

This Curious Adventure

A Perspective on How to Live
a Successful and Fulfilling Life



Art by

Lizi
mire

Drew Saur

To Adrienne, Erika & Alexa for making
my own adventure extraordinary.

Author's Note

I often find myself thinking how incredible it is that I exist at all.

There is an amazingly improbable series of events that led to this moment. It started with the birth of our universe 13.8 billion years ago, which led, through many chance events, to the formation of our solar system out of the remains of generations of forgotten stars. 3.8 billion years ago sees the first life on earth, followed by the fits and starts of evolution, punctuated by mass extinctions wiping out just the right creatures at the just the right time, and ending up with the human species as we know it. Innumerable events could have turned out differently and we wouldn't be here.

Whenever I question what is going on in my life, I always come back to this starting point – we are incredibly lucky just to be here.

Given that we are here, now what? “Why are we here?” is a question that has been pondered for thousands of years. My short answer? Nobody knows. And if nobody knows, the best we can do is come up with our own guess and

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

enjoy as best we can this curious adventure called life.

I've spent the last couple of decades working on my best guess, sifting through ideas to find those that helped me figure out who I wanted to be and how to get there.

Once I had kids, I wanted to give them a head start by assembling my best guess and sharing it with them. The idea was that they could use it to get a jump start on what is, as far as we know, a journey with a limited time.

Having shared it with them, I found myself sitting on this material which has been very helpful to us. I thought that there might be people out there who could also use a starter kit for their own guess and suggestions on what to do about it.

That's the beauty of life. If we are still here, we have a chance to re-think our current guess and improve our lives and the lives of those around us.

How exactly to do that is not always clear, but I have found that a little hard work and the right toolkit can make a significant difference.

If you are someone who has wondered about what to do with this life of yours, or could use some help building your own toolkit, then this book is for you. I hope you find something in here of value.

This Curious Adventure

A Perspective on How to Live a
Successful and Fulfilling Life

Chapter 1

My Best Guess

“Take a chance because you’ll never know how absolutely great something can turn out to be.”
- Unknown

My best guess of how to get the most out of this curious adventure starts and ends with four simple questions. I believe each one is an important ingredient in a successful and fulfilling life. Each one can have both simple as well as thoughtful and deep answers. I’ve found that as time goes on, I spend more time trying to sort out the deep answers. I’m also convinced that I will run out of time before I get fully satisfactory answers - and that’s ok. The adventure is the journey, not the destination.

Here are the four simple questions:

1. Do you have a theory on how the world works?

Humans are both amazing and limited creatures. Any understanding of life needs to start with an understanding of how the world works and how we ourselves work. Did you know

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

that we have programming errors built into our brains where we will consistently and predictably make mistakes in certain situations? These “cognitive biases” are a rich field of study in psychology. Section I explores this and other topics to help you develop your own theories of how both you and the world work. Like a scientist, if you have a theory, you can test it over time and refine it as you learn more.

2. Do you have a strong foundation?

To get the most out of life, I’m convinced you need a strong base of mental and physical health. These areas form the core of daily activity and need to be tended to regularly to maintain, and hopefully improve, your life. This is where a “little bit of hard work” comes in. Most people have heard of the basics of eating right, exercising, sleeping well, and managing stress. The trick, which works for most things, is to work on it a little bit every day. Section II provides a summary of what I’ve learned about our minds, our bodies, and our environment. I’ve also included a fourth foundation – money – as it is hard to operate in today’s world without a basic understanding and philosophy of how to approach your finances.

3. Do you know what you want (and how much you want it)?

Once you have the basic building blocks, it’s time to start thinking about what you want out of life. This is harder than it sounds. Most people only have a vague sense of what they want – they want to be “healthy”, “successful”, or “rich”. I’ve found those kinds of wants are not specific enough to be useful. Understanding what you want at a deep level, and why you want it, will do wonders for your ability to get it. Section

III provides the perspectives and tools that I have found most helpful for figuring out what I want.

4. Do you know how to get it?

Knowing what you want is only the start. The key is how to get it. This includes knowing what tasks need to be done, as well as what resources and skills you need and how to get them. While you can do a lot of it yourself, you will most likely need other people to help you and there are tips and tricks for that as well.

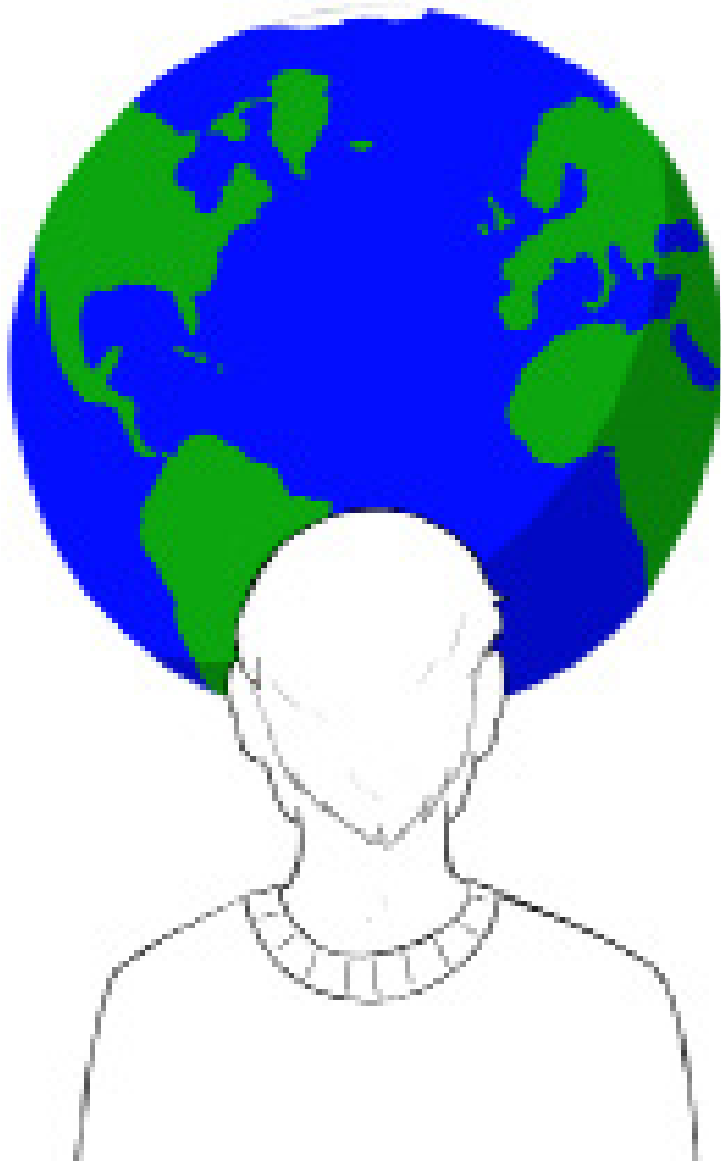
Section IV covers a basic toolkit, which comprises six key skills that I believe everyone should have. I've also collected several additional techniques that have helped me on my journey. These are either more advanced (e.g. techniques for improving memory) or for specific situations (such as networking and selling ideas), so rather than include them in this book, I have made them available on thiscuriousadventure.com. As long as my own adventure continues, you can check the site periodically to see if I've added any new ones.

And that's it. If you can answer yes to each of those 4 questions, your chances for success are probably higher than 95% of the population, and you should put down this book and get started. If you need some tips on how to answer these questions, keep reading.

