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## The Power Playbook: Rules for Independence, Money and Success

*La La Anthony*

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By Alicia Heard  
Absolutely loved this book. I've always admired Lala, her hustle and ambition but after reading this book, I have a new respect for her! I finished it in two days!

The Power Playbook is the empowering guide to forging professional success, establishing financial independence, and finding balance for a truly satisfying life. The author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *The Love Playbook*, La La Anthony is again opening up her playbook to share her no-nonsense advice. La La is a self-made entrepreneur with a successful fashion line, a cosmetics company, a reality show, and a budding acting career to her credit. From humble beginnings, she created a career that she loves through sheer determination and hard work, and now she shares her hard-won wisdom on how her readers can do the same. With her unparalleled drive and enterprising attitude, La La knows what it takes to follow a dream, forge goals, and work relentlessly to achieve them. In *The Power Playbook*, she will share her tried-and-true advice for reaching new levels of success in whatever you set out to do. Big dreams require hard work, resilience, and an undying belief in yourself. Illustrated by personal stories of her own professional triumphs and challenges, La La reveals her secrets to finding success on your own terms. From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author  
La La Anthony is an actress, fashion designer, entrepreneur, and bestselling author. She can be seen in the Starz original drama series *Power*; and recently in movies like *Think Like a Man Too*; and *Baggage Claim*. As an entrepreneur and style icon, La La designs and runs a clothing line, 5th Mercer, and a cosmetics line, Motives for La La. Her first book, *The Love Playbook*, debuted at #1 on the New York Times list. She lives in New York City with her husband, NBA star Carmelo Anthony, and son. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. ALSO BY LA LA ANTHONY  
INTRODUCTION  
Power is like being a lady  
If you have to tell people you are, you aren't  
Margaret Thatcher  
Character is a power  
Booker T. Washington  
I got my first taste of power pretty early in my career. I was sixteen years old and working at WHTA in Atlanta as an intern. Local artists would often show up to the station, desperate to have their music played on the air. Atlanta was becoming a hotbed for music, particularly rap and hip-hop, and our station was the number one station in town. Working as the intern for and eventually the assistant to the music director, Chaka Zulu, I got to see the parade of people who would come through—artists, producers, record labels—all vying for his attention, all in hopes of gaining some opportunity, some introduction, some advantage. They would send over all kinds of gifts just to get that record played. Chaka held the keys to their success. He had the power. If he decided to put a record into the rotation, it could mean the difference for that artist or record. Eventually, some of that power trickled down to me. Artists started coming to me, too. They knew I had Chaka's ear. He trusted my opinion. I learned that I could have power, even in my lowly position as an intern or assistant, if I could be trusted. I didn't go to Chaka often with a new artist's tape—in fact, I did it very rarely—so that when I did do it, he was interested in what I had to say. If I went to him every week or every other day with a tape saying, "This record is hot!" at some point I would lose my power. But if I went once a month, it had more weight. I also knew that if I told him someone was hot, they had better be hot. If I gave him a tape or CD of an artist and told him they were good and they ended up being whack, he would never trust my opinion again. But if I told him someone was good and they were really good, my word would be valued from then on. And that's what happened. I saw firsthand the power of building my credibility. I also learned about abuse of power during my first few years in radio. There was something called payola that was very prevalent during this time. Record labels and even artists would pay deejays and program directors to play their songs. Pay for play they called it and it was illegal. I learned that with power comes responsibility and I watched people in the industry get into a lot of trouble because they abused their power or used it in ways that splintered the trust you should have between you and your audience. Thankfully, we never had any payola at my station, but I paid attention to everything going on in the industry and I remember thinking to myself, "I will never put myself in a position to lose it all over money." But many people did. They lost their power—and careers—by abusing it. I was just realizing that I could actually have a career in radio—not just a hobby or a love, but I could make a real living. I wasn't about to do anything to jeopardize that. I got to see the power of being on the radio really play out when I started working in the number two market in the country—Los Angeles. Instead of local artists coming to the station trying to be heard, we saw some of the biggest artists in the business coming through. Record labels were now calling us to see if we'd have on Aaliyah, Method Man, and Brandy, who were the big names during this time. "Wow, they are calling me to come to my show!" It was flattering and exciting, and a little intimidating at first. If I cosigned, or endorsed that artist and his or her music, everyone would think it was cool! That's when I really got a taste of power. I could literally make or break an artist or an album with my opinion on the air. While I never let it get to my head, I did think it was kind of cool. People were going out of their way to impress me because they wanted me to support their music on the air. I had the power of that mic. The other side of that was I never knew who was being nice to me because they wanted something. I started thinking everyone had an angle. Do people really like me or are they trying to gain favor for another purpose? Back then radio deejays held all of the cards, and had so much power. That was my first experience

