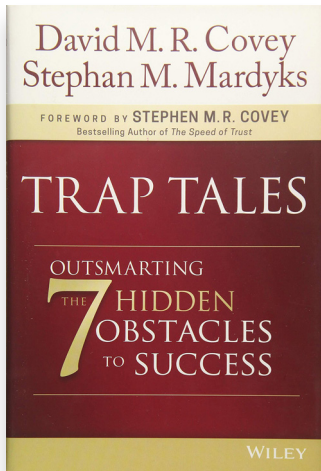


EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARIES

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Trap Tales THE NUTSHELL

John Wiley and Sons 2017

Trapology

The core message of the Traps Framework is *hope*—the belief that humans can change the trajectory of their lives through wise choices and course corrections. Some of the *Conventional Approaches* to escaping traps out there may have some positive effects in the short run, but when we're deeply hurt, we don't need a Band-Aid; we need a cure. I like to call it an *Epiphany Breakthrough*.

TRAP 1: The Relationship Trap

The Conventional Approach to relational differences is to agree to disagree and find other areas where we are more compatible. This approach acknowledges that we can't change others so we just accept those differences. We focus on things both partners agree upon and ignore the differences.

The Epiphany Breakthrough to marital differences involves adjusting our mindset from a *me* paradigm to a *we* paradigm. We look at our relationship as a team instead of as independent individuals. Together you create a shared vision for your marriage and agree upon a pathway to get there.

Trap Tales

TRAP 2: The Money Trap

The Conventional Approach to debt is to set a budget, be disciplined, and exercise restraint. But budgeting alone is not enough to help people escape debt. People can exercise restraint in the short run, but are rarely successful in the long run.

The Epiphany Breakthrough makes eliminating debt fun, interesting, and motivating by turning it into a game. When we make a game out of debt elimination, we can capture the interest and hearts of our family members so that they, too, will change their behaviors.

TRAP 3: The Focus Trap

The Conventional Approach to *being mired in the thick of thin things* doesn't attempt to address the reality which is that we live in information overload, overscheduled and overcommitted to far too many thin things. This approach doesn't filter the information but instead tries to manage it all.

The Epiphany Breakthrough occurs when we realize that we can't do it all. We have to filter out the unimportant, detach from the minutiae, and learn to say "no" more often so that we can say "yes" to the things we value most.

TRAP 4: The Change Trap

In the Conventional Approach to change, people change only when circumstances force them. Either their pain has passed a certain threshold of tolerance or they have reached rock bottom. When we make changes because of circumstances, there is a tendency to slip back into old behavior patterns once the pain is lessened, or to rely on sheer willpower.

The Epiphany Breakthrough is the realization that it's better to change courageously when your conscience enlightens you, instead of changing when circumstances force you to. By proactively choosing to change now, we avoid the negative fallout of missed opportunities and bad habits run amok.

TRAP 5: The Learning Trap

The Conventional Approach to learning from our mistakes tells us if you aren't good at it, try something else. If you can't get the desired results quickly, do something that yields better results before someone notices.

The Epiphany Breakthrough for the Learning Trap requires taking stock of the process, not just the results. We must rejoice and celebrate the journey, the effort, and the process as much as the end results. Mistakes are instructive. Learn from them instead of hiding them.

Trap Tales

TRAP 6: The Career Trap

The Conventional Approach to finding our careers suggests you focus on doing what you love and trust that everything will work out in the end. The problem with this approach is it taps only into what we are passionate about; it doesn't tap into our competencies.

The Epiphany Breakthrough leads us to do professional work that encompasses the four dimensions of a successful career: finances, ideas, passion, and purpose. When we have a job that engages all four dimensions, our entire self comes to work. The problem with a lot of professional work is that it only taps into one or two aspects of a successful career.

TRAP 7: The Purpose Trap

The Conventional Approach to accumulation is to simply expand your capacity to keep and maintain all your belongings. When your possessions outpace your capacity to hold them, simply add more storage space in your house and garage. When they're jam-packed, then you rent a storage unit, or two or three.

The Epiphany Breakthrough reveals that true happiness does not come from possessions, but comes from serving others, making meaningful contributions, and building lasting relationships. Possessions play a supporting role; they don't precede relationships in importance.