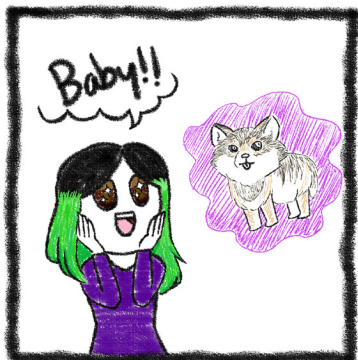
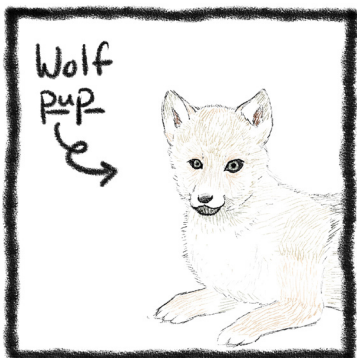
As a final note, re-ask these questions at least once every six months to see if your answer changed. I have seen what I want (#3) in particular change over time.

Section I

How The World Works



THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 2

Reality. It's not what you think.

*“Reality is merely an illusion,
albeit a very persistent one.”
- Albert Einstein*

When trying to get a better handle on reality, I must admit that I can't prove we aren't in a Matrix-like simulation. But let's ignore that for now by assuming that the input we get from our senses is an accurate indication of the world around us.

When you look at that input, you might be surprised to find that scientists have calculated that we are exposed to 400,000,000,000 bits of information a second, but only 2,000 of those bits register with the conscious human mind. The brain is an amazing filtering machine that automatically selects down to the “pertinent” information that it determines you need to know (“is that a speeding car heading right for us?”).

No matter how well it filters (which we know is a bit questionable), we have to accept that we process a small

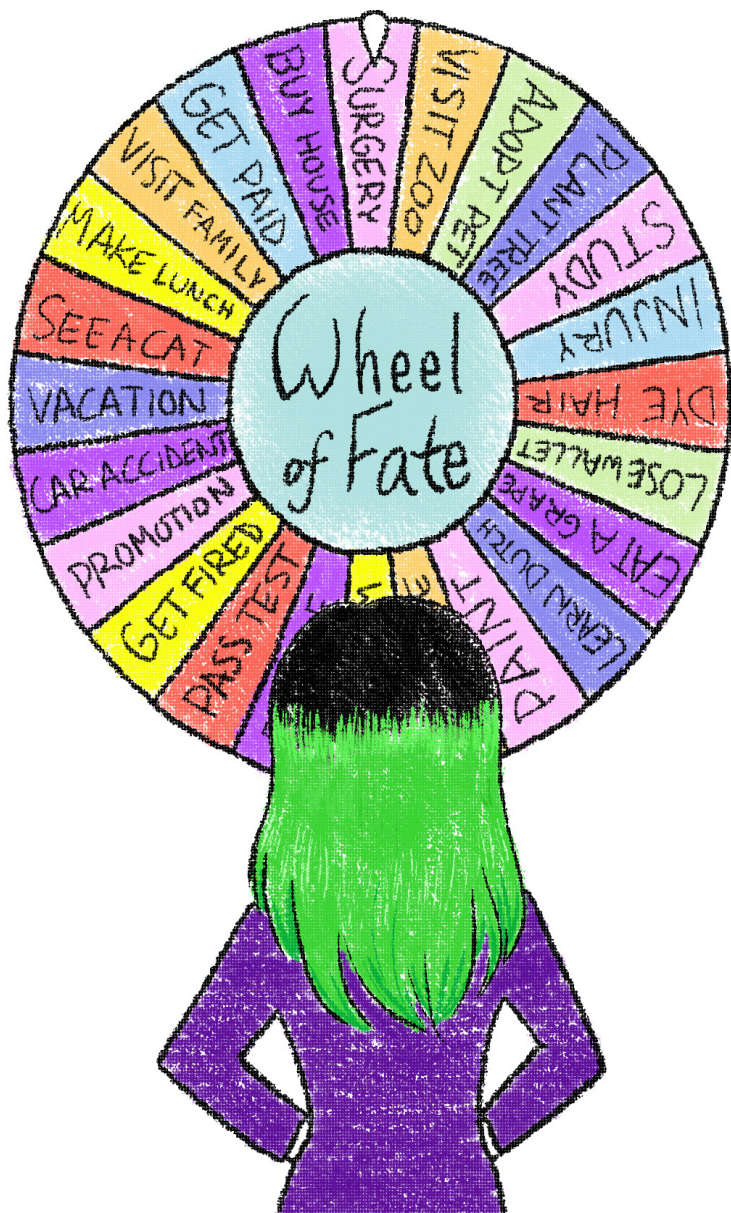
THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

percentage of reality. This means that reality, as you see it, is uniquely yours. Put two people in the same room and through different filters accumulated over a lifetime, the 2,000 bits of data that get through will be different, sometimes radically different.

In other words, reality is subjective. And often, such as when you are exposed to advertising, the input is crafted to make you experience reality in a specific way, so not only is it subjective, others are actively taking advantage of that to influence you.

Daniel Khaneman summed this up nicely in his book Thinking Fast and Slow: in the end, “what you see is all there is”. What makes it past your filters is your reality. If it didn’t, it might as well not exist. Think about this the next time you get into an argument with someone and wonder if they live in their own reality. In fact, they do. But then again, so do you!

1ST PIECE OF ADVICE: ACCEPT THE IDEA THAT REALITY IS NOT AN INDEPENDENT AND OBJECTIVE CONCEPT. EXPECT EVERYONE’S SENSE OF REALITY IS UNIQUELY THEIR OWN.



Chapter 3

It's An Unpredictable World

*“If life were predictable, it would cease to be life,
and be without flavor.”*
- Eleanor Roosevelt

In his book, Team of Teams, General Stanley McChrystal defines the difference between complicated environments and complex ones. Complicated environments have many different moving parts, but are ultimately deterministic - in other words, predictable. If you put in the same inputs, you get the same outputs. Think of a mechanical watch. It has many moving parts, but if it works properly, it will produce a very consistent and predictable output. If it breaks down, you call a subject matter expert, in this case a watchmaker, who repairs it back to predictable outcomes.

It's not so straightforward with a complex environment. The pieces of complex environments are highly interdependent, non-linear, and ultimately unpredictable. If it doesn't work as expected, there is no expert to call, since nothing is clearly broken. Think of the break in a game

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

of pool. Even if you know the locations of the balls, the angle of the cue stick and the force of the strike, there are too many variables to be able to calculate where all the balls will go. Small changes in input lead to large changes in output. It is, in effect, unpredictable. Reality falls in this category.

Not only is the world complex, but your ability to process it is hindered by “cognitive biases” which are a set of mental errors built into our brain. These had an evolutionary advantage at some point, but prompt you to incorrectly lean towards some outcomes, while overlooking others. Sometimes, you won’t see it coming.

So what should you do?

First, spend some time learning about the human brain and influence. Learn about cognitive biases and how they affect a person’s thinking. This is particularly important in a situation where you are being influenced by others (think shopping, politics, etc). Remember that your reality is actively being shaped by someone else. You want to be aware of when and how that is happening.

When you understand how the input is coming in, the next thing is to get better at figuring out what happens next. An effective way to do that is to build a set of “mental models” that can help you find a more likely outcome in various situations that others may miss. An example is the concept of “regression to the mean”, which basically says that large deviations are often anomalous and future results will come back to the mean (i.e. average) results.

UNDERSTANDING HOW THE WORLD WORKS

A simple example is that tall people will have shorter kids, while short people, on average, will have taller kids - in effect bringing the average height closer to the mean. While this is clearly not true in all situations, it provides a quick and simple mental model you can use to create a probable outcome in many situations.

Even with an understanding of how the brain works and a good collection of mental models, you should anticipate unexpected outcomes. How to prepare for that type of world? Focus on resiliency and anti-fragility - the ability to survive, and even thrive, through unpredictable change. The less you “need” to be a certain way and the more options you have for what you consider “successful”, the greater resiliency you have.

