

RICK & ISABELLA PINA COACHING

PATREON PREMIUM GUIDE • JPM 9 • BOOK 5 OF 9

AMERICA IMAGINED

The Imagination of a Nation. Assouline, with an introduction by Joel Stein.

JP Morgan put this on their list for students and interns. That got my attention. If they want their young people reading it, I want us looking at it.



FIVE LESSONS • FOUR ROOMS EACH • [PATREON.COM/RICKPINA](https://patreon.com/rickpina)

5 LESSONS + HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

Hey family. JP Morgan put this book on their list for students and interns. I am not going to turn this into a sermon. It is not a church book. But that list got my attention. If they want their young people reading it, I want us looking at it. Here is what I think they want you to walk away with. And here is what it hit in me.

01 Reinvention is the tradition

02 Story becomes the thing

03 The door is open

04 What you make travels

05 Presentation is respect

A COUNTRY THAT KEEPS REINVENTING ITSELF

This one is different from the rest of the list. It is an Assouline art book, published for the country's 250th anniversary, with an introduction by Joel Stein, who spent twenty years at Time magazine and wrote twenty-two cover stories there. It costs about 120 dollars and it is built to sit on a table, not to be studied.

It is not a history book. It is a road trip through the images America keeps making of itself: the founding fathers, Marilyn Monroe, James Dean, Michael Jordan, the Williams sisters. Read it as a document about reinvention. This is a country that keeps writing new myths about itself and then goes out and tries to live up to them. That is worth thinking about whether you run a company, a ministry, a career, or a household.

1

Reinvention is the actual national trait

Not the flag and not the founding documents. The habit of starting over is the thing that repeats on every page.

2

Images do real work

A country runs on the pictures it keeps of itself. So does a company and so does a family.

3

The myth comes before the reality

America names what it wants to be, then spends generations trying to become it. The naming is not fluff, it is the mechanism.

4

Culture is an export

The people on these pages, athletes and actors and inventors, moved the country's standing more than most policy did.

5

Anybody can enter the story

The book's cast is not one kind of person. That openness is the part worth copying.

6

Presentation is a form of respect

Assouline spends real money on paper and printing. How you present a thing tells people how much it is worth.

7

You are allowed to admire and critique at once

Stein is a humorist, not a flag-waver. Holding both is a mature posture, and it is rarer than it should be.

REINVENTION IS THE TRADITION

FROM THE BOOK

Turn the pages and the same move keeps repeating. Founding fathers, then Hollywood, then Detroit, then Silicon Valley, then whatever is next.

The publisher calls it a road trip through the pioneering energy that made America a beacon of imagination and reinvention. The pattern is not that the country stayed the same. It is that it kept starting over, and kept treating starting over as normal.

MY NOTES — HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

BUSINESS

IF YOU HAVE A BUSINESS

Inspired Solutions does not sell what it sold when we started, and I expect that to be true again in five years. The market moves and the certifications and vehicles that matter change with it. Treating reinvention as normal is the only way to run a company for the long haul.

MINISTRY

IF YOU HAVE A MINISTRY

Ministry has to speak into the world people actually live in. The message does not change. How I carry it has changed many times, and it will change again, and refusing to change the delivery is not faithfulness.

CAREER

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A CAREER

You will reinvent yourself several times, and the ones who do it on purpose land better than the ones who wait until they are forced. Plan for the next version of you before the current one stops working.

FAMILY

WITH YOUR FAMILY

Our family has been through moves, new seasons, and roles that changed completely. What held was not any particular arrangement. It was that Isabella and I both expected to have to rebuild the arrangement more than once.

02

LESSON 02 OF 5

THE STORY YOU TELL BECOMES THE THING YOU BUILD

FROM THE BOOK

The book is full of self-created myths. America named what it wanted to be long before it was any of those things, and then spent generations trying to close the gap.

That is the mechanism worth stealing. The naming is not decoration on top of the work. It is what organizes the work and tells everybody which direction to push.

MY NOTES — HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

BUSINESS

IF YOU HAVE A BUSINESS

A win theme is not marketing language. It is the sentence that tells my whole team what we are actually trying to be for that customer, and every page of the proposal either serves it or gets cut.

