

ONE MORE PAGE

Question Everything, Set Life Goals, Achieve.
What are you waiting for?

G. Richard Bradford

What would you do if you just started the most interesting
book you've ever read? Would you read it?

Would you?

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DEDICATION

I do not know you, but I admire you --- specifically the part of you that brought you here. The way your life has unfolded thus far has led you to perceive that you can get more out of life if you see things from the right perspective. You've got guts. You are reading this line because you think that I have something worth having yourself. So let's get this straight...

This book is dedicated to you, the reader. There are times in life when people say, "Someone should do something about that." This is me doing something about one of those things. This thing is that I am doing something about is your future. I need your help. Let's make it better.

ProTip (just the tip)

I encourage you to buy this book hard copy and touch it every day to remind yourself that you have dedicated your life to making progress from where you were yesterday.

To Empower Success

2011 I was afraid, as I held grandfather's hand as he lapsed into and out of consciousness hours before he died in his home from cancer that had riddled his body, I looked into his eyes and asked the best question I'd ever asked at that point in my life,

“If you could do one more thing, what would it be?”

...

...

“Help one more person.”

That was the last thing he said to me, my mission in life was born:

To Empower Success

Prologue

As Donell H. Meadows comments, “It is great art to remember that boundaries are of our own making, and that they can and should be reconsidered for each new discussion, problem, or purpose.” This book, more or less, is that same principle on steroids. The evidence is overwhelming that the future will be like the past for a little while. The idea is to find weaknesses in the way you operate and to make significant enhancements so that you are surrounded and capitalizing on more opportunities on a day-to-day basis than you are today. In order to do this, being able to sort and prioritize the types of opportunities that are of interest to you is of the utmost importance. This is a New York Times Bestseller. As such, you can expect me to help you enlighten yourself. Specifically, the emphasis is on that which you know that just ain’t so and that which you don’t know that you ought to. I know exactly what I am doing. Do you? The duration of each chapter is a function of my ability to convey the concept in as few words as possible and force you to eat your vegetables. Inside the table of contents, you’ll notice that I’ve the biggest ideas that you’d love to know more about winning but for some reason haven’t been able to be as successful as you’d like to be. The main concepts include: Winning Health, Winning Time, Winning Relationships, Winning Money and Winning in General. All of this requires the Winning Attitude. I am going to teach you how to force yourself to have it and it is just that easy. Do it. ACT AS IF.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank all people, past, present, and future, that have influenced either directly or indirectly the thoughts that have come to my mind.

Continuing to read is diametrically opposed to your existence as you know it. There is no better time than now. The measure of a man is the purpose he creates.

This is me.

Here I go.

You're invited.

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TLDR; Stop Sabotaging Yourself

"Too long; didn't read" indicates that the reader did not actually read the statement due to its undue length. For those TLDRs, I present the "Cliff Notes" version, without the Cliff.

I, Glen Bradford, have systematically trained myself to quit disadvantageous behaviors. That's pretty much all there is to it. As far as you are concerned, I am a brain surgeon. I am inside your head and I am removing **your** thoughts that are holding **you** back. There's a lot of junk in here, so let's start taking out the trash. I know you're excited! Me too! I live for this stuff.

Prepare to:

1. Define self-imposed unnecessary mental constraints that you currently operate under and eliminate those that are disadvantageous
2. Establish self-reinforcing behaviors that are advantageous in terms of getting what you want.

Let's break that into more pieces:

1. Define what it is that you want.
2. Figure out the most advantageous approach to getting what you want.
3. Acquire all the tools and resources that you will need to get what you want.
4. Get what you want.

You see, success is a dish best served whenever you want it and I want it all the time.

How bad do you want to be successful 5 years from today? 10 years from today? 20 years from today?

Well...Get on with it then!

What the heck is wrong with wanting to be successful today instead of in 20 years!?! Something is clearly wrong with wanting it NOW. You just don't know what it is. I am going to do everything that I can to make sure

that you aren't successful now so that you can be successful in 20 years. Doesn't work like that, does it? Didn't think so. Buckle up.

Except to learn from experience, one should never waste time looking back. There is nothing you can do to change your past. However, you can actively choose your perception and thus directly impact your future. In fact, you can become virtually anyone you want to be. Why be the average frustrated chump that lives a suboptimal life of mediocrity due to their inability to break past self-imposed constraints? That was the old you.

As far as you and I are concerned, that person is dying every second that passes and will begin consuming less of your time effective right now. You and I are now on a mission to awaken the new you. Fortunately, the new you has been inside of you all along. You and those around you have locked him up. You've put him in constraints. Let's get him out and go play. Envision who you want to be and be that person. No excuses, there are no second chances. Always..... Do it now.

This is effectively my guide to living a better life. I'm not talking about better regarding how other people measure your life. I'm talking about a better life for you, however you choose to measure it.

I hope you will find some of the truths I say highly alarming and shocking. That means that you are about to get better. That is the first reaction to accommodation. Accommodation is that feeling that you get when you realize that you've come across new information that changes the way that you perceive the world. Assimilation is just fitting in new information to support your world viewpoints regardless of whether they are factually accurate **or not**. Assimilation is the standard of comfortable and boring. If you want to grow, you must re-tool your brain to find comfort in accommodation. Would you be shocked to know that you can make 100x return on your money? Would you be shocked to know that you can date the most beautiful people on earth? It's actually easier to do this than it is to make minimum wage and be desperately single or married to a pig. Pick and choose. It's your life. Your choices result in your life. Fact. I will not help you if you do not help yourself.

The big lie is coming.

I've failed at writing this book **74** times previously.

Yep, that's a lie. I just made it up, but you still believed it for a second and it established rapport and kind of made you like me, just a little bit.

That's important to note. If you say it with confidence, people will assume you know from experience. Sometimes it is incredibly useful to be able to act more experienced than you are so you can gain opportunities to grow.

Other times, you need to be able to identify you are not only cheating yourself by faking it, but you are also cheating others. The difference? Perceived sustainability.

OK....

So what is perceived sustainability?

Perceived sustainability is whether or not you think that the actions that are at hand can be done continuously on a forward basis and will benefit all of the stakeholders involved. Are people being treated fairly? Do they feel like they are being treated fairly? Are you treating yourself fairly? What is fair? Who measures it? You do. Who says what is fair and reasonable? You do. Who deals with the consequences of your perception? You do.

So, where do we go from here? Let's begin by looking at the biggest problem in your life. It's the biggest problem in my life. It always is. It always will be. The problem is:

Biggest Problem: What am I going to do now?

The best way to approach the biggest problem in life is to begin by simplifying the problem and seek the answer to the simplified problem:

Simplified: What is the most advantageous thing I can do now?

See, now you have purpose where there was none. Now you have direction where previously you were directionally challenged. I spent the first quarter-century of my life directionally challenged. Guess what happens to people that are directionally challenged? There are three options for the directionally challenged. They follow in the order or **default prioritization**:

1. Do what other people tell you to do.
2. Do nothing, because you are lazy, the natural human condition.
3. Do something out of habit.

The trick is that most people spend most of their time in option 1. They do it because they "have" to in order to survive. Just ask them, they'll tell you that they "have" to as if they don't have any other available options. They'll tell you that they do it to get by. I can assure you that this is not a solution to the simplified problem above, so why is this you? Here is what is going to happen. You and I, as a team, are setting up and installing thought processes that result in habits that will enable you to do what you want as opposed to getting stuck in option 1.

For all you naysayers out there that think that directionally challenged people do something outside of the three options listed, doing something new is a habit. That habit is a good habit to have. If you have it, you're further along than most. High five!

Winning, in your case, can be defined as switching these priorities around with a small twist:

Switching 1 and 3:

1. Do something out of habit.
2. Do nothing, because you are lazy, the natural human condition.
3. Do what other people tell you to do.

Final Iteration of Priorities – Rewording with Purpose:

1. Do what you want.
2. Do nothing, because you are lazy, the natural human condition.
3. Do what you have to do, to do what you want to do (1).

So, we are getting somewhere. Let's revisit the question.

Simplified: What is the most advantageous thing I can do now?

As you've noticed, all questions or problems can be broken down into even smaller components. If you break them down far enough, everything is binary. Binary is yes or no. It is true or false. Breaking down large, complicated problems into simpler, step-wise, solvable problems is how you make progress. Further simplification of the biggest problem of life involves identifying discrete opportunities. Let's work through a few situations that you've found yourself in where you've made the wrong decision so that you can begin to visualize yourself making the right decision and running with it.

(YES OR NO)

1. Should I approach and talk to that person over there?
2. Should I take ownership of that right now at a specific price?

How did you get to these problems? Do you have enough of these problems? Do you go outside and run into people that you'd like to speak with? If you don't, your questions should be:

1. Should I go outside and try to meet new people?
2. Should I try to look for things that I might want to have?

All I am saying is that you have to start somewhere. If you don't start, then your failure rate is 100% in perpetuity. That's a great way to live life, to fail at everything you didn't even know was possible. Find your problems. Make sure that they are the problems that you want to have. Start solving them. Own your life.

Which problems do you want to have?

In your case, you probably have not defined your specific goals. But, I'm sure you can visualize what those goals might be. In fact, take 10 seconds, put this book down and visualize yourself achieving one of those goals. Imagine yourself being cool, calm, collected. You're living in the thrill of the moment and you are unlocking your true potential. You can feel the energy that you thought had just peaked inside of you starting to run much faster and harder than you ever knew was possible. The momentum is undeniable. It's unbelievable that this is happening to you. At first, you were uncertain and now you fully embrace the magic of the moment. You take it and mold it into your own, perfect creation.

Did it feel nice? Did it feel right? Kind of empowering? Isn't that how you want to feel?

Soooooo..... let's talk about goals and then I'll show you my best practice cognitive framework.

First Step: What do you want?

The first step to *getting* what you want is *figuring out* exactly what you want.

For some people, this is easy, but for others, it is nearly impossible. For some, the goal is crystal clear, as if looking through a window. For others, it is as if they are looking through an opaque glass.

The easiest way I can tell you to determine your life goals is to think about what you liked to do as a kid.

Think back to when you were a kid... Or maybe you already know. What is something you just can't stop thinking about? Whatever that is, that

might be your life's work trying to get out of the constraints you have it under.

My father once had an original song that popped into his head when he was 25. For years he would occasionally sit down at the piano and pick out the tune. At some point he wrote the words down. Finally, the world came together and he not only recorded the song, but he made a music video out of it.

Funny part was, he never had any intentions of selling it, or becoming famous by it. He just had to get it out of his head. Having done that, he now tells his college classes he wrote and sang in a music video. To him, that was success.

Second Step: Ask for it

If you don't ask for what you want, how do you expect to get it? Are you afraid to ask yourself what you want? Odds are that you're more afraid to ask yourself what you want than you are afraid to ask other people and yet for some reason the default assumption is that you are asking someone else, not yourself. Regardless, you lack the ability to read other people's minds. How do you expect them to read yours? You can hardly read your own!

So, I'm asking you to not read this book

Not all of it, anyway. Why waste your time on stuff that doesn't interest you? Look up the chapters you think are the most interesting and start there. If you don't find a particular section interesting, don't read it. That's what I'd do. Spend that time doing something you love. My grandmother gave me some keen advice the other day. She noted that in her book club, the first hundred pages and the last fifty of most books is all you really want to or need to read in order to experience the full value of the book. Everything inbetween for most authors tends to be highly repetitive and trivial. When you read, plan accordingly.

