

# What You Focus on Grows: How One Quote Can Change Your Brain—and Your Life

There's a quote I come back to again and again because of how profound it is. It's from Robin Sharma, and it's a doozy:

*"What you focus on grows, what you think about expands, and what you dwell upon determines your destiny."*

Simple? Yes.

But it's also one of the most *scientifically accurate* things ever said about the way our brains—and lives—work.

Let's unpack this. Because once you get this, really get it, it's like someone hands you the master key to your mindset, your energy, and your future.

## 1. "What You Focus On Grows" — Meet Your Brain's Reticular Activating System

Let's get into the science on why this one sentence is so powerful.

Ever notice how you suddenly see the car you just bought everywhere after you buy it? That's your **Reticular Activating System (RAS)** doing its thing. It's a bundle of nerves at the base of your brainstem that filters incoming information based on what your brain deems important.

So when you focus on something—say, how exhausted you are, or how behind you feel—your brain filters the world to confirm and reinforce that belief.

But the magic is, it works the other way, too.

If you intentionally focus on gratitude, progress, strength, or opportunity? That's what your brain starts filtering for. It's like setting the radio dial for your life: you choose the station, and your brain tunes everything else out.

**Lesson:** You're not just "being positive"—you're literally rewiring your brain to prioritize what matters most to you.

## **2. "What You Think About Expands" — The Thought Loop That Shapes Your Identity**

Here's more science: repeated thoughts create stronger **neural pathways**. It's called **neuroplasticity**—your

brain's ability to change its structure based on experience.

Think about a trail in the woods. The more you walk it, the more defined and easy to follow it becomes. The same thing happens in your brain.

So if you constantly think:

- “I’m not good with money.”
- “I’m too old to start over.”
- “I never have enough energy.”

You’re deepening the groove that keeps those beliefs on repeat. But catch those thoughts, reframe them, and replace them with:

- “I’m learning to manage my money better.”
- “This season is the perfect time for reinvention.”
- “I take steps every day to feel strong and energized.”

...and your brain starts building *those* grooves instead.

**Lesson:** What you think about becomes what you believe—and what you believe becomes who you are.

**3. "What You Dwell Upon Determines Your Destiny" — This One's No Joke**

This is where it gets real.

Your dominant thoughts aren't just thoughts.

They become your emotions, which become your habits, which become your identity.

And your identity? It directs your entire life trajectory.

This is called **cognitive priming**.

It's the way your thoughts create a lens through which you interpret *everything*.

If your lens is tuned to fear, lack, or victimhood, you'll make decisions from that place.

If it's tuned to courage, creativity, and self-trust, you'll show up completely differently.

***Your destiny isn't determined by fate; it's determined by the thoughts you let run your internal show.***

**Lesson:** Don't let unexamined thoughts narrate your future. Choose the ones that align with the life you want to create.

**Reframing in Real Life**

I'll be honest—this quote hit me hard during a season when I was stuck in burnout and reaction mode. I realized I'd been focusing on what I *didn't* want: more stress, more fear, more spinning my wheels.

And surprise, that's what I kept getting.

But the moment I flipped the script and began focusing on what I did want—vibrant energy, meaningful connection, creative fire—things began to shift.

Not instantly. But steadily, intentionally, and powerfully. And it was this quote that worked as a safety net, if you will, for my thoughts. It helped me rewire my brain!

### **Science-Backed Takeaways You Can Use Today**

1. **Name what you're focusing on.** Are you training your RAS to seek out negativity... or opportunity?
2. **Interrupt and rewire.** When you catch a limiting thought, say, "That's not the direction I'm headed," and replace it.
3. **Use visual cues.** Sticky notes, vision boards, a journal—keep your new focus visible.
4. **Feed your mind.** Podcasts, books, even your Instagram feed—curate what goes in.
5. **Speak it out loud.** What you say programs your subconscious. Talk like the person you're becoming.

## **Final Thought**

Your brain is listening. Your future is listening. So is your nervous system, your hormones, your mood, and your motivation.

Speak powerfully. Focus intentionally. Dwell deliberately.

Because your destiny? You are the one writing it every single day—with your focus.