

# Mastery by Stewart Emery

Mastery in our careers (and in our lives!) requires that we constantly produce results beyond and out of the ordinary. Mastery is a product of consistently going beyond our limits. For most people, it starts with technical excellence in a chosen field and a commitment to that excellence. If you're willing to commit yourself to excellence, to surround yourself with things that represent this excellence, your life will change.

It's remarkable how much mediocrity we live with, surrounding ourselves with daily reminders that average is somehow acceptable. In fact, our world suffers from terminal normality. Take a moment to assess all the things around you that promote your being "average." These are the things that prevent you from going beyond the limits that you've arbitrarily set for yourself.

The first step to mastery is the removal of everything in your environment that represents mediocrity, and one way to attain that objective is to surround yourself with people who ask more of you than you would ordinarily give of yourself. Didn't your parents and some of your best teachers and coaches do exactly that?

Another step on the path to mastery is the removal of resentment toward the masters. Develop compassion for yourself so that you can be in the presence of a master and grow from the experience. Rather than comparing yourself to (and resenting) people who have mastery, remain open and receptive. Let the experience be like the planting of a seed within you that, with nourishment, will grow into your own individual mastery.

You see, we're all ordinary. But rather than condemning himself for his "ordinariness," a master will embrace that ordinariness as a foundation for building the extraordinary. Rather than relying on his ordinariness as an excuse for inactivity, he'll use it instead as a vehicle for correcting himself. It's necessary to be able to correct yourself without invalidating or condemning yourself -- to use the results of the correction process to improve upon other aspects of your life. Correction is essential to power and mastery.