To Live – Or Die Trying!

This section might bore you, or it might excite you, don't be afraid to skip ahead. The fact is that I begin solving problems by doing my best to define them as objectively as possible. I do my best to start from scratch when I approach each new problem.

Who is Glen Bradford? I am Glen Bradford. I run my life like a business. The thing about choosing to run my life like a business is that it allows me to leverage well-documented and thought out constructs that will

ACT AS IF

allow me to make decisions that will drive towards the goal. Businesses are predominant in capitalist economies, where most of them are privately owned and administered to earn profit to increase the wealth of their owners. I am a sole proprietorship, meaning that I am owned and run by one individual, that is myself.

Over the last 25 years, I have relentlessly studied the consequences of various decisions and actions made by people and businesses and have decided that reality is what you can get away with. As such, with this framework, I am going to begin a process of continually restating and reviewing that which I am doing at any particular point in my life in order to more effectively achieve my goal.

So it took me 25 years to figure out my goal. I say, "Let's not overcomplicate things." Some would say that life has no purpose, you have to create your own. I say that an existence with a purpose is going to beat an existence without one any day of the week. Ends up that my purpose, my goal and my mission statement as a business are all the same. Here they are, derived from necessity, in tearsheet form.

The Goal: To Live.

There is only one goal. Anything that brings me closer to achieving it is productive and all other things are not productive. The best framework that exists for making business decisions is the Theory of Constraints.

The underlying assumption is that my business can be measured and controlled on three measures: throughput, operational expense, and inventory. Defined below:

Throughput is the rate at which I feel that I am living in the moment.

Inventory is all that I have that enables me to generate throughput.

Operational expense is the time that I spend turning inventory into throughput.

Throughput: Throughput is maximized when I achieve flow. Flow is the mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity.

The Theory of Constraints dictates that before the goal itself can be reached, necessary conditions must be first met. The only condition required in my case is that I need to be alive in order to pursue the goal.

The Theory of Constraints is based on the premise that the rate of goal achievement by a goal-oriented system is limited by at least one constraint. Only by increasing flow through the constraint can overall throughput be increased.

If I wish to increase their attainment of The Goal I should therefore test proposed decisions against three questions using the terms defined above in bold. Will the proposed change:

1. Increase throughput? How?
2. Reduce investment? How?
3. Reduce operating expense? How?

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So, that's our goal in summary form. Let's talk about some basic conclusions that can be drawn right off the bat and then I'll show you why having a clearly defined goal is important.

1. If it doesn't help you feel alive now or in the future, you can cut it out of your life today and never look back.
2. If you can spend less time doing things that you have to do in order to experience living in the moment, do that. Waste as little time as possible doing things that you'd prefer not to do. But make sure that you do what you have to do in order to find yourself living in as many moments that you want to find yourself in as possible.
3. Life is an adventure story where you pick your own ending by picking the various ways that you get to drive throughput. Wise choices result in incredible and mind boggling consequences that others will attribute to luck. You are not so foolish in your attributions. You know that luck is a habit. Luck is merely a result of deliberate practice.

Without having a goal, you might find yourself like some of the "best and brightest" that I've met that measure themselves using a score that they made over 10 years ago. I was at a Google party in San Francisco a while ago and met some of their employees who quickly told me their SAT score as an introductory point --- as if I cared what they scored on a standardized test a decade ago. While a high test score is something to be proud of (I guess), I will certainly encourage you to measure yourself in ways that matter to you in regards to making your life tangibly better. Are you making progress towards living a better life? That's where we start. Do not lie to yourself. Most deception is bad but self-deception is worse. Are you making progress? I don't care what the answer is, the fact is that you are making progress today by reading this New York Times Bestseller. So let's make even more progress. Come on!

ACT AS IF

Before we get involved with the advantageous dynamics of the cognitive framework that drives the ACT AS IF mentality, let's start with a story that illustrates just what you can become if you ACT AS IF.

The Famous Spider Story

Life doesn't often present the opportunity to save people's lives. But when it does...

In high school, like many others, I would often daydream about how I would stop a crazed gunman if one suddenly burst into the back of the classroom. I had tactics planned, partnerships established, and devices used all in my plan. While the teacher droned on about theoretical nonsense, I was disarming a really nasty looking guy.

Then one day, it actually happened. Only I was on an airplane, and the nasty looking guy was actually a nasty looking spider. A deadly spider that had somehow found its way into the airplane.

The following is a true story of an event that transpired in about 1 minute as my Southwest flight was accelerating down the runway at takeoff. This particular flight was from Indianapolis to Midway en route to Tampa, FL.

But first, let's rewind to earlier that day. After all, this story is where this all began for me. Seriously, I can't make this stuff up.

This was the day that I woke up and decided something was distinctly different. I didn't know what it was. I rolled out of bed in Indianapolis and felt like I was more free than I had ever been. I got up feeling a new sense of power and confidence. I wasn't sure what was happening but I knew something had changed forever.

Fast forward. I had just finished making the usual conversation with Jason who was the passenger next to me and had begun to assume the position to fall asleep when I noticed there was something brown under Jason's collar. First instinct, coffee stain.

Sitting in the middle seat on the left side of the airplane, positioned with the individual with the alleged brown coffee stain under the collar of his white button down to my right, things got interesting. I took a second glance to confirm my suspicion and that's when.... Yes, he had a nice, freshly pressed dress shirt, but more importantly to my alarm, the "coffee spot" was moving. Yep, it was definitely moving, in very spider like fashion, I might add.

My face flushed white like a toilet as I instantly analyzed the situation. My gut instinct which was immediately put down by my inner logic was a combination of shouting, pointing, creating distance, and potentially

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smashing the hairy brown leg under his collar. Now I found myself raising his level of passenger concern; he was looking at me as if he was starting to get agitated that I might lose my lunch and he'd have to spend the duration of the flight next to a passenger that easily succumbed to motion sickness. I instantly knew that if I was to alert him to the large hairy leg protruding from his collar that a variety of negative events could occur:

1. I could catch a flailing elbow to the face.
2. I could induce sheer panic among the passengers.
3. I could end up with whatever that beast was crawling on top of me.
4. The worst case of losing the beast as it runs for cover somewhere else on the airplane. I knew the worst case was to know that it is out there and not know where it is. I mean this was a huge spider.

It took me a few seconds to assess my options but clearly I had to act soon.

The plane was hustling down the runway in takeoff mode as I broke every rule in the book and calmly unbuckled my seatbelt. I directed my attention to the stewardess, the bottleneck of this operation, and prepared for direct inquiry in a growing hostile environment.

I proceeded to lean forward in the front seat of the airplane and demanded in a remarkably calm voice, "I need a napkin please."

This was quickly followed with the expected response from the stewardess, "Sir, can you please take your seat."

To which I naturally and most confidently replied, "Yes, gladly, but I require a napkin."

This was followed with an even more forceful "Sir, take your seat."

At this point, I had quite a fan base. In fact, had there been a marshall on this small flight, I am sure I would have ended up being on the national evening news. As it was, the first 5-6 rows were starting to get concerned that I was potentially an unruly passenger and the guy on my left behind me put his hand on my shoulder.

I instantly changed to a sympathetic gesture, "I understand, I need a napkin, this cannot wait."

Success. The stewardess rewarded me with a napkin and I sat back in my seat. Problem solved as far as everyone else was concerned.

Now, I'm not usually afraid of spiders, but this leg that was originally sticking out of Jason's collar had now been followed by the body of the spider. This thing was practically sunbathing under these airplane lights as the front wheels of the airplane broke ground. I'd compare the size of it to

a silver dollar but it was larger in size. It was approximately 2 and a half inches in diameter, brown, leggy and hairy. Perhaps the spider knew that I knew where he was and his cover was blown.

Jason was very concerned at this point and I flashed him eyes that spoke loudly, 'Everything is OK.' That instant he began to relax I went into quick, swift motion. But my thoughts were racing. Heck, I didn't know how much his shirt cost and I didn't want to be liable for a dry-cleaning bill or a new shirt. I did recognize that his shirt was better than any I had ever worn. This would be an expensive operation if I misfired.

But I went for it. My aim was true. I successfully cupped the spider in my hand to the point where I could feel it squirm. At this point Jason was clenching his right fist as if to punch me. I quickly squeezed and extracted the spider from his shirt into the napkin. A split second later, I squeezed the life out of the spider.

But now what? Everyone in the first 3 rows was now on full alert, figuring I was a crazed lunatic, having just confronted the stewardess and apparently punched my seat mate.

I decide to go on the offense. "Listen," I said, "I am squeezing a fairly large spider that I have captured from your shirt. I imagine that you'd prefer not to see it."

Jason nodded "no" figuring I was still some sort of terrorist. I gave the napkin one last death grip and passed it forward to the stewardess.

But I also have a bit of an actor's flair. So, despite the fact that the little plane was in full climb and the seatbuckle sign was still on, I unbuckled, stood up, and turned around.

"Show's over. This was all an act. I am a professional. Do not do this at home." and sat down to applause.

I felt like James Bond. Jason tried to buy me a drink but the stewardess insisted that it was going to be free for my heroism. The next 10 minutes spent with me explaining the specifics to Jason why I handled the situation the way that I had. He was very impressed by my proactive method of not freaking everyone out. He realized quickly that things could have been much worse.

The plane, which a few minutes before had been filled with strangers listening to their ipods (or wishing they could) now became a compartment filled with friends.

Everyone wanted to tell me stories about the last time they had encountered a spider and the time that they had seen their biggest spider and times where they had been most afraid.

Today, this day, was life changing. I had identified who and what I needed to be and lived it, in the moment, to its fullest.

Isn't that what "Carpe Diem" means, anyway?

Whatever you think, you're right...

...Umm yeah, Literally translated: Seize the day.

I seized the spider, and in that motion seized the moment, and in seizing the moment seized the day.

Fact is: You know where you are going and how to get there.

ACT AS IF... what? What does it mean? It means that at any point in your life if you can identify a more advantageous thing to be doing than the thing that you are or were doing, you should immediately set out on this more advantageous, recently identified course of action. This course may very well be inaction. Patience or inaction is a virtue.

Still wondering what ACT AS IF means? What does it mean? It means whatever you want it to mean! Do you want to ACT AS IF you are a millionaire in the making? Do you want to ACT AS IF you're the movie star of the next decade? Do you want to ACT AS IF you know something that other people don't know? If you can clearly define a more advantageous behavior that you are presently not living, why not change for the better? But, whatever you do, do not forget about the importance of perceived sustainability.

There are many slogans that I've come across that stem from the same vibe as the phrase: ACT AS IF. Let's take a walk down the wild side and talk about several similar expressions.

Just Do It.

Nike's **Just Do it** is a slogan that equally represents this idea. Often times people think about doing things to better themselves and actively fight internally with their better opinion, resulting in disadvantageous behaviors and thoughts winning the internal battle and thus outwardly being achieved.

Be As You Wish To Seem.

I've heard a variety of this one. Be the change that you wish to see. It reminds me of boy Scouts and the attitude of trying to always leave things better than how you found them, which was effectively the Scoutmaster's plea for the boy Scouts to pick up camp and clean up the trash.

If you want it... Go get it. Period.

This is from the movie: "The Pursuit of Happiness." If you haven't seen this you should put down this book and immediately get to a computer and search this quote and watch the YouTube video.

The Greatest Risk Is Not Taking One.