2ND PIECE OF ADVICE: REALITY IS COMPLEX AND UNPREDICTABLE, SO THINK IN PROBABILITIES RATHER THAN ABSOLUTES. IF YOU DO, YOU WILL BE MUCH LESS SURPRISED AT ANY PARTICULAR OUTCOME.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 4

Being Human: An Owner's Manual

“When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but creatures of emotion.”
- Dale Carnegie

Why do human beings do what they do? There are entire fields of study dedicated to answering this age-old question. Most of what drives the world is a net result of individual actions people have taken. Understanding why people do what they do (including you), will help you understand why the world works as it does, and provide opportunities to improve yourself, build and maintain relationships, and potentially lead to new and exciting places.

Consider the following models of how humans work as a starter kit on your journey.

THE SIMPLEST HUMAN MODEL

The most basic model says: Humans move towards pleasure and away from pain (“the carrot and the stick” theory of motivation). When both are present, pain avoidance

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

tends to be the stronger motivator.

THE SIX HUMAN NEEDS MODEL

Tony Robbins' interesting model identifies six human needs that everyone has in common. In this model, all behavior is simply an attempt to meet these six needs:

1. CERTAINTY: assurance you can avoid pain and gain pleasure
2. UNCERTAINTY/VARIETY: the need for the unknown, change, and new stimuli
3. SIGNIFICANCE: feeling unique, important, special, or needed
4. CONNECTION/LOVE: a strong feeling of closeness or union with someone or something
5. GROWTH: an expansion of capacity, capability, or understanding
6. CONTRIBUTION: a sense of service and focus on helping, supporting, and giving to others

While people need all six, most individuals will have two that dominate their behavior. The last two - growth and contribution - have a unique place in the model as he believes they are the keys to having a fulfilling life. Are they one of your top two?

Try this simple exercise: Look at your friends, your family, or other people in your life, can you identify their two primary needs? Make and test a prediction on how people will behave in future situations. Then use that to understand why they do what they do.

SYSTEM 1 VS SYSTEM 2

Once you have a basic understanding of what drives individuals, the next step is to figure out how people, including yourself, process information. Daniel Kahneman, in his book Thinking Fast and Slow, describes a 2-tier system of mental processing, which is a little more complicated, but worth understanding.

System 1 operates automatically and quickly, with little or no effort and no sense of voluntary control. We use this system to detect that one object is more distant than another, orient to the source of a sudden sound, or answer routine questions (“What is $2+2$?”).

System 2 turns on for specific demanding mental activities, including solving complex computations (“What is 17×24 ?”) and making “big” choices. We use System 2 when we maintain a faster walking speed than normal or count the occurrences of the letter “a” on a page of text.

Think of System 1 as associated with skills, knowledge or habits. When a skilled response is available, that process automatically starts. So if no skill, knowledge, or habit is available, then you might assume that System 2 automatically kicks in. It turns out that is not quite how it works.

It is rare for System 1 to not have an answer. When searching for the answer to a question, it simultaneously generates answers to related (and often easier) questions and offers these up as answers. For example, when asked “How much would you contribute to save an endangered species?”, System 1 might actually answer the easier

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

question “How much emotion do I feel when I think of dying dolphins?”

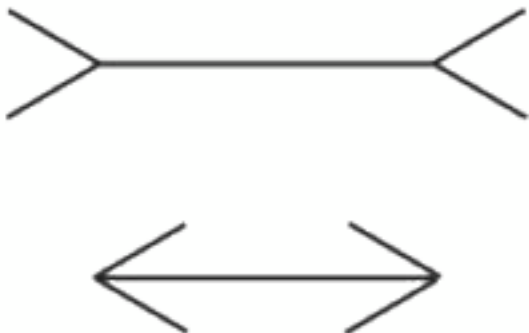
The problem? There is no simple way for System 2 to distinguish between a skilled (accurate) answer and a hueristic (guesstimate) one. System 1 answers can be “endorsed” with minimal checking, which is how it gets a bad reputation as a source for errors. You can see this in the classic “bat and ball” question:

A bat and ball cost \$1.10. The bat costs one dollar more than the ball. How much does the ball cost?

What was the first answer that came to mind? For most people, it was 10 cents. Think about it for a minute (by using System 2) and you’ll see why that is wrong.

Once you understand the basic differences, there are techniques you can use to improve how your brain handles everyday life.

Take the Muller-Lyer illusion:



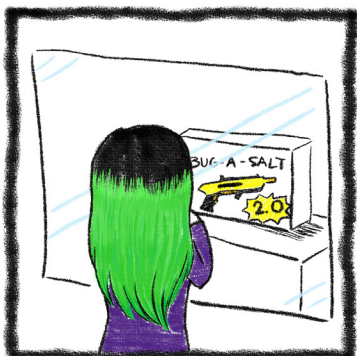
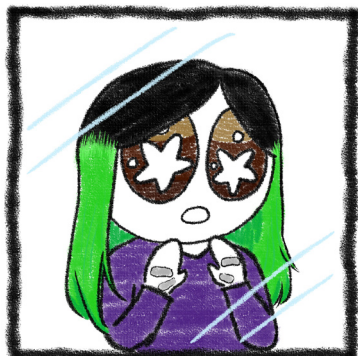
MY BEST GUESS

If you've never seen it, you might think the lines are different lengths. If you have, you "know" they are the same length meaning you've trained System 1 to give the correct answer (if you still can't see it, move a standard object such as your finger between the two). You can also set rules for System 1 to follow. A simple example in the world of finance is to "always take the highest insurance deductible".

While they are not perfect, if you spend time thinking about these models, you can begin to understand, and ultimately predict likely behavior for yourself and others, which will be a critical skill in getting what you want in life (of course, that's after you figure out what that is).

3RD PIECE OF ADVICE: UNLIKE REALITY, THINK OF HUMANS AS OFTEN PREDICTABLE IN WAYS THAT YOU CAN LEARN.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 5

Being Human II: The Troubleshooting Guide

*“Being human means being flawed. Perfectly flawed.”
- Rhonda Britten*

When asked about their driving skills, 93% of US drivers put themselves in the top 50%. If that sounds mathematically impossible, it is. It’s also a great example of a cognitive bias, which is the human brain’s tendency to draw incorrect conclusions. This one is called the “superiority bias”, based on an over assessment of our own skill set. Most people are subject to it (but not you, right?)

Cognitive biases have always existed and many of these are recognizable cultural norms. Doing things just because others are (“herd mentality”), buying something you shouldn’t have and convincing yourself it was a good idea (“post-purchase rationalization”) and underestimating the time to complete tasks (“planning fallacy”) are all examples of common cognitive biases.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

Prior to the 1970s most scientists treated humans as “rational beings”, meaning they believed that if we had all the appropriate information, we would make logical decisions. Sounds reasonable. Unfortunately, it is simply not true. We constantly make decisions that make sense in our own minds, but seem suspect when viewed through an objective lens. Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman were the first scientists to define and study these phenomenon back in 1972.

Since then, they have identified a lot of biases (105 at last count). Thankfully, Eric Fernandez has put together a study guide on all of them with links to Wikipedia for details. In general, there are four main groupings:

- 19 SOCIAL BIASES: Biases related to personal interactions and groups, such the tendency to engage in behaviors that will confirm existing attitudes (“self-fulfilling prophecy”)
- 8 MEMORY BIASES: Biases that affect how we remember things, such as the idea we are responsible for desirable outcomes but not responsible for undesirable ones (“self-serving bias”)
- 42 DECISION MAKING BIASES: Biases that impact how we choose and make decisions, such as the tendency to underestimate task-completion times (“planning fallacy”)
- 36 PROBABILITY & BELIEF BIASES: Biases associated with why we believe something happened or whether it will happen in the future, such as the tendency to perform or perceive differently when one knows they are being observed (“Hawthore effect”)

UNDERSTANDING HOW THE WORLD WORKS

If you look at the full list, you will find a few that sound familiar, but probably quite a number that you didn't realize existed.

