**Explore & Challenge Activity Drive for result (Mandatory) (1) (1)**

0:10  
By a show of hands, how many of you believe you could replicate this image of Brad Pitt with just a pencil and piece of paper?

0:18  
Well, I'm going to show you how to do this, and in so doing, I'm going to give you the skill necessary to become a world class artist.

0:27  
And it shouldn't take more than about 15 seconds.

0:30  
But before I do that, how many of you believe you could replicate this image of a solid Gray square?

0:37  
Every one of us.

0:38  
And if you can make one Gray square, you can make 239.

0:43  
Truth of the matter is, if you could make just one Gray square, it'd be very difficult to argue that you couldn't make every Gray square necessary to replicate the image in its entirety.

0:55  
And there you have it.

0:56  
I've just given you the skill necessary to become a world class artist.

1:01  
I know what you're thinking.

1:03  
That's not real art certainly wouldn't make me a world class artist.

1:07  
So let me introduce you to Chuck close.

1:10  
He's one of the highest earning artists in the entire world for decades.

1:14  
And he creates his art using this exact technique.

1:18  
You see, what stands between US and achieving even our most ambitious dreams has far less to do with possessing some magical skill or talent, and far more to do with how we approach problems and make decisions to solve them.

1:33  
And because of the continuous and compounding nature of all those millions of decisions that we face on a regular basis, even a marginal improvement in our process can have a huge impact on our end results.

1:45  
And I'll prove this to you by taking a look at the career of Novak Djokovic back in 2004 when he first became a professional tennis player who was ranked 680th in the world.

1:56  
Wasn't until the end of his third year that he jumped up to be ranked third, third in the world.

2:02  
He went from making 250,000 a year to 5 million a year in prize money alone.

2:08  
And of course, he did this by winning more matches.

2:11  
In 2011, he became the number one ranked men's tennis player in the world, started earning an average of 14,000,000 a year in prize money alone, and winning and dominating 90% of his matches.

2:23  
Now here's what's really interesting about all of these very impressive statistics.

2:28  
Novak doesn't control any of them.

2:31  
What he does control are all the tiny little decisions that he needs to make correctly along the way in order to move the the probability in favour of him achieving these types of results.

2:43  
And we can quantify and track his progress in this area by taking a look at the percentage of points that he wins.

2:49  
Because in tennis the typical point involves 1 to maybe 3 decisions.

2:55  
I like to refer to this as his decision success rate.

2:58  
So back when he was winning about 49% of the point the matches he was playing, he was winning about 49% of the points he played.

3:07  
Then to jump up, become #3 in the world and actually earn $5,000,000 a year for swinging a racket, he had to improve his decision success rate to just 52%.

3:18  
Then to become not just #1 but maybe one of the greatest players to ever play the game, he had to improve his decision success rate to just 55%.

3:28  
Now, I keep using this word just, I don't want to imply this is easy to do.

3:32  
Clearly it's not.

3:33  
But the type of marginal improvements that I'm talking about are easily achievable by every single one of us in this room.

3:40  
And I'll show you what I mean.

3:43  
From kindergarten all the way through to my high school graduation.

3:47  
Yes, that's high school graduation for me.

3:51  
Every one of my report cards basically said the same thing.

3:54  
Stevens, a very bright young boy.

3:56  
If only he would just settle down and focus.

4:00  
What they didn't realize was I wanted that even more than they wanted it for me.

4:05  
I just couldn't.

4:07  
And so from kindergarten straight through the second year of college, I was a really consistent CC minus student.

4:15  
But then, going into my junior year, I'd had enough.

4:18  
I thought, I want to make a change.

4:19  
I'm going to make a marginal adjustment, and I'm going to stop being a spectator in my decision making and start becoming an active participant.

4:27  
And so that year, instead of pretending again that I would suddenly be able to settle down and focus on things for more than 5 or 10 minutes at a time, I decided to assume I wouldn't.

4:40  
And so if I wanted to achieve the type of outcome that I desired doing well in school, I was going to actually have to change my approach.

4:48  
And so I made a marginal adjustment.

4:51  
If I would get an assignment, let's say read 5 chapters in a book, I wouldn't think of it as 5 chapters.

4:57  
I wouldn't even think of it as one chapter.

4:58  
I would break it down into these tasks that I could achieve that would require me to focus for just 5 or 10 minutes at a time.

5:06  
So maybe 3 or 4 paragraphs.

5:08  
That's it.

5:09  
I would do that.

5:11  
When I was done with those 5 or 10 minutes, I would get up.

5:13  
I'd go shoot some hoops, do a little drawing, maybe play video games for a few minutes, and then I'd come back, not necessarily to the same assignment, not even necessarily to the same subject, but just do another task that required just five to 10 minutes of my attention.

5:29  
From that point forward all the way through to graduation, I was a straight A student.

5:34  
Dean's List, President's honor roll.

5:36  
Every semester.

5:37  
I then went on to one of the top graduate programs in the world for finance and economics.

5:43  
Same approach, same results.

5:46  
So then I graduate, I start my career, and I'm thinking this worked really well for me.