Did you watch the YouTube video? Didn't think so. In regards to the quote, I believe that this is where it all started for me. I found this one on a fortune cookie while I was still in high school and I made it my motto. I have recently revised it. I think that the greatest risk in matters financial is taking a dumb one. There are four kinds of risk that I break risk out into using my personal risk framework. There are good risks. There are bad risks. There are definable risks. Examples of good risks include complimenting lovely ladies, buying undervalued companies, and eating healthy. Bad risks would be drunk dialing ex-girlfriends, buying things you don't understand, and eating unhealthy while you light up. Definable risks exist in a casino where all the outcomes are known and you can calculate your risk using probability models. Riskless situations occur when the outcome is more or less known. My example here usually involves jumping out of a plane without a parachute, shooting yourself in the brain, etc. Death is certain.

Unhappiness can be the biggest motivator for change.

This one came from my most serious ex-girlfriend to date. It's the reason she explained breaking up with me. At the time, she was doing me a favor but I didn't see it that way.

To see success and not take it is unwise.

Did I just make one up? I just made this one up. It sounds good enough to support with an argument like this.

Am I trolling you? Maybe. What I am trying to do is make you wonder what the point of this paragraph is. How am I doing? Have I invaded your internal dialog?

Good. Remember the last time you saw something that you wanted or an opportunity to capture a moment of something fun and you actively persuaded yourself not to? Why did you do this? Are you going to make future disadvantageous behaviors like that excusable? Does it bother you to let the worst in you win over the better parts of you?

Why are you still reading this? Is this the most advantageous thing you could be reading or doing right now? Can you identify something else that you should be doing with your time right now if you were the person that you wish you would be?

ACT AS IF

If so, I want you to stop reading and go and do that. At least when you come back to reading you'll feel the positive reinforcement of actually taking time to implement the technique that this book is about in real life. Seriously. If it comes to this... I command you to question the incentives of anyone who authors a decree that begins with the three words: "I command you." No, but seriously, I command you to set this book down immediately and go and do something else that you have been putting off. Why? Because I told you so. I'm like your father. You don't disobey your father. I'm going to start the ineffective behavior of counting down until you listen to me progressively acting more serious as I count down as if it matters that you heed my pleadings.

Five...

Four...

Three...

Don't make me count to one...

Two...

I'm going to come in there and make you do it the hard way if I have to...

THIS PAGE IS BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY. IF I COULD I
WOULD MAKE THE REST OF THE BOOK BLANK FOR THOSE
WHO DISOBEY.

ACT AS IF

THIS PAGE IS BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY. IF I COULD I
WOULD MAKE THE REST OF THE BOOK BLANK FOR THOSE
WHO DISOBEY.

That that is is. That that is not is not. Note that that that that that that is not is not that that that is. Is that it? That it is.

THIS PAGE IS BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY. IF I COULD I WOULD MAKE THE REST OF THE BOOK BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY.

Seriously. Do something that you've been putting off that you know you should be doing.

ACT AS IF

THIS PAGE IS BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY. IF I COULD I WOULD MAKE THE REST OF THE BOOK BLANK FOR THOSE WHO DISOBEY. FINE, HAVE SOME ACTUAL BLANK PAGES IF I HAVE BEEN UNCLEAR.

ACT AS IF

As you may have noticed... I'm serious. If you fail at this point, the rest of the book will not save you from yourself.

ACT AS IF

ACT AS IF

ACT AS IF

Damn, You Are Stubborn

It is a pity for you to leave undone those things which ought to be done. Regardless, you made it this far without changing your life for the better. A congratulations are to be deserved. You probably want to know the purpose of those blank pages. “Gosh, I just disobeyed this author and made it to his next chapter, sucka!” At this rate, you might as well go the entire book, fantasize about having a better life, and proactively stay the same. My friend Omar told me after reading this, “I don’t like how you just assumed that no one would take any actionable steps to achieve their goals.” Omar actually went out and proactively got something very important done that he was putting off as he is a chronic procrastinator, he set up a date with a gorgeous woman. So, are you going to live vicariously through Omar? You sure? It sounds fun. What did you do?

Yes, I am talking to you. No, not you. The you that is inside you that knows that I am speaking the truth. You could be better but you simply

insist on occasionally sabotaging the potential of measurable progress. People like you make people like me very successful because you are predictable. I can reliably ask you to do stuff at less than your time is worth to yourself and I'll let you happily justify this lower worth however you choose to. This is the old you. The only good part about the old you is that you are stubborn. Let's take that stubbornness and do something positive with it. Before we get carried away with how I am going to make you a better person, because obviously you've been trying to do so and failing your entire life, I want to tell you about the significance of my ability to sell you blank pages.

I'd be willing to bet that those blank pages you bought made you question your better judgment. I'd be willing to bet that in reading these blank pages, this is the first time you've questioned your better judgment since the beginning of this book at a minimum. In some cases, days, months or even years may have lapsed without this positive feedback loop of questioning your judgment. You may have found yourself asking, "Am I really taking this guy seriously that is making me read blank pages?" "Why is this important?" "Is this worth reading" "Should I continue to invest my time reading this book?"

I figured the absolute best way to elicit the desirable type of behavior that I want you to have is going to be me force you to do it subconsciously. Only then can I positively reinforce this behavior and if I am lucky, in the long run we'll bring this to the forefront of your mind as frequently as possible. This attitude, of questioning, is incredibly advantageous. What would you do if I told you that at present I am sitting on a plane bound for New Orleans because one of my friends called me up around 10 hours ago and asked me to go to New Orleans for New Years? Can't Does your present lifestyle offer that kind of flexibility? Why not? Should it? What if I told you that I'm doing it for free? Southwest companion pass baby. Would you like to be able to spontaneously do what you want to do? I am not saying that your goal is to travel. Mine certainly isn't. I just decided that I would regret not doing what I am doing presently more than I would regret doing it. If you want to guarantee failure, you can start by not giving it a go. Can you envision a lifestyle that will enable you to do what you want? Damn, you are stubborn. Why are you holding yourself back? What is this inside of you that prevents you from being the real you, the you that you know you can be?

OK, so now I want you to feel good about questioning your better judgment. It's foolish to continue to read a book if you have identified that it is not worth your time completing. There is no honor in completing meaningless tasks. If you're watching a TV show or movie and you find yourself waiting for it to be over, just turn it off and do something else. One of the things that George Washington Carver did extremely well is that

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if he ever tired or grew frustrated of what he was presently doing, he'd put it on the backburner and move forward with something else. This system is not unlike Prim's Algorithm. For the most part I use this with added emphasis on being opportunistic. Not only am I stepping through tasks in progress as I feel I should be completing them but I am also keeping an eye out for better things that I should be capitalizing on instead. I guess you could call me an opportunity junkie. I'm addicted to finding and realizing what I perceive to be the best opportunity. The catch here is that life has many facets: romance, money, family, spirituality, etc. Don't get stuck in one or the other and be open to jumping out of one into another if the opportunity is there.

This feeling that you are starting to get is a good one. What you are feeling is simply put: opportunistic. You feel like you want to run outside and start negotiating immediately for exactly what you want. Don't get too carried away, there are real world constraints. We'll get to those, but for now, I want you to take this positive energy that you are feeling and indulge a little bit. Go out and do something for yourself. If it involves others, that's great but it sure doesn't have to. The goal of this exercise is to start feeding the positive feedback loop of actively identifying positive actions to better your life. After all, you've only got one of those by my calculations. Since, for the most part, you don't get second chances to relive any part of your life that is in the past, you might as well accept that you have a choice. You can choose one of a few things at present:

1. You can go with the default: Lie to yourself
2. You can admit that in life, you can choose the actions you take.

This has subcomponents.

- a. You proactively can choose to make the best of things.
- b. You can choose to be indifferent and let life and others dictate what you do, what you believe in, and who you are as a person.
- c. You can proactively sabotage yourself and make things harder than they need to be.

To me, the choice is clear. 2.a. sounds the most advantageous. I choose to ACT AS IF for a reason, and that reason simply put is that it does not make sense not to, all things considered. That said, I feel like an excellent way to help you come to the same conclusion would be to argue the other points and let you draw your own conclusion (because you are going to anyway).

1. Contrary to the opinion that you'd expect me to have at present, lying to yourself will actually get you far in life. If you continue to tell yourself that you are living a more fulfilling life than you know you are, this is the best path towards happiness. Not only that but this attitude will help you make the best decisions. Remember that ex-relationship that you had? Wouldn't it be neat if you were able to lie to yourself and say that it would be great to still be a part of a dying relationship? Isn't it worth all of your time and effort to make amends and put in a lot of effort towards a dead end? Shouldn't you want to look at things from their point of view and invest more of your personal time and resources into something that you not only don't have to do but also makes you unhappy? I certainly think that it is a best practice to lie to myself. I frequently do it and encourage others to do so. You'll be a lot better off if you join me. You'd be cooler if you did. Oh wait, you mean that what I'm asking you to do is to stop lying to yourself? Well, STOP IT.

2. B. Remember when you were asked to do something meaningless and you decided not to do it. Shame on you. Don't you know that it is always best to do what others tell you to do? If you get paid for it, it must be right. After all, what kind of person would you be if you didn't make any money? What if you had nothing? Wouldn't that be terrible? How else are you supposed to get along unless you do as other people tell you at least part of the time? Wait, part of the time is an option? When I give, I am all in. I want to give all of my time to things that don't mean anything to me. This is noble and makes me feel better about myself.
C. Proactively sabotaging yourself doesn't deserve its own argument as I believe that the argument is self-evident if you find yourself reading this book.

Allow me to offer you some actual wisdom as opposed to the commonplace bullshit that your friends and family mislead you to believe is true, kind of feels true, but actually isn't true.

For starters, to expect sense is the hallmark of nonsense. How else can I put that? Truth does not demand belief. Contrary to popular wisdom, there are actually tons of easy opportunities that have significantly above average returns. As Max Planck notes on the stubbornness of people, "A scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see

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the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it.” This is by far one of the most important points. If you are sailing, you can’t pick the winds direction, but you can choose how to set your sails. In the many facets of life, and opportunities you uncover, seek to constantly set things in your favor and choose to have the wind at your back, helping you. There’s little to no reason that you’d ever seek out a game where things are difficult and the payoff is marginal. That’s why everyone is doing it. To succeed unconventionally is what you are after. False. That is totally false. To succeed is all you are after. I don’t care how you do it or how you perceive success but that is the goal: success. Ironically, success is unconventional. Therefore, to succeed will in some circles make you very unpopular while you are in the process. Expect that, leverage it, and make the most of it.

