **Trap:** Overambitious plans → relapse. **Fix:** Halve the step; double the streak.
- **Trap:** Intensity theater (looks busy, yields little). **Fix:** Tie tasks to outcomes and define “done.”

Team Application

- Use a “**Never Miss Twice**” policy for key inputs (daily check, PR per day, 1 follow-up per rep).
- Celebrate throughput and streaks, not late-night heroics.

One-Sentence Summary

Intensity starts stories. Consistency finishes them.

2. Habits > Motivation

The Equation

Design the environment so the default behavior produces the result; don't rely on willpower.

Why It Matters

Motivation is a spark; habits are a system. Your surroundings, prompts, and friction levels predict behavior better than inspiration does.

Antithesis (when the other side wins)

- **Kickoff energy:** Early enthusiasm can mobilize allies or start a movement.
- **High■skill acquisition:** Short stints of deliberate practice need focused **motivation** to raise your ceiling.

Stories That Stick

- **Personal:** Laying out gym clothes by the door tripled morning workouts; the plan stayed the same, the **friction** changed.
- **Professional:** A team replaced “update the doc” with an auto■template triggered by PR merges; documentation rates soared.
- **Business:** A signup flow that surfaced one obvious next step (not ten options) increased activation without adding features.

Decision Filters (20 seconds)

- 1) What’s the **first visible prompt**?
- 2) Where is **friction** high? Remove or relocate it.
- 3) What’s the **default** if nobody decides?

Practice

- Pair a new habit with a **current one** (“after coffee, review top■1”).
- Make the **good** easy and the **bad** annoying.
- Keep a **habit scorecard** (Y/N) to measure design, not mood.

Common Traps (and Fixes)

- **Trap:** Waiting for motivation. **Fix:** Start with **2■minute** versions.
- **Trap:** Complexity creep. **Fix:** One prompt, one action, one clear win.

Team Application

- Convert policies into **design:** pre■filled briefs, default reviewers, meeting■free focus blocks.
- Publish a **Habit Playbook:** “What we do by default when confused.”

One■Sentence Summary

Design beats willpower; make it easy, visible, repeatable.

3. Sleep > Grind

The Equation

Protect sleep to multiply hours; don't trade today's output for tomorrow's debt.

Why It Matters

Rest regulates focus, mood, and memory consolidation. Chronic under■sleep creates error■prone work, slower learning, and brittle teams. Energy multiplies hours; exhaustion divides them.

Antithesis (when the other side wins)

- **True emergency:** Contained, one■off pushes may be necessary—repay the sleep debt quickly.
- **Time■boxed milestone:** Short deadlines can compress a phase but should be followed by a **recovery window**.

Stories That Stick

- **Personal:** After shifting to a hard cutoff and a wind■down cue, evening rework dropped; mornings finished the “hard thing” first.
- **Professional:** Rotating on■call with documented **recovery days** reduced incidents and burnout.
- **Business:** A team that measured **defects per release** found fewer bugs when weeks included protected deep■work mornings and consistent sleep schedules.

Decision Filters (20 seconds)

- 1) Is this a **one■way door** that can't wait?
- 2) What work will I **redo** tomorrow if I push now?
- 3) Have I scheduled **recovery** after this sprint?

Practice

- **Protect the first hour** after waking for high■leverage work.
- Use a **bedtime alarm**; stop an hour earlier than you think.
- Keep a simple **energy log** (sleep hours → next■day focus).

Common Traps (and Fixes)

- **Trap:** Badge of honor grind. **Fix:** Track error rates and rework hours.
- **Trap:** “Just this week.” **Fix:** Put the payback on the calendar now.

Team Application

- Normalize **asynchronous** updates and **no meeting** blocks.
- Schedule launches **earlier in the day**; avoid surprise release nights.

One Sentence Summary

Move quickly—without breaking trust with your future self.

About the Author

Mustafa Sualp is a serial entrepreneur and servant leader. He founded and exited **AEFIS** (acquired 2021), and is **Founder & CEO of Social**, a real-time collaborative AI chat platform. He has led global remote teams across three continents, grew AEFIS from 32 to 55 institutions during COVID, delivered a 4.8× investor ROI, and earned the **Philadelphia 100®** (2016, 2017). Drexel **Commerce & Engineering**. Bilingual (EN/TR).