5:52  
You know, you take these big concepts, these complex ideas, these big assignments, you break them down to much more manageable tasks.

6:00  
And then along the way you make a marginal improvement to the process.

6:04  
You know the odds of success in your favor.

6:06  
I'm going to try and do this in my career.

6:08  
So I did.

6:10  
I started out as an exotic derivatives trader of Credit Suisse.

6:13  
It then led me to be global head of currency option trading for Bank of America, global head of emerging markets for AIG International.

6:21  
It helped me deliver top tier returns as a global macro hedge fund manager for 12 years and to become founder and CIO of two award-winning hedge funds.

6:31  
So it gets to 2001 and I'm thinking this whole idea, it worked really well in school.

6:38  
It's been serving me well as a professional.

6:41  
Why aren't I applying this in my personal life like to all those big ambitious goals I have for myself?

6:48  
So one day I'm walking to work, and at the time my my commute was a walk from one end of Hyde Park to the other in London.

6:56  
Took me about 45 minutes each way, hour and a half a day, 7 1/2 hours a week, 30 hours a month, 360 hours a year when I was awake, aware, basically wasting time listening to music on my iPod.

7:13  
So on my way home from work that day, I stopped at the store.

7:16  
I picked up the 1st 33 CDs in the Pimsleur German language program, ripped them and put them onto my iPod.

7:23  
But I didn't stop there, because the truth of the matter is I'm an undisciplined person and I knew that at some point I'd switch away from the language and go back to the music.

7:34  
So I removed that temptation by removing all of the music.

7:38  
They left me with just one option, listened to the language tapes.

7:43  
So 10 months later, I'd listened to all 99 CDs in the German language program, listened to each one three times each, and they went to Berlin for a 16 day intensive German course.

7:54  
When I was done, I invited my wife and kids to meet me.

7:57  
We walked around the city.

7:59  
I spoke German to the Germans.

8:00  
They spoke German back to me.

8:02  
My kids were amazed.

8:05  
I mean, that couldn't close their jaws.

8:09  
But you and I, we know there's actually nothing amazing about what I just done.

8:14  
I made this marginal adjustment to my daily routine, this marginal adjustment to my process with Yetz Espresso and Misian Deutsche, and now I could speak some German.

8:28  
And so in that moment, I'm thinking, it's not supposed to be this easy for a guy like me, an old guy, to learn a new language.

8:35  
You're supposed to have to do that when you're a kid.

8:37  
And yet here I had done it, this marginal adjustment.

8:40  
So what other big ambitious goals have been holding onto putting off until retirement that I could potentially achieve if I just made a marginal adjustment to my routine?

8:51  
So I started doing them.

8:53  
I earned my auto racing license, I learned how to fly a helicopter, deep rock climbing, skydiving, and learned how to fly planes aerobatically.

9:04  
Well, if you're like me back in 2007, you might have the same goal I had.

9:09  
I was just moving back from London.

9:11  
I was about 25 lbs overweight and out of shape.

9:14  
And I wanted to rectify that so I could go to the typical route.

9:18  
You know, I could write a check to a gym I'd never go to, or I could swear to myself that I will never again eat those foods that I love but are doing all the damage.

9:29  
And I knew that going that route rarely results in the outcome you desire.

9:34  
So I decided to become an active participant.

9:36  
And I thought about the habits and passions that I've developed over the course of my life.

9:40  
And I thought, can I make just a marginal adjustment to them so that they work in my favor as opposed to against me?

9:46  
And so I did.

9:47  
I've got this habit where I've been walking an hour and a half a day for the last seven years, and I've got this passion for being in the outdoors.

9:56  
And so that year, I didn't actually set the New Year's resolution to lose 25 lbs.

10:00  
I set a resolution to hike all 33 trails in the front country of Santa Barbara's mountains.

10:06  
And I'd never been on a hike before in my life.

10:10  
But the truth of the matter is, it's not about the 33 trails.

10:14  
You have to break this big, ambitious goal down into these more manageable decisions, the types of decisions that need to be made correctly along the way in order to improve the odds of achieving the type of outcome you desire.

10:27  
It's not about even one trail.

10:29  
It's about those tiny little decisions.

10:32  
You know, like when you're sitting at your desk, putting in just a little extra time at the end of a day, or you're lying on your couch and you're clicking through the channels on your remote control or scrolling through your Facebook feed.

10:42  
And in that moment, make the decision to put it down.

10:46  
You go put on your hiking clothes.

10:48  
You go walk outside your front door and you shut it behind you.

10:51  
You walk to your car.

10:52  
You get in your car and you drive to the trailhead.

10:54  
You get out of the car at the trailhead and you take one step.

10:57  
You take 2 steps.

10:58  
Three steps.

11:00  
Every one of those steps that I've just described is a tiny little decision that needs to be made correctly along the way in order to achieve the ultimate outcome.

11:10  
Now, when I say I want to hike 33 trails in the front country, people think about the decisions at the top of the mountain.

11:16  
That's not what it's about.

11:18  
Because if you don't make the right decision when you're on the couch, there is no decision that occurs at the top of the mountain.

11:24  
So by the end of the year, I had hiked all 33 trails in the front country.

