

The Best Books I Read in 2015

By JD

"I find television very educating. Every time somebody turns on the set, I go into the other room and read a book." – Groucho Marx

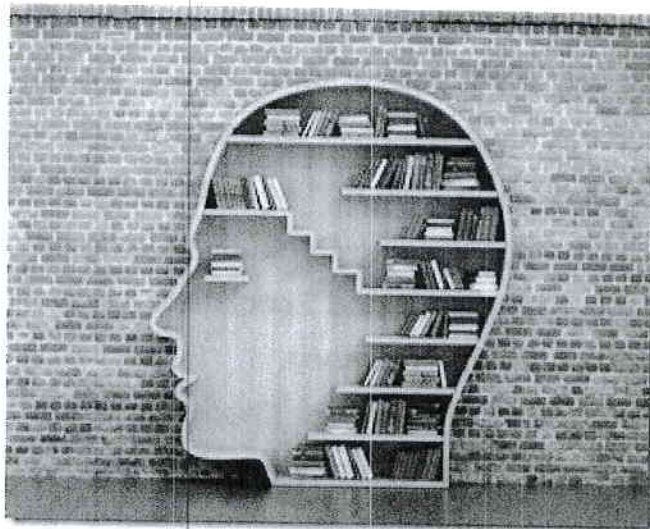
I can't believe it's another year gone by. I was reflecting the other day on the changes this past year, between me now and a year ago.

It comes down to the people I met, the adventures I took, the projects I worked on, the workouts I did, the new habits I formed, the experiences I created, and the books I read.

I suppose all the Netflix shows probably helped change me in some way, too. For example, if I ever run into a zombie, I think I now know what to do.

As you will see, I read a wide variety of books, but they are all geared around how to hack a better you, including mind, body, emotions, career, finance, relationships, and fun.

With that in mind, here are the best books I read in 2015 ...



1. *31 Day Home Cancer Cure*, by Ty Bollinger. This book just might be a life saver for you or someone you know. 1 in 3 people die of cancer now, soon to be 2 in 3. It used to be 1 in 80. Bollinger lost a lot of people in his life to cancer and went on a relentless hunt to find the world's best cures and prevention techniques. Interestingly, his findings match a lot of what I had heard from real-life cancer survivors and from people that have beaten cancer through alternative methods. It's also a very eye-opening book, and I did find some new techniques and some new people I hadn't heard of before, including Dr. Budwig, who was a top European Cancer Research Scientist, Biochemist, Blood Specialist, German Pharmacologist, Physicist, and a seven-time Nobel Prize nominee.
2. *ADKAR: A Model for Change in Business, Government and our Community*, by Jeffrey Hiatt. ADKAR really provides the ABCs of adoption and change management. It's a simple model of Adoption, Desire, Knowledge, Ability and Reinforcement. Adoption is a skill and if you want to improve your influence and impact, this book provides the habits and practices that actually work.
3. *Alchemy of a Leader*, by John E. Rehfeld. This is a different kind of leadership book. It's a synthesis of US and Japanese management culture and leadership practices. Here I learned about Giri as a positive force of mutual trust and appreciation, and the key to deeper relationships. The book is effectively a blend of the world's best management practices to help you outperform the competition, and to be a better leader.
4. *Anticipate: The Art of Leading by Looking Ahead*, by Rob-Jan De Jong. This book is a very rare gem among leadership books. In this book, Rob-Jan De Jong explains how anyone can develop their visionary capacity and become a more visionary leader. He provides pragmatic techniques for looking at the road ahead and translating it into actionable insights.
5. *Creative Anarchy: How To Break the Rules of Graphic Design for Creative Success*, by Denise Bosler. I really enjoyed this book from the perspective of how to push the envelope of design thinking, as well as how to unleash your own inner artist. It's a book that challenges you to be different and how to pave brave new frontiers. My favorite idea in the book is that there are no new ideas in design, and yet you can still add value and continue to innovate in design by applying everything under the sun that's been used before.