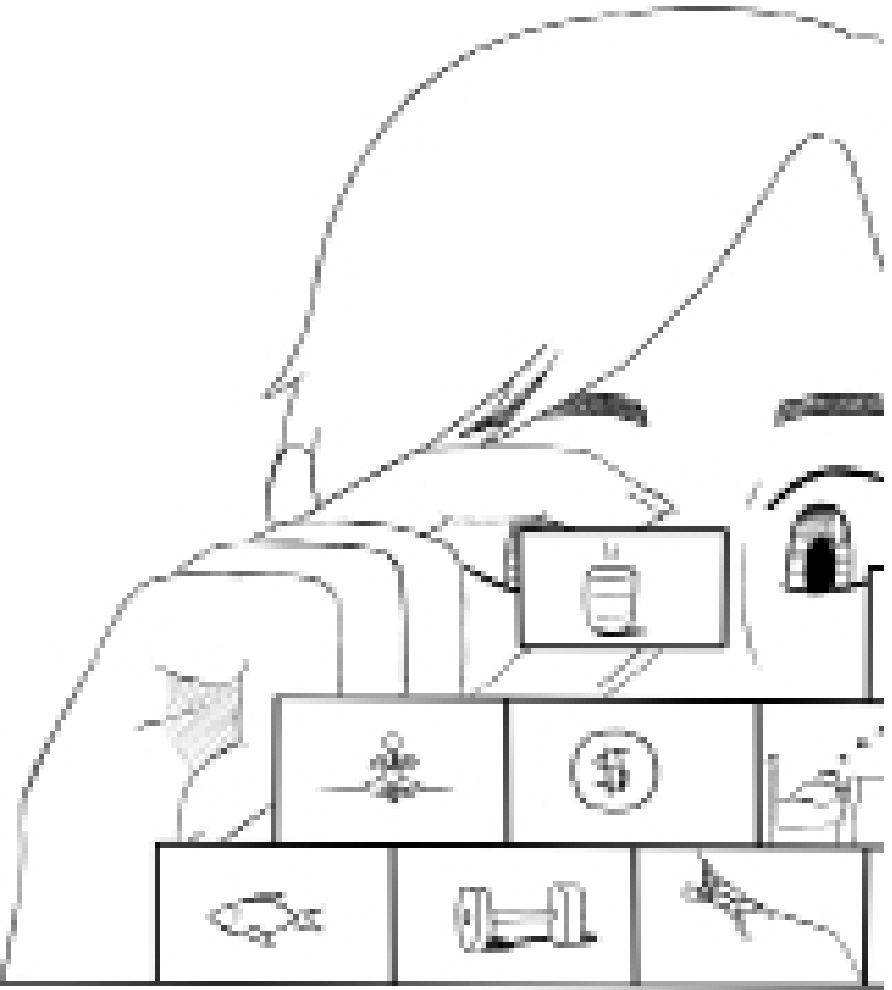
The good news is these “bugs” in our brain software are predictable and you can learn to recognize them, and ultimately counteract them, so you can make better decisions. It's also helpful to understand why others make the choices that they do. So go take a look. It will give you another peek at how the world really works.

4TH PIECE OF ADVICE: UNDERSTAND HOW HUMANS CAN BE PREDICTABLY WRONG IN MANY SITUATIONS (INCLUDING YOU). MAKE A PRACTICE OF LOOKING FOR NEW SCENARIOS WHERE THIS HAPPENS.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

Section II

Building a Strong Foundation



I am beautiful. I am smart.
I am beautiful. I am smart.
I am beautiful. I am smart.

I am
I am
iful.
sma
m b
ful.



smart.

beaut

I am

rt. I a

beauti

I am

beau

art. I

ful. I

am

am

bea

Smart. I am
tiful. I am sm
am beauti
am smart. I
beautiful. I
smart. I am

1.0 1 1

Chapter 6

Crafting Your Mind

*“We are shaped by our thoughts;
we become what we think.”
- The Buddha*

Words matter. In particular, the words you say to yourself every day are the most important words in your life.

As you’ll learn later in the toolkit section, learning is about regular repetition, grooving patterns into your mind over time. As a simple example, think of the majesty of the Grand Canyon. How could water – that gentle, soft, and flexible substance - carve such awe-inspiring grooves in the earth? It is just a tiny bit of force applied consistently over a very long time. That’s all it takes. Words are like the water of your mind, continually reinforcing patterns.

This means that you should spend a lot of time thinking about the words that echo in your head daily. These are the words your life is built on, so it is best to choose them wisely.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

“What do I want?” is one of my favorite questions and I find it to be a great starting point for almost any situation. In the case of our minds, I asked myself that question and eventually settled on the following:

I want to have a vibrant mind with enough gratitude, mental energy, focus, discipline, and joy to do any activity I want at any time.

Let’s look at that in detail, so you can see why I specifically chose those words:

- **GRATITUDE:** This is the first and most important building block. I tell myself that I am lucky to be here. I have been given a gift of a short time to pursue this curious adventure and I intend to take advantage of it. The great times are easy. The not-so-great times, while difficult to go through, are part of the package. I tell myself that if I don’t have the lows, I won’t realize how great the highs are. Groove the habit of gratitude. If you choose to do one thing after reading this book, this is the one.
- **MENTAL ENERGY:** Energy is the fuel of activity. The more mental energy I possess, the more I can do in the limited time I have. I want to find ways to cultivate that energy.
- **FOCUS:** I want to do something meaningful as part of my adventure and I believe that great things require focus, so this is a word that I want running through my mind daily.
- **DISCIPLINE:** A successful and fulfilling life requires

work. Our family has adopted the mantra “short term hard, long term easy”, which means that if you do the hard work today, tomorrow will be easier. Easier said than done, I know. To help, I often remind myself that my future self will thank me for doing it now. Train your mind to think of yourself as someone who gets things done.

- JOY: I believe that joy is one of the reasons that this adventure is worth taking and I want as much of it as I can get.

With that as what I want, I’ve also come up with instructions for myself that I try to follow every day:

1. BE COMPASSIONATE: Just like me, everyone is trying to figure out this thing called life. Just like me, they make mistakes. Since reality is subjective, I want to choose compassion. People were short with me because they are busy, not because they are mean. Someone cuts me off in traffic? I’ll assume they just didn’t see me or they have an emergency. Whether it’s true in their reality or not, I can assume it’s true in mine. Life is much more pleasant this way.
2. BE PRESENT: When I am with someone or engaged in a focused activity, I try to be in the moment, not thinking of things that happened yesterday or things that might happen tomorrow. The only moment that exists is “now”. The more time I can spend there in the moment, the more fulfilling my life becomes.
3. BE OBSERVANT: Life is fascinating if you just open your eyes and look around. Look for the small things that most people miss. Whether unique sights, expres-

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

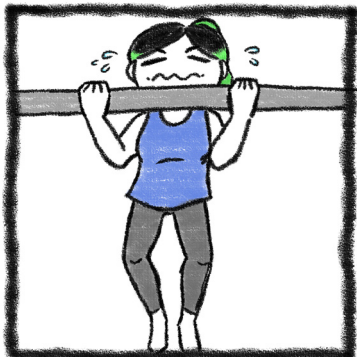
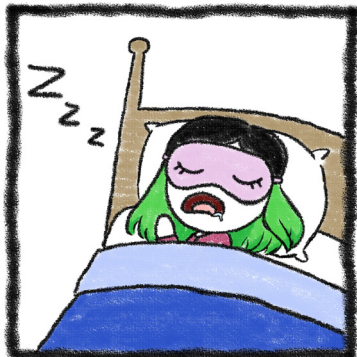
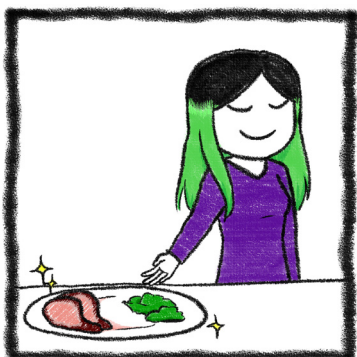
sions, or entire worlds that unfold in the corner of a park or high up in the trees, there is something new that you can see everyday.

