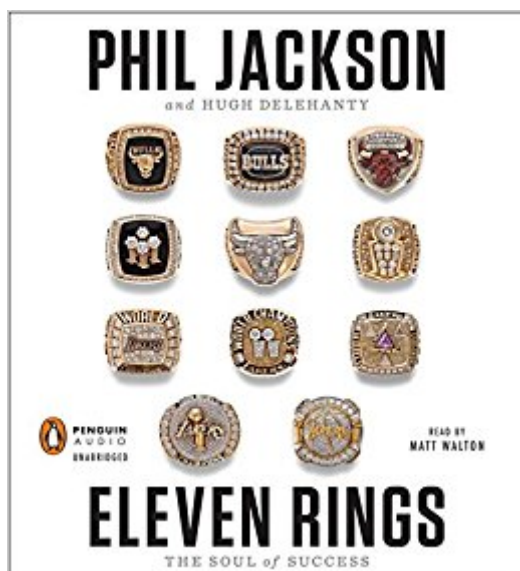


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# Eleven Rings: The Soul Of Success



## Synopsis

During his storied career as head coach of the Chicago Bulls and Los Angeles Lakers, Phil Jackson won more championships than any coach in the history of professional sports. Even more important, he succeeded in never wavering from coaching his way, from a place of deep values. Jackson was tagged as the “Zen master” half in jest by sportswriters, but the nickname speaks to an important truth: this is a coach who inspired, not goaded; who led by awakening and challenging the better angels of his players’ nature, not their egos, fear, or greed. This is the story of a preacher’s kid from North Dakota who grew up to be one of the most innovative leaders of our time. In his quest to reinvent himself, Jackson explored everything from humanistic psychology and Native American philosophy to Zen meditation. In the process, he developed a new approach to leadership based on freedom, authenticity, and selfless teamwork that turned the hypercompetitive world of professional sports on its head. In *Eleven Rings*, Jackson candidly describes how he:

- Learned the secrets of mindfulness and team chemistry while playing for the champion New York Knicks in the 1970s
- Managed Michael Jordan, the greatest player in the world, and got him to embrace selflessness, even if it meant losing a scoring title
- Forged successful teams out of players of varying abilities by getting them to trust one another and perform in sync
- Inspired Dennis Rodman and other “uncoachable” personalities to devote themselves to something larger than themselves
- Transformed Kobe Bryant from a rebellious teenager into a mature leader of a championship team.

Eleven times, Jackson led his teams to the ultimate goal: the NBA championship—six times with the Chicago Bulls and five times with the Los Angeles Lakers. We all know the legendary stars on those teams, or think we do. What *Eleven Rings* shows us, however, is that when it comes to the most important lessons, we don’t know very much at all. This book is full of revelations: about fascinating personalities and their drive to win; about the wellsprings of motivation and competition at the highest levels; and about what it takes to bring out the best in ourselves and others.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Phil Jackson won an unprecedented 11 championship rings as an NBA coach (6 with the Chicago Bulls and 5 with the Los Angeles Lakers). He begins this memoir with a brief exploration of his childhood as the son of two practicing ministers, an experience that laid the foundation for his approach to coaching. As a young man, Jackson realized he couldn't accept his parents' faith, but he explored any number of religions and consciousness-raising movements to satisfy his spiritual yearnings. To a casual fan, meditation, Buddhism, and Native American spirituality may seem an odd mix of resources with which to motivate highly paid, often egocentric professional athletes. Jackson, however, made it work, combining sincerity with a message of teamwork and trust; of course, a healthy dose of basketball acumen didn't hurt, either. Jackson's story, augmented by behind-the-scenes anecdotes involving Michael, Shaq, Kobe, and others, makes for great reading. Hoop fans: read this alongside Bob Knight's recent *The Power of Negative Thinking* (2013) and then determine which coaching style would motivate you more and improve your life outside of basketball. --Wes Lukowsky --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"Through candor and comprehensiveness, Jackson writes a convincing revisionist take, in which he emerges as an excellent coach...highly readable...reflects Jackson's polymathy." •The New York Times Book Review"Part sports memoir, part New Age spirit quest, part pseudo-management tract...But the primary thing with Jackson as with all the old bards, who were also known for repeating themselves is the voice." •Sam Anderson, The New York Times Magazine"The legendary Bulls and Lakers leader's new book finally enlightened me to Jackson's lifelong dedication to the game." •The Atlantic"He tells you at different times to see beyond what is seen and to hear the unheard...applicable to groups in any walk of life." •The Bleacher Report --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

As a mom who spent 12+ years watching my daughter play volleyball, basketball, and throw

discus/shot put, I have seen my share of coaching styles. Some were awesome, some should have been fired, one was fired. Throughout it all, I always knew it could be more humane and motivating without the degrading, intimidating, and negative approach many coaches used. I always loved watching Phil Jackson coach the Bulls and read some about his coaching style at the time. But his book has great information that can be applied to any job, including parenting. Clearly, championships can be won while coaching a team respectfully and influencing them not just as a player, but as a human being. Every coach, teacher, camp counselor, parent would learn from this book. All athletes/children of those who do, will benefit greatly. I bought it for my Kindle, but just bought it in hardback too, as I want to highlight some parts and get all the book referrals he includes.