6. *Goals!: How to Get Everything You Want — Faster Than You Ever Thought Possible*, by Brian Tracy. This is one of the best books ever on the power of goal setting and how to actually set and achieve your goals. In this book, Tracy shows us a repeatable approach and proven practice for setting and achieving any goal – the same approach he has used to make profound changes in his life.
7. *Grit In Your Claw: The 8 Strengths You Need to Succeed in Business and in Life*, by Robert Luckadoo. This book really surprise me. It's about the power of eternal optimism and Luckadoo shares vignettes from his life to show how you can build eternal optimism as a skill. I was surprised by how much I enjoyed the little stories, told in a very authentic way. of how Luckadoo made the most of his situation and how it served him later in life.
8. *Leading Digital: Turning Technology into Business Transformation*, by George Westerman, Didier Bonnet, and Andrew McAfee. This is really a book about how to be an effective leader in a Mobile-First, Cloud-First world. It's a How-To guide for digital business transformation and it shows real-world examples with companies like Starbucks, Burberry, and more. If anything, you'll appreciate what it takes to a modern day leader and to drive change versus get run over by it.
9. *Living with a SEAL: 31 Days Training with the Toughest Man on the Planet*, by Jesse Itzler. This is one of the zaniest personal development books I've read in a long time. It was very refreshing and full of humor. Along the way, it's a very serious book that reminds us that we are so much more capable of more than we ever imagined. But long before our body gives up, it's really our mind that actually does. This is a book about using your heart, body, and mind to become all that you're capable of. And if you enjoy reading about somebody going through their own personal Hell, you'll enjoy the story as Jesse gets pushed to his limits ... and beyond.
10. *Magic in Practice: Introducing Medical NLP: The Art and Science of Language in Healing and Health*, by Garner Thomson with Dr. Khalid Khan. I'm not a doctor, but I enjoy health hacking and studying modern medical miracles, as well as the future of healthcare. This book integrates psychosocial therapeutic approaches with existing biomechanical principles to improve outcomes for patients and professionals. It also helps explain great doctors in terms of modern neuroscience, and it explains the mechanics of what it means to carry hope.

11. *Patterns of High Performance: Discovering the Ways People Work Best*, Jerry L. Fletcher. In this book, Fletcher shares a process for finding your personal high-performance pattern. Rather than try to break yourself against a corporate, standardized approach to mediocrity, this book is all about figuring out how and when you are at your best, and how to do more of that, in your own personal way. Effectively, this book gives you the chance, the challenge, and the courage to own your performance and take it to new levels.
12. *Put Your Dream to the Test*, by John Maxwell. Maxwell nails how to turn big bold ambitious dreams into goals and action steps that you can actually do. My favorite aspect of the book is where John steps into how to test your dream. For example, is your dream even your dream, or is it what others have for you, or what you think others want to hear? He makes goals fun again.
13. *Search Inside Yourself: The Unexpected Path to Achieving Success, Happiness (and World Peace)*, by Chade-Meng Tan. Imagine what happens when a Google engineer decides to get serious about mindfulness. This is a fun and entertaining book about the art of mindfulness and meditation. Chade-Meng Tan does a great job of showing how you can use mindfulness to improve your Emotional Intelligence (EQ), which is one of your most important personal development skills for work and life. If you've ever wondered how to get started with meditation, this book is it.
14. *Strong Medicine: How to Conquer Chronic Disease and Achieve Your Full Athletic Potential*, by Dr. Chris Hardy and Marty Gallagher. This book combines the knowledge and experience of a military doctor with an Olympic athlete to bring you the latest and greatest insight into health and well-being. It's all about helping you be strong, and helping empower you to cut through all the bad information and advice, to get to your personal truth when it comes to health and medicine. It's a hard-core book, but if you are into health hacking or simply want to build a better body, this is the book. It's especially helpful if you want to fight any chronic diseases, and reverse things like diabetes or heart disease.
15. *Survive to Thrive: 27 Practices of Resilient Entrepreneurs, Innovators, and Leaders*, by Faisal Hoque and Lydia Dishman. This book takes positive affirmations and turns them into real-world success stories to help you build a powerful collection of reference models and examples you can draw from. It's really about treating resilience as a skill and helping you use adversity to find opportunities for personal growth.

16. *The 15 Commitments of Conscious Leadership*, by Jim Dethmer, Diana Chapman, and Kaley Warner Klemp. This book is really about cultivating energy, passion, and purpose. Without energy, nothing happens, and people check out. With vibrant energy, people thrive. This book is all about creating a culture where people feel alive and they do their best work.
17. *The Art of Work: A Proven Path to Discovering What You Were Meant to Do*, by Jeff Goins. Jeff walks through doing the work you love and living your work in a way where your work becomes your ultimate form of self-expression. Even if you think you've heard it all before, there is enough fresh thinking there to help you rethink what work means to you, and how you can fully embrace it as a way to become a better version of yourself, and live your best life.
18. *The Blood Sugar Solution: The Ultra-Healthy Program for Losing Weight, Preventing Disease, and Feeling Great Now!*, by Mark Hyman. This book provides powerful insight into how to make your body strong by using food as medicine. It's also one of the books that has helped several people I know improve their blood sugar and reverse diabetes. What I like about the book is the depth and drill-down into how to measure various aspects of your internal health, with plain explanations of what it all means.
19. *The Book of Five Rings*, by Miyamoto Musashi. This is a book by one of Japan's great samurai sword masters. It's not just about the battlefield. It's applicable to all forms of competition, in work and life. It's a principle-based book that helps you learn more about your own weaknesses and how to become more resilient in the face of adversity, as well as how to turn your strengths into opportunities.
20. *The Daily Edge: Simple Strategies to Increase Efficiency and Make an Impact Every Day*, by David Horsager. This is an incredibly easy to read book, chock-full of productivity practices and productivity boosters. Horsager arms you with a toolbox of productivity tools for being more efficient, getting more things done, and feeling less stressed along the way. For example, use the DMA (Difference-Making Actions) strategy to never again have a day where you get nothing done.
21. *Your Daily Brain: 24 Hours in the Life of Your Brain*, by Marbles: The Brain Store. This is a fun filled book full of surprising insights and fun facts to take your personal productivity to the next level. What's unique about this book, is that it walks through "a day in the life" and shows you how you can use a variety of brain hacks during a 24 hour period.