4. **BE ACTIVE:** It's your life. Whether your current circumstances are what you want or not, the only choice you have is what you are going to do next. Own that decision.
5. **BE COURAGEOUS:** Life is an adventure without a rule book. The only way to find out how it works is to try. Try and fail. Then get up and try again.
6. **BE RESILIENT:** Life won't always do what you want it to. Get comfortable with boundaries and not getting what you want. Counterintuitively, if you are comfortable not getting what you want, you have a better chance of getting it.
7. And most important... **BE YOURSELF:** You are the only one on your specific adventure so live it as the person you want to be.

5TH PIECE OF ADVICE: CRAFT YOUR INTERNAL DIALOG PURPOSELY AND WITH CARE. YOUR MIND IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOL YOU HAVE, AND YOU ARE SHAPING IT EVERY SECOND OF EVERY DAY.

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 7

Crafting Your Body

*“Physical fitness is the basis for
all other forms of excellence.”*

- John F. Kennedy

Your mind does not live in a vacuum. In fact, it lives in a very specific place – your body. So just like you need to tend your mind, you also need to tend your body. And like the mind, I start with the question of what I want. Here’s what I came up with:

*To be pain and disease free with enough physical
energy, strength, and mobility to do any activity I
want at any time.*

This one is a bit more straightforward. I want my body to be an enabler of my life and those are the ingredients I believe are needed to do so.

Achieving that by following health news can be both fascinating and frustrating as there are often competing ideas about the “right” way to be healthy. Sifting through all

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

that I have learned it comes down to 3 basic concepts:

- Eat well: Your body is literally constructed out of what you eat. Use the best building material you can find.
- Move well: Your body follows the old maxim of “if you don’t use it, you lose it.” Use it as often as you can.
- Sleep well: Being awake is actually a low-grade destructive process. Sleep is your recovery mechanism. Give your body what it wants.

In terms of what that means in practice, here is what I do.

EAT WELL

There are many delicious things that are not good for you and it is hard to cut them all out, so I’ve adopted an 80/20 rule to eating.

If I eat “well” 80% of the time, I can indulge a little. For me, eating well for 80% means the following:

First, the things that are universally true, or at least I’ve never heard anyone disagree with:

- Eat wild, whole, minimally processed, fresh, local, organic foods (in that order if I can’t get it all).
- Read the labels. Go for the food with the least ingredients (5 or less is best). If I don’t know what the ingredient is, I avoid it.
- Use olive oil, avoid vegetable oils, and don’t eat any

partially hydrogenated oils.

- Avoid sugar.

After that it tends to get a bit murky as to what your mix of food should be. I currently take the middle ground – lots of veggies (salad for lunch, green veggies with dinner), a moderate amount of high-quality protein, and medium to low carbs.

Supplements are even more complicated. Here, you need to do your own research, but it's clear that no one really gets enough sun exposure these days, so Vitamin D is the one thing that almost everyone should take and is considered very safe.

MOVE WELL

Each of us will have a different definition of what “any activity” means. For me, I enjoy going rock climbing, but have no interest in climbing Mount Everest, so my baseline will be more moderate than a mountain climber.

This means that you need to do a little work in the beginning to determine what your baseline needs are, but the good news is, once you get there, maintaining it is pretty easy.

I have found it useful to define a baseline using the following categories:

1. **POSTURE:** This is one of the most important and least thought about aspects of physical fitness. Posture, by

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

definition, is the position your body is in most of the day, and therefore has the most potential for long term effects. The simple advice? Make sure you sit, stand, and walk using the posture that you wish to have when you are 90 years old.

2. **BREATH:** Another underappreciated aspect of the body. There are plenty of practices that will teach you breathing from yoga to meditation. In short, breath as slow and as deep as you can as often as you can.
3. **STRENGTH:** This is what most people think of when they think of a healthy body. It's a measure of how much work your muscles can do.
4. **BALANCE:** Strength is not much good if you can't keep your balance.
5. **FLEXIBILITY:** Gradual restriction of motion as you get older is not inevitable and you shouldn't accept it. Stretch, reach, and move to the full extent of normal human motion.
6. **CONDITIONING:** The other "common" view of physical health, it is basically how long can you keep up an activity. Back to the original definition, you want it to be high enough to do any activity that you want to do.

So how do you build up the baseline that you want?

Start with posture, breath, balance, and flexibility. These are things that should be a daily practice and only take a few focused minutes a day for each to make continual progress.

Building strength has two major approaches:

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

1. **BUILD ADDITIONAL MUSCLE FIBERS:** Work out hard enough to stress your existing muscle fibers which will convince your body that it needs to build more of them. Give yourself enough time to recover before trying again (the growth comes in the recovery). How do you know if you gave enough recovery time? You should have more work output (last time you did 10 pushups? Next time you should be able to do 11 or more). If not, rest more.
2. **“GREASE THE GROOVE” TO IMPROVE THE NEUROMUSCULAR PATTERNS:** Do the exercise in minimal doses (half of what your max is), often. For example, if you can do 10 pushups, do 5 pushups 3-5 times per day, focusing on form.

Conditioning can be done periodically (every week or 2 weeks), with incremental improvement, until you reach your target state. Then you can do as little as required to maintain.

Once you have hit your baseline, you can test it periodically to ensure that it is still in place. I do have specific suggestions of what a good baseline fitness is, but given the variety of activities people may want to engage in, I didn't include it here. If you are interested, you can email me at drew@thiscuriousadventure.com and I would be happy to share.

SLEEP WELL

If you really want to know why you should get a good night's sleep, you should read [Why We Sleep](#) by Matthew

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

Walker. Suffice it to say, it's critically important to almost every major body system.

A simple test to see if you are getting enough sleep is whether you can wake up regularly without an alarm and feel refreshed.

Honestly, this is an area where I get close but don't quite meet. Modern work schedules mean it is hard to get as much as I need while working full time, but close is not too bad.

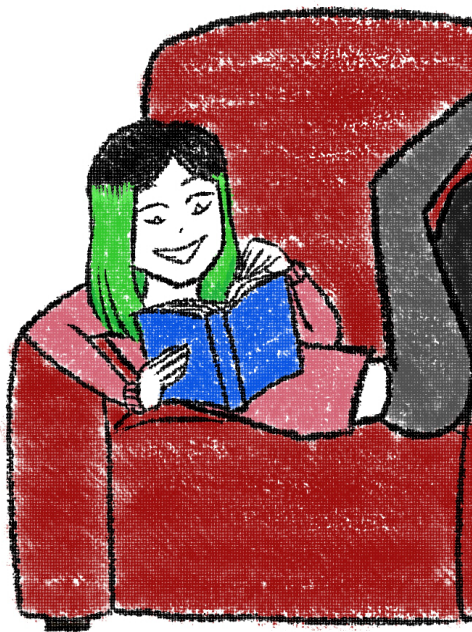
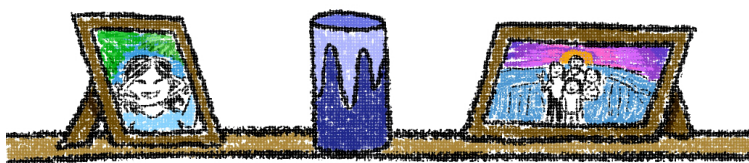
Here is some advice that I've found helpful:

- Quality is more important than quantity, so focus on sleeping well first
- Go to bed at the same time each night
- Avoid caffeine after 2 pm
- Start winding down 2 hours before bed (that means putting the phone and other electronics away)
- Avoid eating big meals or doing a hard workout near bedtime
- Write a "grateful" log before bed
- Avoid bright lights, particularly LEDs and strong blue lights (you can use orange glasses and install F.lux on your computer – ie. You want to create a "sunset" or "fireside" feeling)
- Sleep in a pitch black room

6TH PIECE OF ADVICE: EAT WELL, MOVE WELL, AND SLEEP WELL. YOUR BODY IS THE ONLY PLACE YOU HAVE TO LIVE, SO TREAT IT ACCORDINGLY.

