



MBS's 9 Top Shelf Books to be a Force for Change

I'm Michael Bungay Stanier—hence “MBS”—host of the podcast **2 Pages with MBS**. Every episode my brilliant guest reads the best two pages from a favourite book—a book that's moved them, a book that's shaped them--and then we dive into the ideas and insights within.

It's so wonderful to hear people light up as they share books that have truly and significantly moved them.

Of course, I *love* books. I'd probably be doing this podcast even if there were no listeners. Some books I read and then let go. And some books ... well, these are books I keep, and treasure, and come back to.

These are my Top Shelf books.

It's a delight to share some of these with you now.

PS – if you haven't yet given the podcast a review & rating on your favourite app ... I'd be very appreciative if you did!

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If You Want to Give More to the World than you Take...

Jacqueline Novogratz, [*A Manifesto for a Moral Revolution*](#)

Novogratz is the founder of Acumen, which is a venture capitalist firm that invests in solutions that actually improve the world (even more than just another app!) She's a passionate and experienced champion of what it takes to create solutions that make the world a better place. She's got a great TED talk on this too.

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If You Want to Stay Creative...

Austin Kleon, [*Steal Like an Artist*](#)

Kleon has a trilogy of wonderful books that are a delight to read, and full of pithy and practical insights. *Steal Like an Artist* is the first of the series, and the perfect place to start. The look and feel of his books are a constant inspiration for my own. Austin's also one of the faculty of [*The Year of Living Brilliantly*](#).

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If You Want to Think Long-Term...

Roman Krznaric, [*The Good Ancestor*](#)

Krznaric brings his training in philosophy to think about what it really will take for our actions to be appreciate by our great-great-great-grandchildren. How do you act for the long term, when the short-term shouts so loudly? Roman one was of my first guests on the [*2 Pages with MBS*](#) podcast

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If You Want to be Brave...

Brené Brown, [*Daring Greatly*](#)

I know, I know. It's not like Brené needs the help to get better known. She is a phenom! But it's with good reason. She's given language and grounded, practical and real guidance on what it takes to be vulnerable, to understand shame, and to be brave. I was lucky enough to be a guest on her podcast ... it's a great conversation, and I hope you'll listen to it.

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If You Want to become Whole...

Daniel Siegel, [*Mindsight*](#)

Siegel's work can occasionally get a little too technical ... I was a bit disappointed by his latest book *Aware*, which just feels overly complicated. But *Mindsight* was the book that prompted me to actually try therapy, because of its powerful insight on the power of integration. I'm reminded of Jung's comment, "I'd rather be whole than be good" ... and this book helps make that lofty goal feel real.

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If You Want to Welcome People into Your Life...

Priya Parker, [*The Art of Gathering*](#)

I fancy myself as a good facilitator, so I think a lot about the experience and the arc of an event, particularly the professional ones with which I'm involved. When I read this, I suddenly realized I needed to take the same commitment into every gathering in which I'm involved

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If You Want to Have the Courage to Stand Out...

Seth Godin, [*Purple Cow*](#)

Seth Godin is a legend in the marketing world, not least because his books make sense to everyone, not just marketers. *Purple Cow* is the book that opened my eyes to the power of standing out, something that's stood me in good stead forever. You don't have to be weird. But it is worth accentuating what's unique so we can get the very best of you.

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If You Want to Navigate Uncertainty...

Pema Chödrön, [*When Things Fall Apart*](#)

On my shelves I have quite the range of books written by Chödrön, a Buddhist nun who teaches from Gampo Abbey on Canada's East Coast. This was the first of her book I read, and the title is powerfully emblematic: quiet reassuring certainty that life will be hard; and that we can get cope with that.

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If You Want to Appreciate the Marvel of Being Alive...

Bill Bryson, [*A Short History of Nearly Everything*](#)

Bryson's travel books leave me gasping with laughter, but it's this book that had me gasping in awe. It's stated objective is to reignite a love for science. It did that, and more: it made me appreciate just how extraordinarily unlikely it is to be alive right now. This book helped me access joy

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