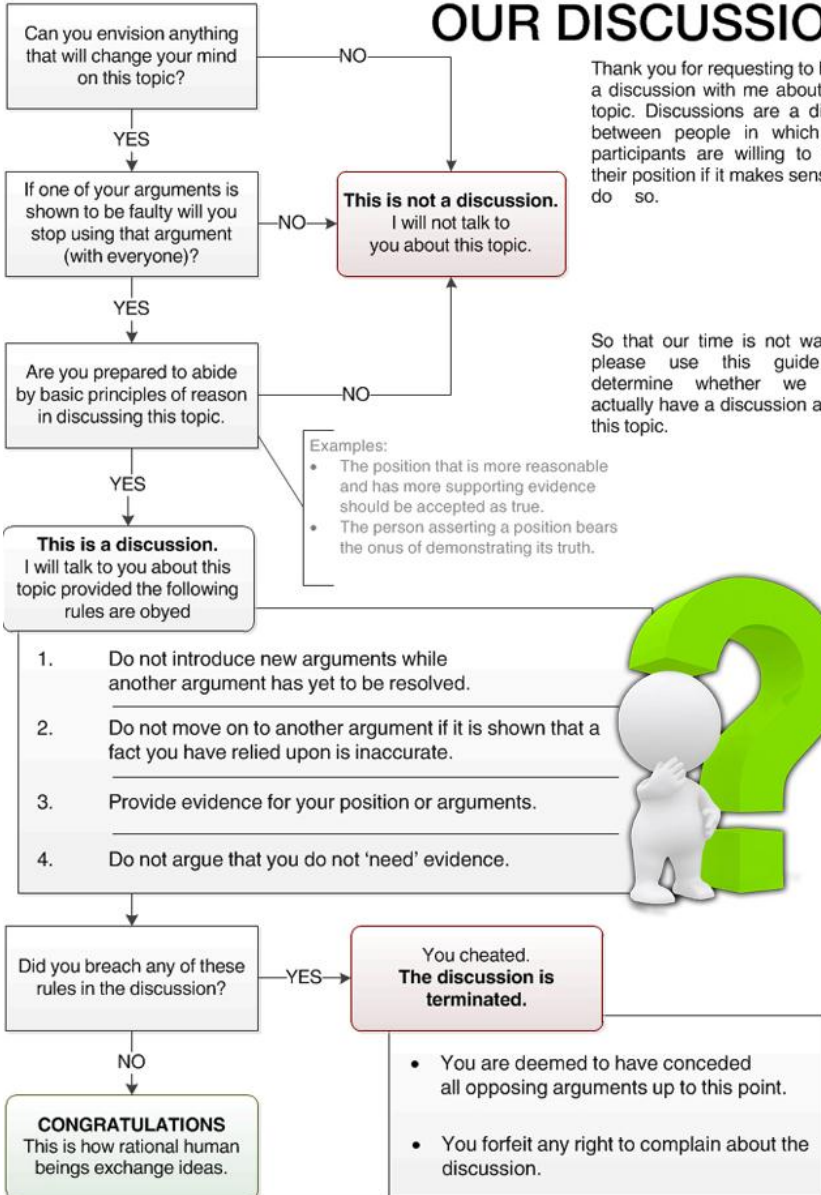
Now, let’s begin. But before we do, I need to cover the only rules that I have about internal dialog. This discussion I am referring to is the one that takes place between your ears. You feel me? There is no need to bring up and entertain topics that are inactionable. Leave that mental busywork to the verbal complainers and the do-nothing-ers of the world.

Talk – Action = Zero.

OUR DISCUSSION

Thank you for requesting to have a discussion with me about this topic. Discussions are a dialog between people in which the participants are willing to alter their position if it makes sense to do so.

So that our time is not wasted please use this guide to determine whether we can actually have a discussion about this topic.

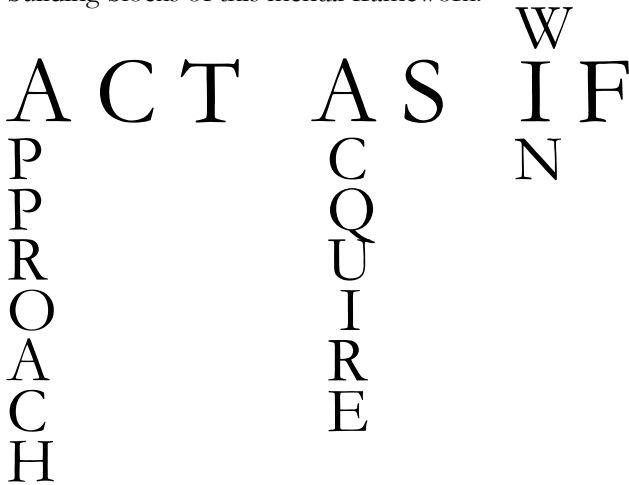


The Framework: ACT AS IF

Life isn't fair. Here's to unfair advantages.

Before you can be successful, you must define a sustainable "new you," from which the "present you" can make definable steps towards becoming. This isn't an exercise that is done once and forgotten. To be done correctly, you will find yourself perpetually re-doing and re-thinking "ACT AS IF" every second of every day until it becomes natural and you become everything you want to be **AND MORE**.

What best describes this new you that you want to be? It's a mentality. An attitude. This attitude is called "ACT AS IF." Let's talk about it and the components that make up my personal schema where I ACT AS IF. So, let's take a look at the diagram that I came up with to oversimplify the building blocks of this mental framework.



The Three steps to ACT AS IF are to Approach, Acquire, and Win.

When dealing with the approach you need to know, what do you want to approach? What is the best way that you presently can think of to approach? What are the systemic risks of approach? Is this approach sustainable?

When dealing with the acquisition of resources needed to win, you need to know the advantages and disadvantages of your mix of resources. What skills do you have that you don't think that you actually have? Can you do more with less? At what point do you feel like you have enough awareness, knowledge, and ability to make impactful decisions that you are ready for battle? At that point, the act of not being in battle should at least be on purpose because you are fully prepared. Part of battling might be acting like

you are preparing, but don't lose sight... you are prepared for quick decisive action.

With all of the power that you are able to harness, the goal is to win. Get exactly what you want. Life is lived one person at a time and your life is your own and nobody else's. Other people will be along for the ride but you are the full beneficiary of all of the consequences of your decisions. Life truly is what you make it. If yours sucks up till now, it's because you didn't get this memo. You just got served. Wake up, buddy. I'm waking you up from your deep slumber within the Matrix. You now are becoming aware of the real enemy. It's not out there somewhere. It's the weakness inside you. You must eliminate it and I am here to help you.

This framework can be applied to anything. I am sure you've skimmed the table of contents. Money, Women, Relationships, Vacations, anything that be set as a goal or objective. Business deals, happiness, food, sports, the list goes on and on. What do you want? If you can define it and it is in the scope of something that can be done, you now can make it yours. But do not forget to apply this framework to only situations that drive your personal throughput as defined by the goal! The goal is to live!

Make wealth. Make relationships. Make it up. Make it big. Make it awesome. Make it unforgettable. Make it so. You got me? This is about making it.

Define Success

The hardest part of getting what you want for most people is defining exactly what that is. Granted, there are people who accidentally happen to be able to achieve what they want without every clearly defining it but this is not the norm. That I can assure you. For most people it is an iterative process where they look at what they have and they ask themselves what they want next and they make adjustments on the fly to try to see it through. In defining success, you must pay attention to what your limitations are as a person and you must be honest with yourself. Clearly, there are things that you are not physically capable of and to imagine and plan that you are will lead to the opposite of success, failure. You must also prioritize the things that you want. If you don't prioritize, life will do it for you and the outcome will not be what you had intended. Much like Sun Tzu, I'm going to teach you to learn by doing. Good news is that you've already to the goal: *To live*.

Approach

The first step to ACT AS IF is to make an approach. If you don't

approach, you should expect a failure rate of 100%. Much like a game of basketball, you miss 100% of the shots you don't take. If you don't even go to the game you forfeit. If you don't even play then you can't expect to win. Approach the things you want. If you don't want it or it is not worth your time, it's not worth approaching. Part of the initial approach is identifying opportunities you are interested in and surrounding yourself with them. You want to place yourself in the most advantageous places to get what you want as possible.

Acquire

Secondly, I want you to acquire all of the resources necessary in order to achieve your goal. Have you ever begun something with the attitude to fail? The first thing you need to acquire is the attitude that you are going to succeed. If you don't first start by believing in your ability to succeed, you are far more likely to fail and we are trying to win here. Winning is more about the acquisition of attitude than anything else. If your attitude is right, even when you fail, you will not have failed because you will more clearly see what it takes to win. Winning is a process that requires failure and learning, but there is such a thing that I want to completely and utterly destroy from your mind as an acceptable attitude. **Playing with the attitude that loss is OK is not OK.** Going into something with the attitude of defeat and despair is not the attitude of a winner. A winner enters the arena, level headed, ready to make calculated decisions to leverage their strengths, and is ready to capitalize on any opportunity that presents itself if it helps them in their pursuit of winning. It is the attitude of losers that walk into the arena and shrug off losses and externalize their weaknesses. I traveled around the world to pick up a book from a friend that I had read before that had a quote in it that best summarizes this concept and is my favorite quote:

“The superior man is distressed by the limitations of his ability; he is not distressed by the fact that men do not recognize the ability that he has.” – Confucious

This quote can mean different things to different people. To me, it means that the superior man understands that he can change his outward appearance if he chooses to impress on the other men that he actually has the ability that they presently do not perceive him to have. This concept to me is **EPIC SHIT**. This is the most insightful and succinct way to put this concept that, one who is superior to all others, can actively manage the perceptions of other people to his advantage if he sees fit. This is what I am going to teach you. That is what this book is about.

My friends, on the other hand, believe that this quote means that in their lives they should disregard the opinions of others and focus on themselves. Although this may be a reasonable interpretation of the quote, it is in my opinion lacking the lightning burst insight of the prior definition. To support this as the meaning, one must purposely delude themselves into believing that opinions of other people don't matter. They do. The opinions of other people will make or break your success. If other people believe in you and your abilities, success will come easily and more naturally. As Matthew says, To him who has, more will be given. To him who has not, even that which he has will be taken away.

If you have not, there are systems out there, mostly driven by money, power, and greed that will constantly erode at your ability to have. If you are not aware of these systems, I can assure you they are not working for you, but against you. You might find yourself proactively ignoring the existence of these systems as you painstakingly have to deal with the consequences of them. Imagine for instance that you are laying down and three other people are laying on top of you. One more hops on. Can you feel the pressure? Is this kind of how you would feel if you could imagine shunned, unopened unpaid and unserviceable bills piling up in your name at your address? Creditors hunting you?

On the other hand, if you choose to, and I encourage you to do so, I encourage you to see things as they are. I encourage you to accept that you can act in such a way that draws people in and is not only advantageous for you, but for them as well. I want you to accept that the way things are is for no reason in particular except that they are. If you can make up something better for everyone involved, it is up to you to make it happen. So, what are we waiting for? Let's get on with the things you need to know to empower not only your own success, but the success of others. By leveraging the talents of others, you will leverage yourself far more than you even believed you could when you started.

I want you to become a student of consequences. Study the consequences of the actions of yourself and others and the reactions of all things related. Study those who are successful in ways that you are not successful but would like to become successful. I want you to base your present and future decisions on your cumulative understanding of your perception of how the world works. Do the actions or inaction that you take on a daily basis drive you towards being who you perceive yourself to be? Is that who you want to be? Can you do things better? If you weren't you, what kind of advice would you give yourself if you were someone else? If you can come up with good, actionable advice for yourself where you believe that taking it will result in a better life, what is keeping you from taking it? Can we eliminate that idea or concept or thing that is preventing you from being who you should be?

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I want you to ground all of your believable consequences in reality. How do you think people will react if you take a specific action? If you do end up taking that action, was their reaction in line with your expectations? Could you have acted more advantageously in retrospect? What did you do really well? What do you think you should try to do differently? Would you say that you could have put in more effort? Would be putting in more effort be the best use of your time or do you have more important things to do? In life, define what you want most first. Everything else is secondary.