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 8

Crafting Your Environment

“The environment is everything that isn’t me.”
- Albert Einstein

As discussed in the background section, your reality is determined by the input you receive, and in turn, your input is based on the environment you are in. Given the importance of our environment, we also want to make sure it is well positioned to help us. As usual, I start with “what I want”. In this case, I came up with:

To have a healthy, safe, secure, and enjoyable environment that gives me freedom from worry and supports me in living the life I want.

Much of this is determined by where your environment is, so choose the best environment that you can find. Money is clearly an important ingredient in providing more options for where that is, which is one of the reasons I chose it as the last foundation piece.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

Wherever your environment is, you have a significant influence on what is in it and how it is structured.

In the past few years I have adopted many of the concepts of minimalism, with the idea of having less stuff, but more meaning for each thing I own. Here are the general guidelines I've adopted:

1. As much as possible, everything in our house makes us happy and joyful.
2. Simplify. The fewer things I have, the more time I can spend appreciating and enjoying each specific item and the less time I spend maintaining it (cleaning, etc).
3. Everything should have a place, preferably visible (limit storage to as small a space as possible).
4. Everything should have a purpose (memento, growth, fun, functional, or security).
5. Everything should be used within the year - If I haven't used it within one year, I give it to someone who will get better use out of it.

I also like to keep a small list of the “precious few” assets that mean the most to me and have systems in place to recover them from loss. These days, they are mostly in the form of memories – photographs and videos of both the extraordinary experiences I've enjoyed as well as the ordinary days with my family and friends. Thankfully, there are many backup options today that can cover this.

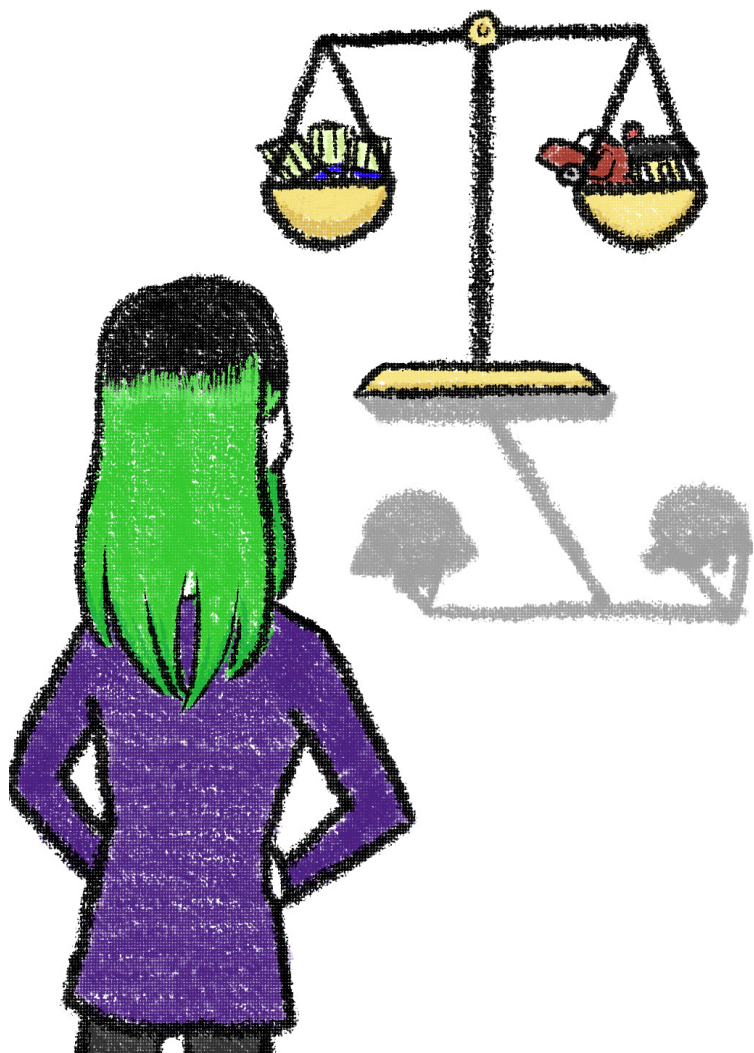
Ultimately, I often remind myself that if my house burned down, but my family and I are healthy and safe, all is still

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

well with the world. The rest can be replaced.

7TH PIECE OF ADVICE: YOUR MIND AND BODY ARE IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT ALL DAY, EVERY DAY, SO DESIGN YOUR ENVIRONMENT TO HELP YOU, NOT HINDER YOU.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 9

...And Your Money

“That man is richest whose pleasures are cheapest.”
- Henry David Thoreau

Money is an interesting concept and can mean lots of different things to different people. “What do I want?” Here’s what I came up with:

*The ability to do anything I want, anytime I want,
without having to worry about the money to
finance it.*

Read that again carefully. Note that it doesn’t say I want to have lots of money. Just that I don’t want money to be an inhibitor to what I want to do.

In my family, we often talk about “rich” versus “wealthy”. Rich means having lots of money. Wealthy means having enough money to cover everything you want to do. I often make the point to my kids that the wealthiest person I know is their great grandmother. Why? Rather

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

than having the most money, she went the other way and wants the least of anyone I know. “Want to go on a cruise or travel?” “No, been there done that.” “Want new stuff?” “Why would I want new things? The stuff I have is perfectly functional.” The main thing I’ve seen her want to do is pay for or make big family dinners, which is well within her means. I can’t think of a single thing that she wants that money is preventing her from getting. That’s what it means to be wealthy.

Now for myself, I must admit that my wants are a bit bigger than hers. I don’t need a private jet, but I do like to travel. I generally don’t need new stuff, but there are a few gadgets that I like and tend to buy.

In terms of an actionable strategy, I’ve done the following 4 step process and have found it very useful.

1. Figure out what I want in life (see Section III).
2. Determine how much income is needed to sustain that life.
3. Determine how to achieve that income in the most effective way possible.
4. If I can’t yet achieve that income, start over at step 1 and want a little bit less for now.

So where does income come from? Most people think “job”, but that’s only one of the ways. Particularly once you start to save and invest some money, other options become available.

Your goal should be to move up the ladder of these major

income categories over time, with full passive income being the ultimate objective. If you make it there, what you do with your time is solely based on what you love to do and what kind of contribution you want to make to the world. I'm personally not there yet but continue to work on it. Here are the categories:

1. **FULL PASSIVE INCOME:** Financial agreements that guarantee you income, this includes pensions, annuities, and some government bonds such as TIPS.
2. **PASSIVE OWNERSHIP:** Investing in a broad portfolio of assets, such as index funds, looking for both growth (appreciation in value) and dividends (actual cash that you get on a regular basis). You don't do much work here, only decide on how to allocate your money at the highest level such as what percentage to stocks, bonds, or real estate.
3. **ACTIVE OWNERSHIP:** This is investing in a specific set of assets where you spend time thinking about them and specifically choosing them. In the words of Warren Buffet, try to invest in businesses that are "so wonderful that an idiot can run them. Because sooner or later, one will". To do this well requires a lot of time and a love for numbers and digging into minute details.
4. **ACTIVE OWNERSHIP & MANAGEMENT:** Own and manage a business, such as a store, real estate, or other venture.
5. **WORK FOR HIRE:** Get paid for your time. This is where most people start out.