with really having power and it was bittersweet. But it taught me three valuable lessons. 1. Power must be put in perspective. People will try to use you; they will give you things, do things for you to get your attention and favor. So you have to know who you are first, or else that power can go to your head and you will think it's all about you when it's really only about what you can do for someone else. 2. Power should never be abused. Just because you have the power to help someone, you should never use that power to hurt or control another. If you use your power for anything other than doing the right thing, it can have bad results. I heard about people losing their livelihoods and careers and even ending up in jail over payola, a prevalent abuse of power in music. It wasn't worth it. 3. Embrace power in moderation. I liked the way I felt when I could control my own destiny, when I had the connections to make the calls and get the meetings I wanted, and even when I had the power to help others. Power is contagious. The more you have, oftentimes the more you want. But for me, it was always about having the power to do things for others and myself. I wanted to be able to open doors, to make paths smoother and easier for my friends and family. I liked how that felt and I wanted to be able to do that on an even larger scale. What I knew for sure was that I never wanted to be powerless.

Everyone I know seems to have read *The 48 Laws of Power* by Robert Greene. It is this generation's version of *The Prince* by Machiavelli or *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu. This book is like a bible in the hip-hop community because it lays out how to obtain power in this world. The book looks at power from the perspective of conquering countries and conquering people. Greene acknowledges in the first pages of his book that everyone wants more power, but he warns that it is dangerous to seem too power hungry. So his book illustrates through historical examples how to make power moves being "congenial yet cunning, democratic, yet devious." There are laws such as, Law 2: "Never Put Too Much Trust in Friends, Learn How to Use Enemies," Law 7: "Get Others to Do the Work for You, but Always Take the Credit," Law 27: "Play on People's Need to Believe to Create a Cultlike Following," and Law 38: "Think As You Like, but Behave Like Others," that show you how to gain power and how to get ahead. I believe these laws totally work when you think about the steps it takes to be a political leader or how you work your way up the corporate ladder or how to dominate and conquer an industry like the music or television industry. I cannot dispute that throughout history men and women have used such rules and laws to gain power. But for me, the real power starts with control and mastery over yourself—not anyone else. You can't find success on your own terms unless you first attempt to execute your vision for yourself on your own. No two paths are exactly the same. What works for a friend or a colleague in navigating a tricky situation in the office or in setting up your own business may not be right for you. Only through forging your own way do you find both yourself and your purpose. You can use books like *The 48 Laws of Power* and even my books as guidelines, but you must figure out the path you need to take to be successful. The process of figuring it out yourself is in and of itself powerful. It's like working a muscle. The more you work it, the more you break it down, the stronger it gets. Whether you want to be president of your own company or president of the United States, it all starts with you and figuring out who you are and what you really want in life. That's where I had to start—figuring out what I really wanted and going through life with purpose instead of just letting things happen around me.

Over the last few years I embarked on a career change, launched a new business, created new brands, and wrote a bestselling book. I have traveled all over the world, met a whole bunch of new people, and been introduced to new ideas and opportunities. And as I continue to grow in my craft and in my personal life, I'm learning the value of having power—not necessarily over any particular person or situation, but rather power over myself, and my life. I have learned and put into practice certain rules and laws that have led me to succeed, and I wanted to put those experiences in a book to share with the world. I can't tell you how often people stop me on the street or hit me up on Twitter or Instagram asking for advice. It started with advice about relationships, which led me to write *The Love Playbook*. The advice has evolved into other areas and I'm getting asked questions like, "I'm in a career I absolutely hate and I'm miserable, what should I do?" and "How do I brand myself?" and "What should I wear on my job interview?" These are important questions, and while all of our professional paths are different, I certainly have learned a thing or two about getting ahead and finding a career that I love. In this book, I'm sharing my experiences, what I've learned through going out there and doing it the hard way, and what I've learned through watching and listening to others. We're all looking for success in our lives, no matter what that means individually. And I wanted to explore this thing called power because I believe it's at the root of success. Power can mean a lot of things and, to me, real power starts with a mastery over yourself. So, I set out to develop the best ways for people to find power in their own lives, based on my experiences and those of my friends and family. I don't know a single person who doesn't want power. But many people have no clue what true power is, how to get it, and what to do with it when it is obtained. For many, especially women, the idea of wielding power is scary. Many have a twisted idea of what power really is. For me, it's simple. Power is putting yourself in a position to maximize your gifts and your purpose and execute your goals and plans. Power is something developed from within. It's not about trying to control anyone but yourself. Power is the strength to face the things you may be afraid to do and then doing them anyway. Power is no regrets. Power is pushing forward. Power is making the tough choices in your life, and even if