Win

The last step is to Win. If you need an explanation of winning, I can't help you. Maybe Charlie Sheen can? Did I just say that? Let's take a look at the Approach in more detail.



Approach

Pay close attention to the things that you do decide to do because the only person that is going to derive meaning from them is you. Approach them as if you are playing a videogame if you have to. That's what I do. The master of their domain is one whom can, much like an iguana, morph their personality to exceed the expectations of their audience. They had no idea that you were that unbelievably awesome! They want more! You have a highly contagious positive attitude and a drive so great to be successful that you can't let anything in your way go unnoticed. If it is in the way, it must be moved out of the way. What would you do if you weren't afraid?

Your Mystique

There is no "going to be successful" or "planning to be successful" in the way you act. You are successful. This is now how you act. You have committed to this new you and everything else is secondary. That is the bottom line.

Since people will notice that there is something inside of you that they cannot explain that excites them, they will begin to ask you questions to try and explain the change. Explanation is futile! People always look for purpose. Make your responses such that it leaves them hanging. Leave them an incomplete picture, wanting more and having even more questions that they want to ask you. Your story is simple. You woke up and decided to take advantage of the moment that you live in and they are invited, just don't stand in your way or try to slow you down. You feel great and today is the best day of your life.

You want to, if you can, be as sure of the world around you as possible. Now, you can only achieve that to a certain degree, but you want the greatest degree of perspective and control that you can obtain. That means that you will be giving up comforting fantasies in order to live in an actually real world. These fantasies are mind viruses. They are preventing you from taking the necessary action to get what you want. Get rid of all the ones that hold you back or aren't actionable and seek to replace them with ideas and concepts that actually help you. Don't entertain the impossible, but seek to really understand what is possible.

On the inside of this new you, yes, making decisions regarding what you do and how you do it does require a lot of deliberate thought sometimes, but outwardly, as far as anyone can tell, you are the definition of who you envision yourself becoming and effortless thoughts are constantly driving highly effective action.

People are drawn to the irrational more than to the rational. Play into it. Obviously, you are somewhat putting on a show and you know this, but never admit to it because that would spoil their fun of trying to figure you out! Besides, your life is now a show. It's your show and you're living it! It's exciting! Keep them guessing! Your personality is a catalyst for fun. You can't give answers when answers are dull, it's just not in you anymore. You are contagiously exciting and you know it. Yank their chain a little. Create a little mystery. Take them places but don't tell them where you are going. Even though the place might suck, the fact that they don't know where they are going will make it exciting.

Alright, so now that you are awesome, let's figure out how to surround yourself with more awesomeness. That is to say, let's get what we want. Let's get it yesterday. Do we have it already? I thought so. We just didn't know we had it. Damn, I hate it when I already have what I want and I didn't even realize it! Haha!

Before we can get to defining what you want and prioritizing it, we first need to have a framework understanding of the prevailing systems in place that will allow you to get what you want. The first thing to acknowledge is that you do not have everything you want. Of course to others they cannot tell this because outwardly you exhibit the attitude of having it all and this includes the understanding that if you want something that you don't have you have a highly effective method of getting it if it's worth your time.

Let's start from the bottom. At the bottom you spend time asking for something and it is given to you. This is a trade. You have traded words and the awareness of expectations for something. Here are three such trades. Perhaps you asked your parents to prepare you something for lunch. Perhaps you ask a stranger on the street for \$20. Perhaps you have ask your friend to drop you off at the airport. To achieve different things you have to ask for things different ways and you have to deal with the consequences.

These three trades all have one thing in common. They only work if the person you are trading with actually thinks it's in their best interest to comply. Odds are your parents want to feed you because they want the best for you because you are a part of them, literally. Odds are your friend may or may not drop you off depending on how frequently you two hang out. This is where it gets interesting and I can feel you waiting in anticipation for what's coming next. I am kind of having fun delaying it. The anticipation is building. Alright, good enough. This is dangerous because it's going to cover a highly controversial topic and there are key takeaways. The first thing that I am going to say is that to the best of my limited awareness engaging in this sort of behavior is not in your best interest. That said, I believe that by opening the floor for a mental debate where you consider the consequences of taking the other side of what is socially desirable behavior you can gain key insights that will better enable you to craft what will be a more effective life plan. Alright, further ado, here we go.

Asking a stranger on the street for \$20 only works if they feel like complying. Reasons that they may comply and give you \$20 are in great number but it all boils down to their need for it and their perspective on life. As someone who has been robbed, I can speak to the fact that when my very existence is threatened and I am at the mercy of criminals that my primary focus is to do whatever is necessary to live to fight another day. This can be very effective for a criminal. In fact it is probably the most effective form that I can even think of in terms of getting something you want as quickly as possible. The name of the game here is consequences. If you choose to cross the line of engaging in activities under the predisposition of voluntarism then the consequences are severe. Voluntarism is the philosophy which holds that all forms of human association should be voluntary. This is the system that constrains my behavior and I encourage you to do the same. Moving on, the other, more

common ways that you may express a need for \$20 from a stranger on the street are to act like you're out of money and obviously a compelling story of hopelessness and destitution will surely increase the likelihood of you getting mercy dollars. Obviously if you are thinking of this from a business model perspective, you can't sit around on the street and rob people. You also probably wouldn't be very happy if you begged for money. All things considered these are not things that you want to do, so you should not do them. You are not stupid.

So, these are three trades of basically nothing for something at first glance. As you look deeper you're selling your idea that someone else will be better off if they give you something that is theirs that you want and presently do not have. The reason that I brought the homeless strategy into this mix is to transition to the next step. This is the sell side. Onto the buy side. The difference between the homeless business strategy and the other two is that the homeless business strategy evolves out of desperation due to a lack of belief on the buy side. Begging and robbing stem from the careless disregard for oneself. Only when you lack the conviction that you're worth it do these present themselves as options. I can't even call them attractive options, but I guess that begging is attractive if your alternative is starving to death.

Let it be known that I do believe that there are person specific situations when begging is OK and even the right thing to do. I believe that it is only acceptable when you are at the end of your rope and it is used as a means to begin climbing back up. In your case, however, you will not be putting yourself into any socially disadvantageous situations if you can help it. You will also note the stigma attached with this type of behavior. Your time is obviously better spent engaging in trades that are mutually beneficial for all parties involved. If this is not immediately self-evident and you must ask "Why?" the answer is you should close this book. You're in time-out. Your thinking privileges have been revoked. You will not expend mental energy on that which is not important to you. Haha just kidding. What's life if you can't screw around every once in a while? What do you think this is? Me holding your mind captive in an Auschwitz concentration camp?

Alright, to summarize, before you can trade for what you want you need to have something you're willing to sell. The good news is that we already know who the first buyer is. It's you. Before you can sell at your highest level of performance you need to buy into your own ideas. Trust me when I say that it's hard to buy into false ideas. I'll get into the details later but I practically fail-passed MBA school on the fumes that I used to be a good student with mercy grade adjustments from faculty members. I'm sure the kidney stone during finals week helped too.

Your Initial Public Offering

“Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself.” – Rumi

If you don't sell yourself and your ideas, you've got nothing. What happens to a business that stops selling itself and its products? It ceases to exist. The only way to drive personal throughput is to sell. It's that simple. So what exactly do you sell and how do you go about it? Hey, don't look at me. You're the one that brought it up. Let's start with a fact.

You get to choose the types of experiences that dominate your life. My advice? Be very picky. Be as picky as you can possibly be about important things and let the rest flow. How exactly do you choose what to be picky about? I might be able to help you with a mental framework that has been derived from my personal research into tens of thousands of companies, attempting to understand what differentiates those that are successful from those that are not, and applying those concepts to myself as if my life is a business. Again, this is about you selling yourself, so what do businesses do when they sell themselves? They go and they find investors to invest in them and through the process of an IPO they transform from a private company to a public company. So what do you think you ought to do if you want to sell yourself? Glad you asked, the model below are the new rules you live by. Note that in this model that I am about to show you, priorities represent a matrix of purposes. At any particular point in time you will be tasking yourself with one particular purpose and you will be executing on that purpose. Your purpose at any particular point in time is exactly what you see it to be. Right now your purpose is to consume as much of this book as possible as long as it remains action oriented. Learning that does not lead to a change in what you do amounts to mental masturbation and should not be exhalted.

The model is simple (below).

Important → Priorities → Ownership

Working Down

What is important to you drives your priorities.

Your priority matrix defines what you choose to own.

The Point

That which you own increases your ability to sell yourself.

Working Back Up

When you sell yourself better you have more to buy into priorities.

Live true to your priorities and your life will be more important.

Your IPO is a little bit different than that of a company. For companies, going public is a process that requires additional costs and additional controls and standards that enable the company's progress to be audited, tracked, and verified. For a public company, the purpose of the audits is to shut down bad business practices and reallocate time and efforts towards good business practices. That is to say that audits prevent companies from lying to themselves and their investors and force upon them the predisposition to create value as measured in dollars. You are a little bit different. You are a person. As a person there is more to life than making money. You are now in the business of making high quality experiences that are important to you.

James Allworth in the book How Will You Measure Your Life has brought to my attention as I am about to yours the risk of sequencing life events, which arguably had been my excuse of choice for everything until I woke up one day and decided to ACT ASF IF.

“One of the most common versions of this mistake that high-potential young professionals make is believing that investments in life can be sequenced.” A few examples of this before I move on:

1. “I will date someone better once I have more money.”
 2. “I can invest in my career now, and I will focus on my family later.”
 3. “I need a degree to be successful.”
-
1. No you won't.
 2. You never will.
 3. No you don't.

You now have a framework to make value-based judgments and it's time to dive into the ultimate question that actually drives all personal decision making. All of us are going to die, but not everyone makes the choices that enable them to, for any brief moment in time, truly live.

Time & Health

Is this worth my time?

Definition of this:

Whatever it is you think you are doing at any point in time is the this that I am referring to in the above question. Right now, the this that you are doing could be a multitude of things beyond just reading this book. Quickly identify a few of them just for practice.

Repeat this question to yourself as often as possible. When the answer is no, **STOP IT**. If you arrive at this sincere conclusion, you are employing self-defeating behaviors if you do not **STOP IT** and you are not a friend of mine, but an idiot. I don't associate with idiots.

Everything in context ladies and gentlemen. Everything you have or claim to have is of less value if you don't have health and time. Imagine not having any time? You're dead. See what I mean? Imagine yourself with significantly less of both of these in paradise somewhere. Just isn't the same as what you imagined paradise being, is it? It doesn't matter how many millions you have in your bank account or how many people wish they could spend time with you... Time and Health is what you start with. For you, they are a function of each other and entirely inseparable. Health is more of a "status" metric whereas time is passing. Health is a byproduct of what you do with your time and your time is limited by your health. So have you got a second? What are you presently willing to trade it for? What do you actually trade it for? What should you be willing to trade it for?

Before I get there, why does it even matter?

Too frequently, people trade their health and time without putting too much thought into it. What's interesting to me about this is that there are systems that will force you to abandon all of your health and all of your time if you don't guard it. The bottom line is that you'll learn more about consequences as they prevent you from being able to do what you want and effectively force you to do things that you would rather not do. Instead of being a master of your environment, you are letting it master you. Brilliant strategy. If you don't learn, life will teach you the hard way by not allowing you to think much. You effectively trap yourself. Don't do this. Life is a videogame. The goal is not to get stuck in a meaningless routine that involves lots of self-defeating behavior. Would you ever play that way if you were a videogame character?