As you can see, each of these levels requires more and

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

more of your time. I've also found several general pieces of advice that I think everyone should follow:

- Protect yourself. Have an emergency fund to cover 6 or 12 months of expenses. Reduce your expenses until you can build up a cushion.
- Invest in yourself. For any money you get (salary, gifts, odd jobs), save 10%, invest 10% and give away 10%. Live off the rest. If your emergency fund is full, invest 20%
- Avoid fees whenever possible. Put the 20% investment into a total stock market index fund.
- If you can't afford what you want, want less, or develop patience to wait until you can afford it.
- Have the money in the bank before you buy something. Avoid all debt, especially credit card debt (a potential exception is a mortgage). Credit cards are actually a good strategy to protect yourself from fraud, but be sure to pay them off every month.

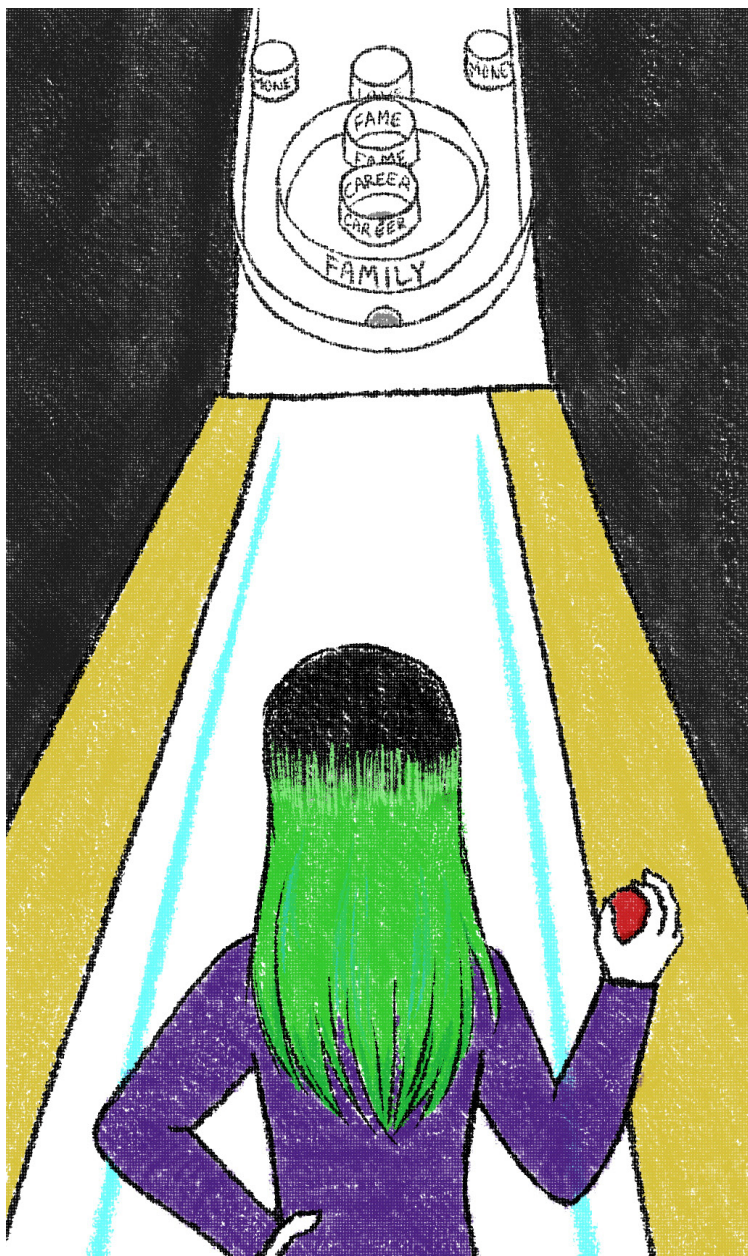
8TH PIECE OF ADVICE: UNDERSTAND HOW MONEY WORKS. IT CAN'T BUY A SUCCESSFUL LIFE, BUT IT CAN CERTAINLY HELP.

Section III

Figuring Out What You Want



THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 10

What Do You Want?

*“The first secret of getting what you want
is knowing what you want.”
- Arthur D. Hlavaty*

As the world becomes smaller and more interconnected, our choices of what to do with our time are rapidly expanding. It’s understandable that when someone asks “What do you want in life?” many of us have difficulty knowing how to answer. As David Allen put it, “you can do anything, just not everything.” So where to start?

First, set the goal posts.

These should be the guiding principles that you use to align your life path. They are a good check to make sure you are making progress. I’ve picked five key “goal posts” for myself:

- **LEARN:** Life is not static. You either grow or decay.
What do I know today that I didn’t know yesterday?

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

What skills will I need to address a probable future? I want to keep expanding my view of the world.

- **CREATE:** I want to make a mark on the world by creating something new. Whether it lasts or not, creation is a powerful human drive.
- **BUILD STRONG RELATIONSHIPS:** Humans are wired to be social beings. Study after study has found the importance of strong relationships in maintaining health and well being. Go for quality over quantity. And like everything else in life, it takes work to maintain them. I would suggest you make this one of your focus areas.
- **HAVE FUN & AMAZING EXPERIENCES:** That's the essence of life. Enjoy it.
- **CONTRIBUTE:** While amazing experiences make life enjoyable, in the end, I believe we are part of something bigger than ourselves and contributing back is a key goal post for me. I think about how I am contributing and how I can do more. If I can combine it with one of the other four goal posts, even better.

This is my current list. If they don't work for you, create your own - just make sure you have them.

Then think about what you want in each area. It can be long term or short term. Brainstorm as many possibilities as you can. If you are stuck, you can do an 80/20 analysis of your life. For example, what small subset of things (the 20%) is driving the majority (the 80%) of the happiness (or stress, income, etc) in your life right now? What is causing that? Why? What can you do differently that could improve it?

FIGURING OUT WHAT YOU WANT

Once you have a list, go make it happen. Getting started is often the hardest part, so do something - do anything - to move towards your goals. Don't wait. Do it now. If you do, you'll find that it makes all the difference.

9TH PIECE OF ADVICE: BE AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE WHEN DEFINING WHAT YOU WANT. SET GOAL POSTS FOR WHAT YOU WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE COVERING ALL THE KEY AREAS.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 11

Why Wanting Something is Not Enough

*“If you really want to do something, you’ll find a way.
If you don’t, you’ll find an excuse.”*
- Jim Rohn

So now you have a list of what you want. Unfortunately, that by itself doesn’t do much. To get what you want, it helps to first do some homework.

When you “want” something, you are looking for a specific outcome that is somehow different than what you have today. That may seem simple, but it is hard to do well. If you look at New Year’s resolutions, people often want to be “rich”, “happy”, “famous”, or something similar, only to end up in the same place a year later.

So why do so many people fail to achieve their outcomes and how can you do it differently? At its heart, there are three questions to consider:

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

1. HOW CLEAR IS YOUR OUTCOME?

Unclear outcomes are inherently unhelpful. Let's take Joe, who wants to be "healthier" this year. After six months, Joe can run a mile (up from no running at all), but has gained 10 pounds after eating too much junk food. Is Joe "healthier"? Well, that depends on what Joe meant by "healthier", which he never defined. After six months, he doesn't know if he's achieved his desired outcome!

You can avoid Joe's fate if you set it up properly, which requires just two key ingredients: 1) be as specific as possible and 2) have a way to measure progress and achievement. In this case, if Joe had set a goal to "run a mile in under eight minutes by the end of the year while maintaining his weight within five pounds", he could easily determine whether he achieved it.

2. HOW HARD IS IT TO ACHIEVE?

The sweet spot for an outcome is "moderately challenging". If it's too easy, it won't motivate you. If it's impossible, you will stop. Try to make it just beyond what you think you can comfortably do.

