

PART ONE

Let's Be Honest



*In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a
revolutionary act.*

—GEORGE ORWELL

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CHAPTER 1

Get The Truth Advantage



No legacy is so rich as honesty.

—SHAKESPEARE

This book will help you become a better, happier, and more powerful person by using only one tool—the truth.

When you tell the truth and can obtain the truth from others, you are manifesting your best qualities, both inwardly and outwardly. You are someone others want to have around. You are someone whom people listen to, learn from, and look to for strength. You respect yourself, and others respect you. In short, your life is happier.

Through dealing with hundreds of juries and analyzing news and newsmakers, I've learned that liars get caught, and the truth always wins out. If you look closely at those around you, you'll realize that in your everyday interactions with friends, family, and colleagues, when you tell the truth, people like you, respect you, and are truthful with you in return. If

you're being honest—whether in business or your personal life—you are both attractive and persuasive. People want to know you and help you more; by being truthful and understanding of the truths that others tell you, you forge deep, powerful, life-changing bonds and relationships.

How, then, does truth help you rise above? Why is telling the truth easier and more powerful than not doing so? Mark Twain put it simply, "If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything." The truth helps you inside and out: inside, because you avoid the inner turmoil produced by lying; and in your outer life, through trusting relationships with others. The truth not only shows on your face, it manifests in your life. You only have to tell the truth once, but you have to remember and retell a lie forever.

According to Daniel Langleben, a psychiatrist at the University of Pennsylvania, lying requires far more effort than truth telling. His years of research in brain-scan detection have proved that, in order to tell a lie, the brain first has to *stop* itself from telling the truth. After that, it creates the deception and then catalogs it. The more you lie, the harder your brain works, and the more tired you become. Your brain becomes a juggler with too many balls in the air. Or, more specifically, concocting lies weighs you down and makes everything in life more difficult.

There's wisdom in the old proverb that it's easier to simply tell the truth. The truth lifts the weight off your shoulders. It gives you a clear conscience, a sharpened focus, and a boost in power that no one can take away. Simply put, the truth will set you free.

A lie, on the other hand, is a mean moving target. Just ask anyone who has ever been caught telling a lie or who has fallen victim to one. That's probably all of us.

You'll be hard-pressed to find someone who has never told a lie. We all lie in fairly regular and predictable ways. For instance, according to the research of Robert S. Feldman, a professor of psychology and the interim dean of the College of

Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Massachusetts, people meeting for the first time lie to each other at a rate of two to three times for every ten minutes of conversation. That's a whole lot of lying.

But why do we lie? Lying is certainly an elusive combination of human traits. "Of course, they're real." "It fits you perfectly." "I have a headache." As you'll discover, though, lying is also a learned survival technique. We lie to build ourselves up and because we think it will protect us from pain and suffering. That's the mistake. It does neither.

Whether big or small, lies are eventually exposed, and liars end up with egg on their faces. If you're sixty-three, but your online dating profile says you're forty-two, sooner or later, someone you date will realize the math doesn't add up. From then on, will this person be able to trust anything else you say? If your résumé states that you graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a 4.0 GPA from Harvard, it takes a human resources person only a few clicks of the computer mouse to check whether you are on the list of people who actually did.

And if you think your extramarital dalliances won't catch up with you, you're wrong. Having served as counsel for the Democrats during the impeachment of President Bill Clinton, I've seen the dire consequences of big-time fibbing up close. It's not a pretty picture. Whether it's a sitting president, a famous athlete such as Tiger Woods, a public figure such as presidential candidate John Edwards, or simply one of the scores of adults across the globe who is caught in an adulterous situation every day, covering up such sexual shenanigans almost always backfires. You will leave a trail—whether physical or emotional—and eventually will be caught, if not by your significant other, then certainly by your conscience.

My dad is an ex-FBI agent. Nothing gets past him. I grew up in a house with a living, breathing lie detector and learned

quickly as a child that telling the truth was always the best way to go. If you told a lie, you'd eventually get caught. My dad always said that if you don't get caught by someone else, you'll get caught by yourself.

Here's why I am telling you this: I'm a mom. My kids need the truth from me, and I need it from them. I'm a friend. My friends expect the truth from me, and I expect it from them. Who wants a dishonest friend? I'm a lawyer. Okay, I know what you're thinking. Although I was trained in the tools and wordplay of the courtroom, I realized that in trials, the best results saw truth tellers redeemed and the liars sent away, rebuffed and punished. I earned the distinction as one of the top trial lawyers in the country by always telling the truth to my clients, my witnesses, and my jurors. In doing so, I never lost a case.