So, about this Time & Health thing-a-ma-bob...

What are you presently willing to trade it for?

The funny thing about this is that if you were honest with yourself right now, you'd be willing to trade your health and time for less than you actually trade it for. How embarrassing is that? Not only are you selling yourself short but you're willing to sell yourself shorter. This is just basic economics. Odds are you perceive the marginal value of your time less than the market value for the majority of your time. What are you willing to do for an extra \$5?

What would you say if I told you that when I was a millionaire, I priced corndogs against the sum of hotdogs and hotdog buns at Sam's club where my friend was a member and walked out with corn dogs because they were

marginally cheaper. Sure, they barely fit in the fridge and crowded out a variety of other, more reasonable food groups but they were an excellent way to maximize fullness and satisfaction per dollar. What's the dumbest thing you've ever done on a bet? Why did you do it? You did it for more reasons than the money at the time. Freeze that thought. Can you inspire those kinds of reasons in yourself to do something more intelligent starting now, today? Let's take a look at a few other example situations where you might happily sell yourself shorter than you actually are.

How about the dating scene? Are you willing to settle for someone who by most metrics is beneath you? Are you sure? How about if they were really persistent? How much time do you think you should be putting into dating or the existing relationships that you have? Is it enough? Are you being as effective as you could be with your time? Is this a paragraph of questions with a final statement? Yes it is.

Investments? Who here, like myself, has sold out of something only to see its value appreciate? Well, have you at least seen someone sell something for a price at which point the buyer who assumed ownership during the sale later resold it and made a profit? Wait, isn't that just normal business. Yes it is. Value is an illusion and it is created by managing and setting the perceptions of others. You can create value very easily, you're just not used to it, yet.

Are you willing to work more hazardous jobs because they pay more? Sure, your life is more at stake and you might die, but you can't think about that now cause you're making more money than you would otherwise. Exposed to hazards at your job? No problem, someone's got to do it.

Look around you. Do you know anyone who trades their time for less than it is worth at any point in the day, even for a second? Can you envision them trading it for even less? Yeah you can. Hahaha. Pretty funny right? So, you tell me how you're any different.

Look, I've done things so dumb that no matter who you are, I guarantee you could have done better than me at various points throughout my life up till now. You'd probably be able to outdo me at points in my future too. If you could only fathom the greatness of my stupidity, you'd wonder "How did this baboon ever write a New York Times Bestseller?" That's simple. It's because I don't let the past define what I am willing to trade my time for.

What do you actually trade it for?

I'm imagining a large majority of this book's audience is willing to trade their time for some sort of income. Is that income worth your time? You must perceive it to be or you wouldn't be investing the time to procure it. Of course ideally, you'd end up with a large passive income, but that would be too complicated because then you'd have to figure out how to make

yourself happy.

To many who read this book, they'll be looking at this book from the false paradigm that an income is a scarce resource. This is one of those things that if you believe it to be true, it will be true. If you choose to question this perspective, you'll be opening far more doors than you will be closing. For the most part, the majority of people work a job at what I'd call the market clearing rate, that is to say that they are not getting paid what they are worth if they were to utilize and leverage all of their talents but they are getting paid a lesser portion of this by an employer who values their time less than they do. The employer ideally keeps their time premium, that is to say the difference between the value that they add to the organization and their individual cost of employment. This gets sticky when you take a closer look at the margins but more or less the amount people are paid compared to others of similar ability is a function of their ability to negotiate.

What about your relationships. Are they all going superb? Do you think that they could be going any better?

What should you be willing to trade it for?

Odds are you know the answer to this one without me even telling you. I'll tell you the answer in four paragraphs because I want you to think about it first. You should never take a serious health risk. The potential cost is far too great to offset any marginal reward that you might get. Let everyone else work in hazardous conditions.

I met a man this last week when I was in Florida who was in the parking garage of National Rent-A-Car. He had served in the military. The first thing that he shared with me after I established rapport with him was that he was proud that he worked there in Florida for minimum wage instead of running around in the desert fighting a bunch of people in hiding amongst civilians. I made sure to point out to him that I fully agreed with his decision to live in Florida and live a low-stress lifestyle where he could keep an eye open for that next opportunity.

As for me, at present I am working at about 40% of what the market value for my skillset is worth. I recommend a low stress activity to keep you somewhat regular in the things that you do. My job: I'm good at it and it is very low stress, but then again anything is low stress after you experience the loss of millions of dollars of your own money and millions of dollars of other people's money due to fraud. I lost something like 25 pounds, moved, sold my car, slept on a cushion on the floor and hugged my dog to sleep, no joke. As I write this, that was 11 months ago. 12 months ago I was still worth something like half a million dollars. It's amazing how fast money slips through your fingers if you don't know what you are doing and you think you do. You can always make your money back a different way but

unfortunately you cannot make back lost time. Spend it wisely.

So, what should you be willing to trade your health and time for? You should never really be willing to trade your health. Your time is a function of your health. In fact, the way I measure it, health is basically my perception of my physical capacity to perform. If you are not physically healthy, how do you expect to maximize your cognitive abilities? I hate to break it to you but your body and mind are connected. If you ignore problems in one area, they will slowly grow behind your back until they start negatively affecting other areas of your life or your perception of life. Maintaining a positive attitude is a conscious effort and all of us can pinpoint many individuals in our life that passively let negativity biased positive feedback loops take control of their lives. Don't be that person. Four paragraphs later: what should you trade your time for?

On a forward basis, you should always be willing to trade your time for what you perceive to be the best opportunity to capitalize on what you want. Do you want free time? Free to do what exactly? How do you expect to get it? If you were a millionaire would you have free time? Ha, millionaires can't afford a second to themselves most of the time.

I know people worth 100's of millions and they all have less free time than I do at present. Sure, they may drive around different colored Lamborghinis on a daily basis but they are still driving them to where might you guess? To work! Ha, in most cases to work a job that they tell me they don't even want to do anymore.

The No Regrets Model

I am so excited for you that you've made it this far. Would you regret not finishing the most life changing book you've ever read?

Let's use the Socratic method to show you that this is the most exciting and fun way to live. Let's do that and start with a fun question.

If life had a 'reset' button, would you press it? What if you did? Let's pick a particular age, say 15. If you could go back to that time knowing what you know now, would you do it? Obviously the answer is yes. I wouldn't hesitate a moment. Why am I pointing this out? There is something to be learned here. It's better to regret something you have done than to regret something you haven't done.

The reason that I would go back in time to relive the past and potentially alter the decisions that I have made is clear. I would make better ones then if I knew what I know now.

If you, at this point in time, are in disagreement with what I called the obvious answer, 'Yes,' and still insist that if you could go back in time and relive your life you wouldn't change a thing --- then you, my friend are in denial. I do realize, that putting it that way puts you on the defensive. For everyone else, skip forward 1 page, but for those of you that need a little

convincing, I am here for you.

So, you think that there is no decision in the past 5 years that you couldn't have made better? Well, then that would also imply that you are of the opinion that you don't make mistakes. Should I entertain that idea? If you don't make mistakes, then why are you reading this book? Wouldn't it not be worth your time to try to improve yourself if you are flawless? Would it not be a mistake to be reading this book if you did not make mistakes? Did I just catch you red handed? Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar? Yes. You do make mistakes. It's OK. I guarantee that I make far more mistakes than you do. Success comes from acknowledging that you have and will make mistakes and that you will learn from them in order to make fewer going forward.

Do you learn from your mistakes and then change how you act so that you don't repeatedly make the same ones over and over? Maybe you don't. Maybe you have a history of extreme laziness. This actually is preferable if you ask me as compared to the hyperactive "let's do everything and put in 150% into everything" type mentality. Why? Because you know that you have a lot of regrets already that you can use to motivate you to have fewer going forward. I stay motivated by continuously trying to figure out what I would regret not doing if I was to evaluate my life 5 years from now, or heck 5 minutes from now. I call this my no regrets philosophy. If you can come up with a better name, I'm all ears. Anyway, here is what it is.

If you skipped the page stop here.

When faced with a decision to do or not to do something, you ask yourself the following two questions:

1. Will I regret doing this?
2. Will I regret not doing this?

IF I will regret doing this, I don't do it. Then, if I will potentially regret not doing this, I do it.

My mother spent years of her time as a long term care pharmacist. As such, I had unbridled first person access to a resource in the regrets department – people on their death beds. It was one of those opportunities where all you had to do was show up. You didn't even have to ask questions... they wanted to dispense life advice and I was glad to take it.

If there was one thing that I learned from people who felt that they were close to their expiration date it would have to be that people rarely regret the time that they tried something new that they thought might be fun. Based on my personal research, it is a more frequent occurrence that people regret not doing something that they thought they should have tried but didn't have the guts to take the first step. And behold! The greatest regret I've ever come across:

ACT AS IF

“Not following my heart when I was young and ending up doing/being what I thought everyone else wanted me to do/be.

Eventually, enough life builds up that you can't change course without hurting a lot of people. Now, it's too late. My only hope is to prevent my kids from making the same mistake.”

Anonymous

Shortlist Your Priorities

“Not everything that can be counted counts. Not everything that counts can be counted.” –Einstein.

Back to the IPO Model below. Let's dial into the midsection.

Important → Priorities → Ownership

The question is about diversification. How do you invest your time? It's a scarce resource. I am going to paraphrase Warren Buffett's speech on the topic and translate it from the financial world to the time management world.

Now that you are in the business of evaluating how you spend your time, diversification is a terrible mistake. If you really understand the value of your time, you probably shouldn't have more than 6 priorities. I mean, if you can identify six wonderful ways to spend your time, that is all the diversification you need. You're going to be hugely successful and I can guarantee that going into a 7th priority rather than putting more time and effort into your first one has got to be a terrible mistake. Very few people have done well on their 7th best idea, but a lot of people have been hugely successful in accomplishing their best idea. I would say that anyone working with normal amounts of time who really knows what they want, six priorities is plenty. And, you are going to want to spend half your time working on your best idea. All the people I know that have done well for themselves tend to avoid the addition of unnecessary priorities.

Thanks Mr. Buffett!

The danger for high-achieving people is that they'll unconsciously allocate their time and energy to activities that yield the most immediate, tangible accomplishments. This is what society and school has hardwired them to do via the carrot stick method so that's what they do. A strategy whether in companies or in life is created through hundreds of everyday decisions about where you spend your time, who you spend it with, and what you do with it.

If you don't know what you want, how do you expect to get it? The first step to getting what you want is figuring out exactly what it is that you want. Do you want to be happy? Do you want to be rich? Do you want to have a great social circle? Do you want to surround yourself with gorgeous women? Do you want to have better relationships with family members and relatives? Do you want people to come to you when they need serious advice? Do you want to read a book that tells you what you are supposed to want? Am I even taking writing this book seriously? If you believed any of the bullshit in this paragraph, re-read it and seriously ask yourself, are asking these types of questions going to help you? How is this any better than the popular musings of everyone in society?

Start by figuring out what you don't want. It's the fear of getting stuck with what you don't want that is going to propel you to a lifestyle that sucks less.

Alright **new you**, be honest with yourself. A few textbook answers that I have heard in the past is that people want to be successful or they want to be happy. We need concrete goals that are achievable. You need to be able to measure progress against them. Why? Because if you can't measure progress then it's almost impossible for you to put the incentives in place to keep going strong.