you fall or fail, having power allows you to get back up and try again. CHAPTER ONE You have to learn the rules of the game. And then you have to play better than anyone else. — Albert Einstein I look at life sometimes as one big game. In a game you need to know the rules to even compete. Can you imagine sitting down at a board game, like Monopoly or chess, and just playing without knowing the rules? You may win eventually, after losing a whole lot and figuring it out. But how much more equipped would you be if you took a moment and studied the rules? During my career, I have jumped into the game several times without fully understanding the rules and have figured things out. I have also taken time and studied — through watching others and asking questions — and here are some rules I've learned that I believe are the keys to gaining real power — in life and in business.

Rule No. 1: Put Yourself First. Rule No. 2: Find Your Passion and Your Purpose. Rule No. 3: Do the Work! Rule No. 4: Know Your Worth. Rule No. 5: Be Gracious and Grateful.

Rule No. 1: Put Yourself First. Everyone knows that my family comes first. My entire life has been about making sure that everyone I love is okay and taken care of. I've always put my son, my husband, my mother, my father, my brother, my grandmother, my cousins, my aunts, and even my close friends, first. As I've grown older, I've realized that most of my life I have been out of order. I'm realizing how important it is to put myself first. To love me first. It's not selfish to do that, but rather common sense. As much as I worry about everyone in my life, if I'm not okay, then I can't be there to help anyone. All of the pleasure and peace I get from taking care of others will mean nothing if I'm depressed or sad, or I've worked myself so hard that my health fails. I've always been about making everyone else happy and that was the source of my happiness. But I'm learning that it's no longer enough. I have to be happy first. Last year, I launched a new line in my cosmetics business, I was shooting another season of my reality show, *Full Court Life*; I auditioned for two major films; I was starring in a hit television show, which was picked up for another season with my role expanded; I starred in and was on tour promoting *Think Like a Man Too*; and I wrote and went on tour promoting my first book, *The Love Playbook*. I was doing all of the things I loved and wanted to do — and more. I embraced new opportunities and said yes to exciting new projects. But I found myself exhausted and not sleeping well. I was working so much I would get maybe two hours of sleep a night. I had a moment when I felt so bad I got scared. I finally had to have one of those talks with myself. You're going to end up in the hospital if you don't slow down! I have seen it happen — especially in the entertainment business — where people are hustling so hard that they forget to take care of themselves. They are so driven that they ignore when they're tired, they don't eat well, don't exercise, and end up in the hospital with exhaustion. It's real. What would happen to Kiyah if something happened to me? What would happen to my family? I knew I not only needed balance in my life (which I will talk about later in this book). I also needed to change my priorities in my life, putting health and balance much higher. As much as I love everyone in my life, I have to love myself first and best. If you don't put yourself first, you cannot build a solid foundation for your life.

Rule No. 2: Find Your Passion and Your Purpose. My passion and my purpose are connected but very different. I knew my passion at a very young age. I always knew I wanted to work in the entertainment field. It started with the desire to be on the radio and then it evolved into being on television and now it's evolved again to include acting in television and film. All of this fits under the "entertainment" umbrella. I know this is my passion because when I'm doing it, I feel fulfilled. It doesn't feel like work. It feels like something I was meant to do and it's rewarding. I wake up each day thinking about what new adventure I will tackle, what show I will audition for, what movie or television opportunity will come my way. I'm excited about my work. I'm happy when I'm working. The majority of people I know wake up and go to a job day in and day out, and they're not necessarily happy there. It's just another day at work. They spend twenty to thirty years of their lives working at a job, which is just a job. I know how blessed I am to have found my passion at a young age and I have continued to raise the bar and challenge myself and love every minute of it. I know this is my passion because after all of these years I still have the drive. I still care and I want to excel. I'm sad when I'm not doing it. My purpose, which I started realizing about five years ago, is to take care of people. Whether it's my family and friends or my fans through giving advice in person, online, or in my books, I have a desire to help people and see them succeed. I've always been that go-to person who people come to when they want a shoulder to lean on or a word of insight or encouragement. I can't tell you how many times I've met someone for the first time, struck up a conversation, and had them tell me, "I feel like I've known you all of my life," or "I can't believe I'm telling you this. I've never shared this with anybody," or "You're so easy to talk to, I feel like I can tell you anything." And they can. Remember my motto: No judgment. That ability to listen to people and not judge them no matter what is my gift. My purpose is to use that gift to help people overcome obstacles in their lives or accomplish things they never thought they could. This book is an extension of my purpose. Instead of telling one person some of the things I've been through and some of the insights that have helped me accomplish things in my life, I can put it all here. My passion helps me execute my purpose.