11:28  
I did them a couple of times each.

11:30  
I even did a few in the Backcountry.

11:32  
I lost the 25 lbs and I capped the year off by doing the hardest half marathon in the world, the Pier, to Peak in 2009.

11:40  
I got really ambitious.

11:43  
Ambitious for a guy who's still to this day, cannot settle down and focus on anything for more than 5 or 10 minutes at a time.

11:49  
And that was to read 50 books.

11:52  
But again, it's not about reading 50 books.

11:55  
It's not even about reading one book.

11:57  
It's not about reading a chapter, a paragraph, a sentence.

12:01  
It's about that decision when you're sitting at your desk at the end of the day, or when you're lying on the couch or flicking through your Facebook feed and you put down the phone.

12:12  
You pick up a book and you read one word.

12:16  
If you read one word, you'll read 2 words, 3 words.

12:20  
You'll read a sentence, a paragraph, a page, a chapter, a book.

12:24  
You'll read 10 books, 30 books, 50 books.

12:29  
In 2012, I got really ambitious.

12:32  
I said 24 New Year's resolutions, 12 of them were.

12:36  
Two were what I call giving resolutions, where I did 12 charitable things that didn't involve writing a check.

12:43  
But it's not without its failures.

12:45  
I tried to donate blood and they rejected me because I'd lived in the UKI tried to donate my sperm.

12:50  
They rejected me because I was too old.

12:53  
I tried to donate my hair, and it turns out nobody wants Gray hair.

12:58  
So here I was trying to do something to make myself feel good and it was having the opposite effect.

13:04  
So anyway, I've also had these 12 learning resolutions to learn 12 new skills.

13:09  
And when I was done with unicycling, parkour, slacklining, jumping stilts and drumming, my wife suggested I learn how to knit.

13:19  
And I'll be honest, I wasn't all that passionate about knitting.

13:25  
But one day I'm sitting under this 40 foot tall eucalyptus tree that's 2.6 miles up the Cold Spring Trail in Santa Barbara.

13:32  
And I'm thinking that tree would look really cool if it were covered in yarn.

13:37  
And so I went home and I Googled this and it turns out this is the thing people do.

13:41  
It's called yarn bombing.

13:42  
You wrap these public structures with yarn.

13:45  
And the second annual International Yarn Bombing Day was just 82 days away.

13:51  
So for the next 82 days, no matter where I was, if I was in a board meeting, on the trading floor, in an airplane, or in the hospital, I was knitting one stitch at a time.

14:05  
And 82 days later, I had done my first ever yarn bomb.

14:17  
And the response to it blew me away.

14:20  
So I kept going with bigger, more ambitious projects that required more engineering skills.

14:28  
And in 2014 I set the goal to wrap 6 massive boulders in Los Padres National Forest at the top of the mountains.

14:35  
But if I was going to pull this off, I'd need help.

14:38  
So at the this point, that had a few 1000 followers on social media as the yarn bomber, and I started getting packages.

14:48  
Lots of packages.

14:50  
388 contributors from 36 countries in all 50 states.

14:55  
In the end, I didn't wrap one massive boulder, I wrapped 18.

15:06  
So I kept going with bigger, more ambitious projects that were required me to work with new materials like fiberglass and wood and metals, which culminates in a project that is currently at TMC here in Tucson where I wrapped the Children's Hospital.

15:26  
Along the way, I stopped knitting.

15:28  
I never really liked it, but I like crocheting.

15:37  
So I started making these 7 inch granny squares because that's the standard granny square.

15:43  
And I thought along the way, why am I stopping at 7 inches?

15:46  
I need big stuff.

15:48  
So I started making bigger granny squares and one day I'd come home from a business trip and I've got this really large granny and I went to the website of Guinness.

15:58  
I was curious, what's the world's largest granny square?

16:01  
And it turns out there's no category for it.

16:05  
So I applied and they rejected me.

16:09  
So I appealed and they rejected me.

16:13  
I appealed again and they said, fine, if you make it 10 meters by 10 meters, we'll create a new category and you will be a Guinness World Record holder.

16:22  
So for the next two years, seven months, 17 days, one stitch at a time, I finally reached more than half a million stitches, incorporated more than 30 miles of yarn, and I am now the official Guinness World Record holder for the largest crocheted granny strap.

16:48  
Along the way, I've garnered an awful lot of attention for my escapades.

16:52  
I've been featured in Newsweek magazine Art News, which is kind of the Bible for artists.

16:57  
But what I want you to realize when you hear these things, I'm still that C minus student.

17:04  
I'm still that kid who can't settle down or focus for more than 5 or 10 minutes at a time.

17:10  
And I remain a guy who possesses no special gift of talent OR skill.

17:16  
All I do is take really big, ambitious projects that people seem to marvel at, break them down to their simplest form, and then just make marginal improvements along the way to improve my odds of achieving them.

17:28  
And so the whole reason I'm giving this talk is I'm hoping to inspire several of you to pull some of those ambitious dreams that you have for yourself off the bookshelf and start pursuing them by making that marginal adjustment to your routine.

17:42  
Thank you.