MINISTRY

IF YOU HAVE A MINISTRY

I say out loud what I believe God is doing before I can point to evidence for it. Naming it is what gets people moving toward it, and people cannot move toward something nobody has described.

CAREER

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A CAREER

Write down who you intend to be in three years while it still sounds too big. That sentence will quietly sort your yeses and your noes for you.

FAMILY

WITH YOUR FAMILY

Isabella and I told our kids what kind of family we were going to be before it was fully true. Saying it made us accountable to it, and they grew up inside a description we were all working toward.

THE DOOR IS OPEN TO ANYBODY

FROM THE BOOK

Look at who is in the book. Founding fathers next to Marilyn Monroe, James Dean next to Michael Jordan and the Williams sisters.

That is not a tidy cast. It is a country that has repeatedly let people in who were not supposed to be there, and then treated their contribution as part of the national story. Whatever else is true, that door is the best thing on these pages.

MY NOTES — HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

BUSINESS

IF YOU HAVE A BUSINESS

The 8(a) and SDVOSB programs exist because somebody decided the door should open wider. I am in rooms today that were closed to companies like mine a generation ago, and I do not treat that as an accident.

MINISTRY

IF YOU HAVE A MINISTRY

The most useful people in any ministry are rarely the ones with the credentials. They are the ones who showed up and kept showing up. I hand real responsibility to people nobody else would have picked.

CAREER

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A CAREER

Do not wait to be invited into your field. Most of the people you admire in it were not invited either, they just started doing the work in public until it was undeniable.

FAMILY

WITH YOUR FAMILY

I want my house to be the one where people's friends end up. An open door costs groceries and some noise, and it has shaped my kids more than most things I planned.

04

LESSON 04 OF 5

WHAT YOU MAKE TRAVELS FURTHER THAN WHAT YOU SAY

FROM THE BOOK

The people filling these pages are athletes, actors, musicians, and inventors. Not diplomats.

American culture went around the world on the back of what Americans made, and it moved the country's standing further than most speeches ever did. The work is the argument.

MY NOTES — HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

BUSINESS

IF YOU HAVE A BUSINESS

Past performance beats any capability statement I could write. A customer who watched us deliver tells the next customer, and that sentence outruns every marketing dollar I could spend.

MINISTRY

IF YOU HAVE A MINISTRY

People remember whether the teaching helped them on a Tuesday. They do not remember my outline. The usefulness of the work travels, the description of it does not.

CAREER

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A CAREER

Build things people can point at. A portfolio, a shipped project, a fixed process with your fingerprints on it. That travels into rooms you will never be invited into.

FAMILY

WITH YOUR FAMILY

My kids are watching how I handle a bad week far more closely than they are listening to anything I tell them about character. What I make of my own conduct is the lesson.

05

LESSON 05 OF 5

PRESENTATION IS A FORM OF RESPECT

FROM THE BOOK

This is a 120 dollar art book. Assouline spent real money on the paper, the printing, and the binding, and the object itself makes a claim before you read a word of it.

Notice what that communicates. How you present a thing tells people how much you think it is worth, and how much you think they are worth. Joel Stein's introduction does the same job in a different register: he is a humorist, so the book admires the country without turning into a pamphlet.

MY NOTES — HOW THIS APPLIES TO YOU

BUSINESS

IF YOU HAVE A BUSINESS

A proposal that looks like somebody cared gets read differently than one that does not. Same content, different signal. I have watched formatting and cover quality move an evaluator's posture before they read a single technical word.

MINISTRY

IF YOU HAVE A MINISTRY

I put real effort into how the teaching is packaged, because sloppy presentation quietly tells people the message is not worth much. The care is part of the message.

CAREER

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A CAREER

Your resume, your deck, and your email formatting are all saying something before anyone reads the content. Make them say that you take the work seriously.

FAMILY

WITH YOUR FAMILY

Isabella sets a real table for ordinary dinners. Not for guests, for us. It tells our kids that our own family is worth the effort, which is a thing you cannot say convincingly with words alone.

BOOK 5 OF 9

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THIS

This is book 5 of 9. These are books JP Morgan wants their new people and interns to read. What did you get out of going through this? Let's discuss this in the comments.

I love you.

This is the YEAR OF DISCOVERY.

YEAR OF DISCOVERY
GREATER IS COMING

Rick