

DISCIPLINE
CREATES
FREEDOM

LESS
NOISE
A SHARPER
LIFE

SILENCE IS A STRATEGY

THE ART OF SHUTTING UP

A QUIETER MIND
A STRONGER YOU

MICHAEL A. MANN

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THE ART OF SHUTTING UP

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Consider this my attempt to save you the tuition.

I spent a good part of my life talking. Explaining. Connecting people. Defending people. Defending myself. Making introductions nobody else could make. Opening doors. Fixing situations. Giving people information, opportunities, contacts, second chances-and sometimes fifth chances.

Eventually I learned something incredibly simple: **Most of it was unnecessary.**

People will tell you almost everything you need to know about them if you give them enough silence. They'll tell you what they want. They'll tell you who they envy. They'll tell you who they're afraid of. And eventually, if you stay quiet long enough, they'll usually tell you exactly how they're planning to screw you.

The problem is that most of us are too busy waiting for our turn to speak to notice.

I wasn't born knowing how to shut up. I earned that education. Through business. Through money. Through friendships. Through beautiful people and ugly situations. Through rooms filled with powerful people-and rooms filled with people pretending to be powerful. Through becoming a father. Through watching people

I loved suffer. Through losing friends. Through making money, losing money, rebuilding, and discovering that the people standing around you during the celebration aren't necessarily the people standing beside you when the music stops.

I've been underestimated. I've also overestimated people. **The second one cost me considerably more.**

This book isn't about becoming quiet. It's about becoming intentional. Shutting up doesn't mean becoming weak, cold, antisocial, or afraid to speak. It means understanding that not every question deserves an answer. Not every accusation deserves a defense. Not every person deserves an introduction. Not every opportunity deserves a yes. And certainly not everybody deserves to know your next move.

Sometimes the smartest thing you can contribute to a conversation is absolutely nothing.

These aren't commandments. They're lessons. Most of them came with tuition. Some of that tuition was expensive. Some was painful. A few lessons nearly cost me everything.

LAW 1

SAY LESS. LISTEN LONGER.

When you're talking, you're broadcasting information.
When you're listening, you're collecting it.

Learn the difference.