This book has a "ghost written" feel to it. 70% of the book is just a recap of the Bulls and Lakers playoff and championship games- boring. Jackson's first book "sacred hoops" is much better. When reading this book I did wonder about why if Jackson is so "zen - like" he cannot apply these principles to his marriage(s). The book left me coming away that it was basically a " look at how cool I am " statement by Jackson with a few cool Zen quotes thrown in. If you want a playoff run recap from the glory days- this is your book. But if you looking for a Zen reading, save your coins and just buy " Not always so" on - you will be happier - and more at peace :)

The expression "the whole is greater than the sum of the parts" is often used to describe successful organizations, whether business enterprises or sports teams. Phil Jackson has embedded his recipe for leading that kind of success into "Eleven Rings." NBA fans will appreciate Jackson's insight on the men he has coached. Jordan and Pippen; Kobe and Shaq; Rodman and Metta World Peace. Jackson does not shy away from addressing the controversies whether the Bulls or Lakers. He is at his best when discussing the web of team relationships; Jackson and co-author Hugh Delehanty make us feel like they're catching us up on family news. Older readers will also appreciate Jackson's unique perspective on the dramatic 1970 NBA Finals against the Lakers, as an injured member of the Knicks. Jackson is popularly known as a "Zen master." You will learn much about what this means, and whether there is anything in his toolkit that you can adopt for your own situation. He wants us to know how he encouraged strong personalities who had conflicting ideas about what it would take to succeed, to function together at a magnificent level. The book drags in places; many of the

basketball stories read like straight history text; the authors could have spent more time polishing or even cutting them. There are lots of good books on leadership available that get the same ideas across with fewer words. But by writing as he has, Jackson has given himself an opportunity to reach people who might not necessarily pick up another leadership book. And it is important to hear about it from Jackson because his results cannot be questioned. So in the end, he's done well. *Eleven Rings* is a generous scoop of who these teams were and how Jackson led them to the top of their profession.

Let me start by saying I am a huge basketball fan and hate the Lakers with every fiber of my being (I'm a Sixers fan). That said, this book gave me a lot more respect for Phil, Kobe and some other Lakers. I'll get my only downside of the book out of the way quickly, Phil Jackson makes a lot of excuses for his losses, but his wins are always the work of him or his team. For instance, whenever talking about something other than a championship win, he's blaming the ref's or saying a team won, though through now spectacular play of their own. I can't blame him too much because I'd imagine you have to be pretty ridiculously competitive in that profession, which will make it very difficult to admit when you're bested. The reason I titled the review what I did, was because this isn't just purely basketball, and it's not even just 50/50 basketball/spiritualism. It's got basketball, it's got spiritualism, it's got philosophy, and more. I was never big on the zen or meditation stuff, and still am not, but he makes a lot of it sound a lot more practical and helpful than I've read/heard before. It takes you behind the scenes for mostly all of his championship teams, and early on when he played for the Knicks and ends after his last year as the coach of the Lakers. You get his thoughts on the similarities and differences between Jordan and Kobe, some of the reasons behind the Kobe/Shaq feud, and what brought the teams of individuals together to be a championship caliber team. If you love the sport, you'll love this book.

Phil Jackson gives us a retrospective on his success as the winningest coach in NBA history. As a coach, he led the Chicago Bulls to six championships and led the Los Angeles Lakers to five championships, in addition to winning two championships as a player with the New York Knicks. Jackson's coaching techniques are heavily influenced by a deep interest and understanding of various spiritual paths (e.g. Native American, Christianity, Zen Buddhism). Rather than taking the viewpoint of leadership as a hierarchical, top-down endeavor, Jackson conveys the idea that in order to develop a winning team, a leader must cultivate a harmonious and selfless ethos of "we" rather than "me." This allows players to develop a deep bond with each other, to trust one another,

to "read" each other's actions to the point that one may anticipate what will happen moment-by-moment. According to Jackson, playing the game in this way, selflessly and harmoniously, brings out the best in each player. Is this strategy effective? Eleven rings, baby.

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