Rule No. 3: Do the Work! I'm married to one of the best basketball players on the planet. He is naturally incredibly athletic and has been specifically talented at basketball since before he can remember. He won an NCAA championship his first year at Syracuse University, the first ever in the team's history. He then left school at just nineteen years old for the 2003 NBA draft, where he was the

number three pick. Basketball comes naturally to him and he probably doesn't have to work as hard as most. But he does. The summer of 2014, after he signed the biggest contract of his career to return to the New York Knicks, he worked harder to prepare for the coming season than I ever saw him work. He changed his diet—eating low carbs to lose weight so that he would be leaner and faster on the court. And he put in hours-long training sessions twice a day—before training camp was even to begin. “Babe, aren't you going to have to work this hard for training camp? Why do it now?” I asked him. “I don't want to be exhausted when training camp gets here. I want to be in such great shape that it will feel like a breeze,” he told me. He wanted to make sure that he was ready because more than wanting to be the best, he wants to win. When his team isn't winning, he's not a happy camper, no matter how good his personal stats are. He takes it very personally. So he wanted to make sure that he was doing everything in his power to see them victorious. “This is my team and I have to perform as hard, if not harder, than every man on the team,” he told me. As a team leader, he feels like he has to set the tone. He has to create the standard on his team. And it starts with putting in the work. If his teammates see him putting in the extra time, staying later for practice and working harder than everyone else, it will rub off. “It's not enough to be talented. There are a lot of talented people in the world. But the power move comes in figuring out how to take that talent and do everything in your power to achieve that level of success that you see for yourself. There may be people who won't hire you for a particular job. In entertainment there is so much rejection. I get rejected at least once a week for a role. But what do I do about it? I work harder. While the reason why I didn't get the job may be outside of my control, I want to make sure that everything that is within my control—my skills, my look, my attitude—is working to perfect. Throughout this book I will give several personal examples of how hard work trumps everything. But I'm most reminded of this quote from Will Smith, to which I totally relate: “I've viewed myself as slightly above average in talent. And where I excel is ridiculous, sickening work ethic.”

**Rule No. 4: Know Your Worth.** How do you determine your value? For others to know your value, you first have to know your worth. Most of us base our value on what other people think about us or what we've been told our whole life. Only you know your true value. It's based on what kind of person you know you are, what your talents are, and what's the going market for those talents and gifts. Only you know what you can bring to the table. Only you know your work ethic. Your worth is deeper than salary, though it's easy to fall into the trap of valuing yourself by your paycheck. You are so much more than your job and amount of money you bring home. But I get it; it can be one way to quantify your worth professionally. There is an open market and you can do research on what your salary should be or what people in your field make. But always remember, your worth is deeper than salary. When I was younger I used to care so much what people thought about me. I wanted everyone to love me. I wanted to reach out to everyone who said something negative about me and let him or her know how cool I was and how wrong they were. But as I grew up, I cared less and less. Today it doesn't bother me at all. I know who I am and what I have to offer, and no one can take that away from me or detract from it. I will even make a joke out of comments made about me. You can look like Halle Berry and there will be thirty comments on your Instagram page about how messed up you look. That's just people today. If you're going to be upset, you shouldn't be on social media. I'm immune to it now. Going back to Rule, I had to love myself enough to realize that who I am and what I can accomplish have everything to do with what I put into it. I power my life. I don't give away my power to others to rule my life. I don't need the validation of other people for me to feel good about myself or to assess what I have to offer the world. There wasn't one moment or one event that happened when I came to realize this. There was a series of events and each time something happened that I thought was devastating and I overcame it, I grew stronger and stronger. Becoming a mother to my beautiful son Kiyan was a big turning point. There is nothing anyone can say to me or about me that will diminish who I am because I have a son who loves me to my core and as long as that's the case, I'm good. I have a family who loves me. I don't need any outside validation. My worth and value are stored in the knowledge that I am loved. I am enough.