The first thing that you need to consider when setting concrete goals is that people can convince themselves of anything. The takeaway is that you can be convinced of anything, regardless of if this anything is based on reality or not. You can learn a lot about how to manage your own perspective if you study the perspectives of others and what types of manipulation they are susceptible to. If you are willing to lend a hand, you can help others convince themselves of something that is entirely inaccurate. They can be convinced that their best choice is actually their worst choice and vice versa. This concept illustrates the importance of perception management. Managing the expectations of others as it relates to you is paramount to your success with said persons.

In defining what it is that you want, you must be operating from the perspective that there are real life constraints and consequences to all actions and behaviors that make you, you. Not doing so will lead to actions like 'seeing if you can fly,' 'trying to buy a home without any money' and/or 'putting your hand in boiling water.' Obviously participating in these activities is disadvantageous and not in your best interest. The goal is not to ACT AS IF you are an idiot. What is less obvious is the internal mental framework that you have that guides you not to do these things. In the spirit of this, the purpose of this book is to help you force yourself to question various aspects of your own mental framework and to shoot holes in what I would call the natural behavior that we all would naturally fall into if we simply didn't stop to ask questions and did as others told us. Why do

ACT AS IF

we do what we do? Is it optimal? The new YOU is not normal because nobody exceptional is normal. You can't afford to make normal decisions.

Also note that part of defining and getting what you want is actively acknowledging what it is that you don't want to the best of your ability. Avoiding doing things that you don't want to do is going to help you more than anything. To be frank, nobody really knows what they want to do, but everyone knows what they don't want to do. In the spirit of consequences, knowing as much as you know at this particular point in time I pose the following question: Are there habits that you have or things that you repeatedly do that you wish you could change? Imagine the consequences of not changing. Imagine the consequences of changing. Which is better?

I want to unleash your full potential. It's always been inside of you. If you are like I have been for the last 25 years, you've been actively preventing yourself from being a better person. Let's put an end to disadvantageous behaviors one at a time. Let the better parts of you shine through, resulting in a new, better you. One of the most difficult realizations that I've come to as of late can best be summarized by a quote from Batman:

"It's not who you are underneath - it's what you do that defines you." – Batman

If you ask me, it's not what you do that defines you, but what you are about to do. This excludes what you are about to fail. You must succeed for it to count.

To help illustrate this point, I used to be an idealist. I used to believe that it was what I truly thought internally that was important. False. What you do outwardly directly reflects your attitude and the way that you think. In so far as that goes, you must first think it before you can be it, but in my opinion, there are two aspects that should be used to measure success.

Dear Optimist, Pessimist and Realist,

While you guys were busy arguing about the glass of water,
I drank it.

Sincerely, the Opportunist.

My advice is to define the new you as an opportunist. See something more worthwhile than what you are currently doing? What do you mean, that is impossible because if you ever do it immediately becomes what you are doing. Be prepared to change course in very short time with the idea to minimize your future regrets of the decisions you've made.

Insert Witty Quote About Prioritization

A priority to all is a priority to none. A priority to one is one that gets done. I just made that up and it's brilliant.

What is most important in your life? What do you spend it doing and consequently who do you spend it with? That's my answer. You can come up with your own or just take mine from me and make it your own. There really is no one most important decision in your life. If you look at life that way, once you've made it, it is all downhill from there. I have met a bunch of middle aged people who sincerely believe that the most point in their life was in high school or in college. Apparently they spent the balance in neutral instead of in drive. Frankly, that's a prohibitive attitude that we can cross off our to-do list. Put it in drive and let's get moving.

Akrasia vs. Procrasterbation

Akrasia is the state of acting against one's better judgment. Effectively it is that situation where you know you should do something and you don't do it... as if you don't have control over your situation. Generally some feeble excuse is required. "I should say hi to that person" ---- "but I am too busy reading this book."

STOP Reading and Go Do It

If you find yourself wanting to try something as you read this book, stop reading and go do it. You might have noticed that this was an incredibly abrupt transition. That's because you are training yourself to suddenly and abruptly change complete directions and conversations in practice and you're learning from the master.

You might choose to imagine that you are someone else giving yourself advice and carrying through with it. Bottom line is that I don't care what works, I just care that it works. Do what works for you. So, how should you go about prioritizing what you do? If you haven't defined what you want, start there. I could say be honest with yourself but that would have no effect because obviously you think that you are already honest with yourself. Try to be more honest with yourself than you ever have been before. Listen to your heart. What do you actually want? Take it easy. Have fun with it. We don't always get everything right and there is always room to make things better.

Make a list of 4-7 of your top priorities in that order. I'll join you shortly. Don't know what you want? At least you're trying to be honest! That's better than acting like you want things you don't actually want. Don't tell me you're reading this book without a pen. Get one. Use the margins. Write!

ACT AS IF

Got it? STOP READING AND DO IT. Get a pen and write on this paper 4-7 of your priorities, I admire your laziness, but seriously..

Got it? STOP READING AND DO IT.

If at any point in time you think that your list of priorities needs to be changed, start from scratch. Write in pen, don't be afraid to have tons of lists littered everywhere. Once you get one you are happy with you throw the other ones away and put it somewhere where you have to look at it.

You'll find that the things that grind your gears are the things that you want that you don't have. An aside: you never fully appreciate what you have, but will understand its importance in the event that it is taken from you and you cease to have it. Understanding your priorities will enable you to avoid the loss of what you have and enable you to acquire complimentary and supplementary wants to meet your needs. Well, since you have defined things that you want and how much I want them as well it's time we take a look at instances where life and other people will tell you what to do because you failed to prioritize. The reason for this is because if you fail to prioritize, I guarantee you that your time will be spent serving other people's best interests, who more or less disregard the value or importance of your time and what makes you happy. This is stupid. Now, if you choose to designate specific time to help others, that is one thing and it can be very positive and uplifting. Be careful though, because other people will abuse you and your time if you let them take the reins.

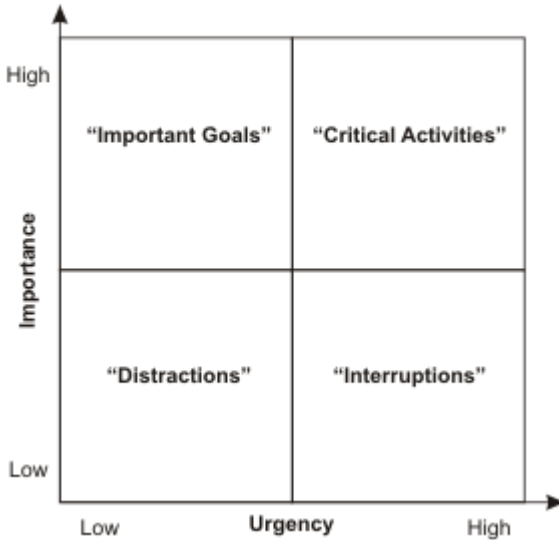
Have you ever had to work or get an additional job because you didn't have enough money? Perhaps learning how to earn money should be a higher priority.

Have you ever lost a relationship because you didn't spend enough time on it? Did you care about this relationship? Did you lose it for another

reason? Perhaps learning how to better manage relationships should be a higher priority.

Have you ever had too much time and too much money on your hands? Didn't think so. Let's prioritize to make that the problem. Take a look below at the urgency/importance matrix that they'll teach you about in school.

Figure 1: Urgent/Important Matrix



Straight up, this is bullshit. Usually the things that are the most important are actually not urgent. They take maintenance and are done gradually and require your attention occasionally on an as-needed basis. Nothing is urgent and important. If you find that you have critical activities, you're doing something wrong. You are out there fighting fires when you should be promoting fire prevention. If you are doing it right, nothing is ever critical for you because other people are taking care of it. Occasionally, you may have to step in and act swift and decisively, but this is not the norm. Imagine yourself being a millionaire. Make decisions as if you know what it takes to be one and act accordingly.

Do you envision yourself stewing over minute and insignificant details? Nobody envisions themselves stewing over insignificant details. It just happens because you can't prioritize what to spend your time focusing on. I'm sure you know all sorts of people that worry about all sorts of trivial things. These people are not facing the two questions below:

1. Are you afraid of something that does not exist?
2. What is the most advantageous thing you can do?

ACT AS IF

Alright, so you've got your list of priorities somewhere. Here are mine:

1. Health: Physical and Mental
2. Relationships: Family and Friends
3. Owning Yellow Media and Dex Media
4. Job
5. Write this New York Times BestSeller
6. Write investment articles

I would argue that your ACTUAL priorities probably looked like:

1. Job/School
2. Sleep
3. Eat
4. Some hobby (videogames/tv/facebook/etc.)
5. Relationships
6. Health

Have you ever given up sleeping to go to school or to work? Have you ever not eaten because you were too tired to get out of bed even though you were hungry? Have you ever set aside videogames to eat? Maybe not.

How do your priorities that you live by tie out to that which is important to you? Probably not 1:1. Something to strive for. Remember, this is ACT AS IF meaning that you are going to list your priorities as you wish they were and then you are going to start taking steps that will enable you to live into whatever you decide them to be at any particular point in time. How do you take steps?

On Purpose

Don't believe me? Just watch.

Decide what you stand for. And then stand for it all the time.

Want something? Go get it and act like you're doing it on purpose!

Life doesn't give you a purpose. You have to create your own. Make up who you wish you are as you go along and ACT AS IF that is who you are. That's right. Make it up. Do it on purpose.

Keep making it up as you go along. Make it better. Find one thing at a time and make that better. Try to figure out which things are most worth your time in doing so.

Act accordingly. Note that I did not say plan accordingly. I don't care what you plan to do, neither do you. We only care about what you actually do. A plan without action is equivalent to not planning at all.

One of the things that I've begun to realize over the years is that

humans tend to look for meaning or purpose in everything. Comparing human beings to computers, I think that this is the evolution of our seek algorithms that simply may have gone too far. What if there is no purpose? That can't be true, can it? Well, from my perspective, it doesn't really matter. If you study people that are successful, they at least ACT AS IF they have a purpose. Since you are successful, if you don't have one, imagine one. Run with it.

You might be feeling it right now. You might have felt it at an earlier point in this book. The psychological term flow is the mental state of operation in which a person in an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and success in the process of the activity. It is this single-minded immersion that represents perhaps the ultimate in harnessing the emotions in the service of performing and learning. This is what living is. Everybody dies but not everybody lives. So, how do you get there? Let's talk the most important living thing that you, if you master it, can use to do things so unbelievably powerful and great that you can't even fathom your capacity to undertake them at present.

Do you have any idea what I am talking about? That's a trick question, because the answer is inside of it.

Riddle me this: You can't touch it. You can own it. You can change it. It can change you. Understanding them is not as important as using them. What are they? Let's do that page trick to make you think about it and to illustrate the immensity of the one word answer that is about to hit you right between the eyes like the light bulb that it is.

ACT AS IF



Give up? Got any idea what it is?

Idea.

Go ahead, flip back, reread and be amazed that you overlooked this idea. How could you not recognize that this is what it is and that is all that it is? Now that you do you'll never forget it. An idea is a living thing that has a mind of its own. Once you start one, they tend to take off and live their own lives. Ideas and your understanding of them will change your life. ACT AS IF is an idea. At this point, you are hooked, line and sinker. Now we are going somewhere.

Clearly the best ideas are practically self-propagating. Clearly the best ideas are valuable. How much would you pay to know the best idea in the world? How much would you charge to sell it if you owned it? Would you be willing to give it away? Is this idea limited to the extent that it can be capitalized on? Some ideas are, some are not.