22. *The Four Intelligences of the Business Mind*, by Valeh Nazemoff. This is a powerful book for developing your business mind. Passion and purpose are one thing, but building a strong business mind can help you recognize, identify, and pay attention to opportunities and value. A well-trained business mind is skilled at creating and capturing value. A well-trained business mind also knows how to think in terms of systems, sustainability and growth. Too many good ideas for the world, die because they lack a business mind behind them.
23. *The Four Lenses of Innovation: A Power Tool for Creative Thinking*, by Rowan Gibson. In this book, Rowan shares how brilliant innovators, like Steve Jobs, Richard Branson, and Jeff Bezos, use four key business perspectives to change the game, create new value, and accelerate growth. The four lenses are effectively: 1) challenging orthodoxies, 2) harnessing trends, 3) leveraging resources, and 4) understanding needs. They are simple but effective lenses to look for opportunities to innovate and disrupt the status quo.
24. *The Future of Strategy: A Transformative Approach to Strategy for a World That Won't Stand Still*, by Johan Aurik, Martin Fabel, and Gillis Jonk. If you are a strategist or plan to be one, or simply want to add strategy skills under your belt, this is a great read about how the game of strategy is changing. It's really about going from a "waterfall" or big monolithic approach to strategy, to a more agile approach, and baking strategy into execution.
25. *The Heart-Led Leader: How Living and Leading from the Heart Will Change Your Organization and Your Life*, by Tommy Spaulding. If you've ever had a coach, a mentor, or teacher, or somebody in your life, that really made you feel special, and helped you believe in yourself, this book helps you be that person for somebody else.
26. *The Love Fight: How Achievers & Connectors Can Build A Marriage that Lasts*, by Dr. Tony Ferretti and Dr. Peter Weiss. Here I learned how Achievers and Connectors can build better relationships by understanding the differences, knowing what to expect, and working on key areas of improvement.
27. *The Second Machine Age: Work, Progress, and Prosperity in a Time of Brilliant Technologies*, by Erik Brynjolfsson. This book shows how and why the pace of change is accelerating and what technology and automation will mean for work and life. If you want to stay on top of what's happening around the world, this is a great book to give you a glimpse of the kinds of changes that are happening and what a future world might look like. It's not science fiction, and it's a great example where the truth is stranger than fiction.

28. *The Warrior Within: The Philosophies of Bruce Lee*, by John Little. You might know Bruce Lee the martial artist, but many people don't know Bruce Lee the philosopher or personal development pioneer. He really pushed the envelope of mind, body, and spirit to new levels. In this book, Little shares the guiding philosophy that Bruce Lee used including the way of no way. You'll learn how Bruce Lee used life experience as his personal dojo to test his limits, learn about himself, and to really build his self-knowledge. Because no knowledge exists in a vacuum, Bruce Lee considered all knowledge to be self-knowledge.
29. *Warriors At The Helm: A Leader's Guide to Success in Business*, by Juan Carlos Marcos. In this book, Juan Carlos Marcos reminds us that the most effective leaders, focus on the minimum set of high-value activities. It's a book about relentless focus, ruthless prioritization, and a drive for excellence, while helping the people you lead become all that they are capable of.
30. *What More Can I Say?*, by Dianna Booher. This is a great little book on how to master storytelling to influence people and drive more meaningful change. It's full of tips and tricks that you can instantly apply to make your point better or to influence more effectively, or to just be a better communicator.

I hope you find something useful among this collection that helps you in some way, shape or form, even if it's just by creating a little bit of hope, or a new twist on how to tackle a challenge you've been facing.

Best wishes for the road and reading ahead.

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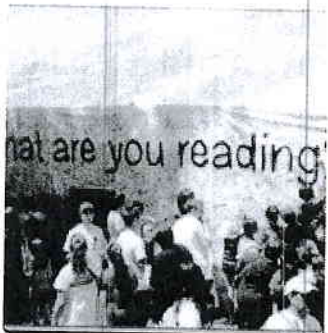
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The Best Books I Read in 2014

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