I told my witnesses and crime victims what I had learned growing up: that if they were truthful with themselves and with me, they'd sail through. And they did. The truth removed the bumps and the potholes from the road. I watched firsthand as those who swore to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth—and did so—came out winners. Those who didn't? Well, many went to jail.

Today, as the legal analyst for the Fox News Channel, I witness almost daily the self-imploding nature of deception, how one simple lie can quickly destroy the reputation, the career, and the life of someone at the top of his game. At my core, I'm motivated to stop the devastation that I've seen lies cause to the liar and those around him and to herald the transformative power that the truth wields. I've seen this power in my own life. I rely on the truth to explain a diversity of complex issues and to stand strong against some of the biggest know-it-alls in the business, people who are paid to disagree with me.

In addition to my own experience—in scenarios that range from the courtroom to the classroom, from my living room to

the television studio—I consulted a group of international experts, individuals who have made careers out of studying the truth, why we lie, and how to detect deception. I also surveyed and interviewed more than three hundred people for my American Truth Survey, who answered very personal questions about their truth telling, their lies, and their lives. These experts and the survey helped illuminate and enlighten my search for the truth. As a result, I discovered the positive, life-changing consequences of telling the truth.

Yet your goal isn't just winning an argument or gaining superiority; rather, it's making an earnest effort to become more forthright, kind, and true to your word. I've experienced amazing benefits in my own life from following these straightforward techniques. I hope that *The Truth Advantage* will free you from worry, lift your spirits, and help you and your loved ones become happy, successful, and fulfilled in every way.

This book will help you improve every aspect of your life:

- **In business**, the truth yields long-term associations, contributes to a better work environment, and translates into a higher income.
- **In romance**, the truth makes for stronger, livelier relationships and adds incredible spice.
- **In parenting**, the truth enables you to connect deeply with your children and to protect, respect, and guide them toward successful, happy lives.
- **With friends**, the truth makes you forever honored, trusted, and remembered fondly.

The seven keys to truthfulness, which we'll explore in the book, will produce benefits in a wide range of situations, from the boardroom to the bedroom. In addition to real-life examples, I will also share information and stories from psychologists, relationship experts, body language specialists, and media stars to demonstrate how each key works in practice—and how

you can use these seven keys to be consistently direct and forthright and enrich your interactions with others.

The Truth Advantage demonstrates how being truthful will bring about positive changes in your life and will help you become a significantly more humane, loving, and compassionate person. It will also teach you how to help others be truthful with you. You will learn the best way to appropriately and thoughtfully encourage everyone you encounter—friends, colleagues, and family—to be fully honest.

The Truth Advantage will empower you with your own personal lie detector—a truth-seeking missile that finds the heat of someone’s lies and distortions. You’ll learn the secrets of how psychiatrists, private investigators, and trial attorneys, as well as other “people readers,” get to the truth. The truth is written on the face, heard in the voice, and seen in the tell-tale signs we leave behind. This book will teach you the questions to ask, the things to look for, and the techniques professionals in the truth-detecting business use to dig for facts and unearth the truth.

The point is not to try to catch friends and loved ones in lies but, rather, to cultivate truthful and mutually respectful relationships. The Truth Advantage will help you convey authenticity, caring, and understanding so that your friends, colleagues, and loved ones never feel compelled to lie to you again. Encouraging others to be truthful with you will give you peace of mind. In turn, the person who learns to be truthful with you will build a noble character and rock-solid self-confidence. Finally, that truthfulness will foster better bonds, increased trust, and deeper personal commitments with everyone you know.

Being truthful will bring you greater contentment. You’ll be more self-confident, feel less weight on your shoulders, and have greater clarity about yourself and your values. In short, you’ll enjoy a seamless life and leave behind a proud, distinguished legacy.

The fundamental benefits of truth telling will enable you to become a person of character and strength in these volatile times, which will benefit not only you, but also the people you care about. Following these simple techniques will take you to the next level in your career and family life and will carry you well into your future.

Living in such a fast-paced, egocentric, and money-driven era, what do we most want to hear? What do we most want to know? Whom do we most want to be with? What makes us feel at ease and comfortable?

We all want to know that we are living with loving people we can trust. It is in our nature to seek honesty and feel attracted to people we can believe in. We each want a solid anchor in this turbulent world. We all hope to be considered strong and virtuous. This book will reveal the benefits that living truthfully will bring to your life.