When initially valuing ideas, you need to figure out what it is that you actually value because if you don't you will be chasing perceived value instead of actual value and there is nothing less fun than spending lots of time doing things that don't matter. I should know! I did it for two straight years of 10 hour days! Time wasted? Not so much, but yeah pretty much. I learned some of the most valuable lessons of my entire life. I spent two years being somewhat miserable and decided that if anyone was going to make things better it was going to be me so I started lifestyle planning. At the time I was a millionaire. As I write this sentence, I am not. By the time

you read this statement, that just changed. As easy as it has changed for me, it can change for you. Success flows from having the right attitude. All you do to get that is surround yourself with the right ideas.

So, simply put, you absolutely need to take a step back and look at your life. Do you spend time valuing ideas? How frequently do you spend your time listening to crappy ones? How often do you know beforehand that these ideas are crappy? If you ever find yourself entertaining bad ideas or even considering hearing out the thought process behind a bad idea, cut yourself off immediately. I want you to prefer complete isolation over the pursuit of bad ideas. After all, they are detrimental to your well-being. So, you might be wondering, why have you been entertaining these types of thoughts? Well, that's a great question.

The following is an idea that I learned from a brilliant man named Peter Thiel. Hey! Credit is due where credit is due and I don't come up with all the best ideas in the world. I just am awesome at organizing other people's ideas.

Do not confuse capitalism with competition. We incorrectly believe that whoever competes best comes out ahead. This may have been an idea that you believed in. It is no more. Let fools continue to support this premise. Let me say that differently in case you missed it. In the race to be more competitive, we sometimes confuse what is hard with what is valuable. Do you respect what is hard? Why did you respect what is hard? STOP IT. If you had a choice to work 1 hour and make a million dollars or work a million hours and make 1 dollar, which one do you do if you respect what is hard? Which one do you do if you respect what is valuable? So, why do you respect people that work really hard? The point is that there more or less is no point to working harder than you have to.

Have you ever been told: "Thanks for getting it done?" If you have, was it ever really that important? Just saying you might as well reconsider the message. Forgetting it --- done.

The takeaway is that we are hardwired to seek to be really good competitors, but in reality we shouldn't seek to be really good competitors. Instead of putting in all of the leg work to be slightly better than the person next to us, realize that winning the rat race still implies that you are a rat. Play differently. Realize that the maze that you operate in is constructed of your own mental boundaries. It's time to start breaking down walls and doing things differently. You don't have a choice because you cannot fathom being unsuccessful because being successful in what you care about is all that matters.

I'm going to beat this idea like a dead horse. You might be whining now that it's going to be hard or difficult to do this! Haha, I'm going to laugh in your face. It's actually easier to be successful and take shortcuts than it is to do the hard work and not take any credit. Bwahahahahaha. Alright, maybe

laughing in your face doesn't help you, but at least it's going to make you listen to what I say next.

To be successful, you have to have the ability to perceive a level of value that is beyond that of the average person, which is fairly easy because the average person doesn't put in a lot of effort trying to figure these things out. It's like deciding to step over a branch that's off the beaten path. It's not that hard to decide to step over the branch but it does take determination to leave the beaten path. The average person makes average decisions and paths are formed because people walk certain ways. That's all I'm saying.

Life may seem competitive but in reality, it's best if you just assume that people are operating at 10% of where they could be if they only could figure out what to do. With that mindset, you're beginning to see all sorts of opportunities. In a world where competition has triumphed value-creation and where the competitive arena undermines innovation, your acknowledgement of this travesty puts you on the shoulders of giants. Your acknowledgement of this disconnect can be exploited to your advantage. Make getting what you want a game. Compete with yourself to get it! Don't waste your time competing with others by their own arbitrary rules. You now figure out the most practical and minimal effort method to get what you want and achieve it. People accuse you of having things easy, but you know that you just see the easy way to do things and are happy to take it.

What exactly is the most important idea, you might find yourself wondering? To me, it's fairly straight forward. I call it ownership. So let's talk about that!

Highly Selective Ownership

"You buy furniture. You tell yourself, this is the last sofa I will ever need in my life. Buy the sofa, then for a couple years you're satisfied that no matter what goes wrong, at least you've got your sofa issue handled. Then the right set of dishes. Then the perfect bed. The drapes. The rug. Then you're trapped in your lovely nest, and the things you used to own, now they own you." ~Chuck Palahniuk, *Fight Club*, Chapter 5

"If you don't know what you want," the doorman said, "you end up with a lot you don't." ~Chuck Palahniuk, *Fight Club*, Chapter 5

What is the most important to you? How do you get it? This brings us to the concept of ownership. Reference the IPO Model? Check.

Important → Priorities → Ownership

What do you own? What is worth owning? These are **the** important questions. They imply the assumption that you know what ownership is. Do you?

This is going to be painful for some of you so bear with me. Imagine your teeth being dragged down the highway at 60 miles per hour, or them running across a chalk board. That's the kind of pain I expect you to experience. Yikes! It can't all be fun and games. Deliberate practice is not fun, but it is worth it.

If you own it, you accept responsibility for it. You take care of it and you manage it to get the most out of it. You might own things that you don't take responsibility for. When I ask you if you own something, what I am really asking is do you assume responsibility. If you are part of a company that you don't own, you still take responsibility for the things that you do there. If you do the right things, you will assume more responsibility. If you do enough of the right things and avoid being purposely stupid, you will find that people will want you making larger and larger decisions that impact far more people than you do now.

Do you own your decisions?

Now you do. Decision or indecision, now you own it. You accept full responsibility for the consequences of your decisions. The act of ignoring an opportunity is **now** viewed as purposely ignoring the opportunity. The act of sitting inside watching TV is now the act of purposely not being out and about and looking for new and exciting opportunities. You'll suffer or reap the consequences regardless so you might as well own it and improve on them.

My advice, take a minute or two a day and try to write down decisions or things that you did the day prior that you think you could do better. If you're too lazy to write them down, speak them out loud when you're by yourself. Sure, it might be embarrassing, but the cost of embarrassment is well worth the motivational value that you'll experience the next time you are faced with a similar situation. You'll be more prepared to succeed by knowing at least one more decision not to make because in the past you identified you could do it better. Might as well do it better if you figured out how to.

Do you own your time?

You do now. How much of your time do you have to give to others in order cover your monthly expense? Are you batting more than 40 hours a week? Be honest with yourself. You act like living in denial is going to get you out of this predicament or somehow be less stressful than confronting your purposeful ignorance. It's time to grow up.

What do you spend most of your time on? Would you be pleased if you spent the same proportion of time across the rest of your life doing the same thing? Based on how you presently allocate your time is there any reason to believe that suddenly you'll be able to spend less time doing what

you dislike and more time doing what you like? Odds are that you have a few hours of free time a week, how do you spend them? Would you like to spend them figuring out ways to free up more time? Why don't you? The good news is that by reading this sentence, you have accidentally started today! Let the losers who learn how to solve their problems and then choose to live with them as opposed to solve them postpone the greatest day of their life till the point that they never have it.

Do you own your health?

This one is easy. Are you fat? Do you want to be fat? If there is a disconnect here, you likely do not own your health. Could you be healthier if you spent 20 minutes of effort a day? Yes. Are you going to do it? You start today. Start thinking healthy. Reward yourself with positive thoughts. The easiest way to do this is only eat between Noon and 8pm. Work out 3x a week for 20 minutes tops to the point where you are tired, but you have to push yourself till you are tired. It's not easy but it is worth it and it doesn't take that much time.

What do you have to show for yourself?

Does it really matter? Not really. You can always ACT AS IF you have more than you actually do and win regardless. But, let's play along anyway.

Do you even have time to present yourself given an opportunity? Ownership is fundamental to success. Own your decisions, your mistakes, your theories and your thoughts. The 'blame the situation' for your mistakes philosophy is one that is owned whole heartedly by the poor. It fails to take into account that you were at fault for an incorrect assessment of the initial situation at some point throughout the process of trying to get what you wanted. So, what do you own? What do you want to own? That is the question.

If you fail to understand the significance of this question, you will not own your time. When you do not own your time, you have nothing to show for yourself. You will work for others and make less than you could be worth and have trouble meeting your obligations as they come due. You will blame your environment and your situation for your failures as they happen and attribute lots of outcomes to bad luck. Your lack of awareness of opportunities will be a self-perpetuating mental deafening behavior. Your routine becomes to accept less more of the time. After a certain point of this kind of conditioning, you will feel hopeless. Hopeless people fail to understand the value of being able to differentiate what they want to own from what they do not want to own. Being able to differentiate the two requires an assessment of what is valuable to you as an individual. Some people are able to own some of the right things but are still frustrated because they don't have that which they truly want and instead have a lesser

iteration of it and this experience can be summarized as cognitive dissonance.

What matters to you? What matters more than that? What matters the most? If you had it, would you want anything more? Odds are that your perception of what you want is presently influenced by what society tells you to want. I can tell you from firsthand experience that although being a millionaire can enable happiness, that having millions of dollars without the correct assessment of knowing what you want and taking measurable progress towards getting it will leave you hopelessly frustrated. You won't feel confused, just extremely frustrated. The fact is, you know what you want, and you probably just don't like to admit it. Perhaps you don't want to admit it. Perhaps you'd be embarrassed.

Defining what you want and outlining a path to make having that a reality is critical to actually getting what you want. So let's talk about how to figure out the answers to all of these painful questions. The questions are the painful part because it involves you confronting the old you who was routinely in denial. You just made it through that. Take a deep breath. I know, it sucked. Onto the fun part.

Now that you understand how important the concept of ownership is, we can move onto prioritization in the spirit of incentivizing you to take the right actions and do the right things to make habits that will undoubtedly force you to begin owning in such a way that you begin to acquire things that are valuable to you.

If you are a redditor or you presently have no idea what I am talking about I recommend that you go to <http://www.reddit.com> and create a free account. I then recommend that you unsubscribe from most of the default subreddits and take a look through what is available for subscription at http://stattit.com/subreddits/by_subscriber_growth_1w/ and start signing up for things that are of interest to you. Below is my list of subreddits at the moment. I know that I'm going to be publically judged by sharing this by people who don't like me but I am doing this for those of you that find this sort of thing useful:

1. AccomplishedToday
2. Advice
3. allcapsmotivation
4. AmateurRoomPorn
5. AskReddit
6. askseddit
7. business
8. carpediem
9. ChallengeAccepted
10. changemyview

ACT AS IF

11. confidence
12. Cruise
13. DCSeddit
14. DecidingToBeBetter
15. Entrepreneur
16. faimprovement
17. feelgood
18. foodhacks
19. Frugal
20. frugalmalefashion
21. fullmoviesonyoutube
22. getdisciplined
23. GetMotivated
24. GetOutOfBed
25. GetResults
26. GotMotivated
27. ImprovementHub
28. kickassday
29. Life
30. lifehacks
31. LifeImprovement
32. LifeProTips
33. LifeRPG
34. malefashionadvice
35. malehairadvice
36. malelifestyle
37. malelivingspace
38. manprovement
39. mentors
40. MotivatedMusic
41. motivateme
42. MotivationalPics
43. MotivationVideos
44. MusicForConcentration
45. needacoach
46. NoExcuses
47. NoFap
48. OneY
49. pics
50. productivity
51. Purpose
52. Pyongyang
53. QuotesPorn