The objective is to make it "winnable" while also achieving something meaningful. If you do the same with the next outcome, and the next, and so on, you will create a "winning" streak that will help you drive through the inevitable rough patches that will come up along the way.

3. HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT IT?

There is a fable of a young man who asks Socrates how he could get wisdom, Socrates replied, “Come with me” and walked along the path to the river. They waded in until he and the man were waist deep. Without saying anything, Socrates grabbed the back of the man’s head and pushed him under water. At first, thinking it was a joke, the man waited patiently to be let up. After a while he became concerned as his air supply dwindled. He started struggling to get up. Socrates continued to hold his head under water. When his struggles became frantic and he thought he would black out, Socrates finally let him up. When the man regained his composure, Socrates asked him “what did you desire most when you were under water?” The man said simply, “air”. Socrates told the man, “When you want wisdom as much as you wanted air, you will receive it.”

“Wanting” something is an important first step, but you need to know how much you want it. To get a better idea of how much you want it, rate your “wanting it” from 1 to 10, with 1 you have almost no motivation (ie. “If it shows up for free on my doorstep, I’ll take it”); 5 you want it enough to do something (but not too much), and 10 you are willing to do anything (like wanting “air” in the story above).

Want to be successful? Make sure the most impactful activities rate a 9 or 10 on the “want it” scale.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

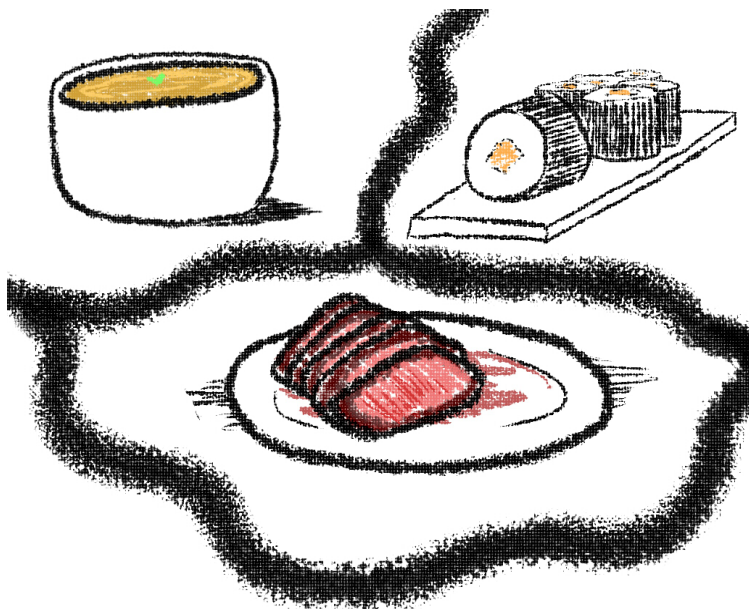
If your goals are currently on the low side, the good news is that you can “program” yourself (to use a coding analogy) to want it more. You can try to entice yourself (ie. “the carrot” - visualize the great party you are going to throw when you achieve your outcome) or force yourself (ie. “the stick” - commit out loud to all your family and friends so you’ll do it just to avoid the embarrassment). Each enforcing thought, assuming it’s strong enough, can raise your score. Keep adding stronger and more compelling reasons to do it, and eventually you will get there.

And if you want it enough, you will find a way to get it. If, however, you find you don’t want it enough, then that’s great too! You just learned something about yourself and you have one less thing on your to do list. Now go back and think of something else you want more!

10TH PIECE OF ADVICE: KNOW HOW MUCH YOU WANT SOMETHING (AND THAT YOU CAN CHANGE HOW MUCH WITH JUST YOUR MIND). YOUR ACTIONS ARE THE TRUE INDICATION OF HOW MUCH YOU WANT SOMETHING.

FIGURING OUT WHAT YOU WANT

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 12

What to Do When Faced With a Big, Uncertain Decision?

“In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing”
- Teddy Roosevelt

Sometimes it's hard to figure out what you want because it means making a big decision that might be very impactful to your life - such as getting married, having kids or changing jobs. The same ideas apply, but I find a bit more structure can help.

The first thing to keep in mind is that life is complex, which means there is no single “right” answer to the question you are pondering, so don't expect to find one. Instead, you are trying to find the answer with the highest probability of success.

It is also important to think about your mindset. Even if you are struggling with a difficult situation, don't dwell on it as a “problem”. It is simply the next chapter in your grand adventure, and a lot of people (myself included) find that the current “problems” often become the best

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

stories once you get past them.

Once you have the right mindset and approach, it's time to get to work:

1. What information do you have to work with?

Do an inventory of what resources and information you have that can help you make your decision. It's important to differentiate what pieces you are confident in (the "facts") and what is less so (the "assumptions").

Think of additional pieces of information that would be helpful. How can you get those? Ask "journalist" questions: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?

More specifically, if you want to launch a successful business, study other successful businesses. The same goes for marriages, job changes, or other complex decisions. Find ones that worked and look at the facts and assumptions in those situations. Compare the two for likenesses and differences, with the goal of finding items that can help in making your decision. Be sure you cast a wide net to find potentially useful information.

2. What are the potential options and associated outcomes?

Start brainstorming potential action options ("what could I do?"). List them out without worrying about the outcome. The goal here is quantity over quality. Even if you think it's a bad idea, write it down anyway. Often great

creative solutions come from what looked like bad ideas at the beginning.

Once you have your list of potential actions, go through and write up 3 possible outcomes – the most likely outcome, best possible outcome, and worst possible outcome.

Now filter the list and improve. You want to find the outcome with a likely scenario that you consider “good”, a high (or at least medium) probability of an amazing outcome, and a low probability of a negative outcome. Go through the list of possible actions and pick the 3-5 that seem like the best matches to that criteria.

Once you have those ideas, see how you can make them better. Specifically ask two questions: “What can I do to increase the probability of the best-case scenario?” and “What can I do to limit the downside risk (or make the worst-case scenario less likely)?” This is a great place to ask family, friends, or your network for advice on how to improve the options.

After you have the options flushed out, comes the most important part – you need to make the decision.

If you are having difficulty deciding, remind yourself that stalling or otherwise not deciding is actually a decision. There is a cost to not making the decision, so make sure you know what it is.

11TH PIECE OF ADVICE: IF THERE IS A DECISION TO BE MADE,

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

MAKE IT ACTIVELY. NO DECISION IS A DECISION.

Section IV

How to Get It: The Essential Toolkit



THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 13

Learn How to Learn

*“What you don’t remember,
you might as well not have learned.”*
- Harry Lorayne

From the day you were born, you have been learning. Much of it was done via school or other formalized education, but a lot of this was done organically – you just kept picking up stuff along the way.

Two things I’ve concluded about learning. First, no one else truly knows what you need to learn. This goes back to the idea that your reality is your own and that it is also unpredictable. Therefore, the skills and knowledge you need to be successful in your life are uniquely your own and you should take charge of building them appropriately. Second, learning is a skill and can be improved just like any other and you should treat it that way.

To get started, let’s talk about what learning is, which requires that you understand a little about how your brain works. As far as we are aware, the brain is the most

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

complex object in the universe. This means we don't fully understand how it works, but we do have some pretty good ideas. The main idea you need to know for learning is that your brain contains tens of billions of cells called neurons that are connected to thousands of others through structures called dendrites. Scientists estimate that there are 100 trillion connections, or circuits, in the brain.

Any input received to your brain through your senses causes a response. Which response? Whichever circuit is the strongest and most deeply grooved. Some are so deep, like your heart rate or body temperature, that we don't have any meaningful control over them, and they operate independently.

Why does that matter to learning? Because learning is the act of creating new neural circuits and strengthening them over time. To learn better, you need to get better at creating those circuits.

Here are the best tips that I've picked up:

Step 1: Link the concept, idea or task to something you already know

It's much faster to copy a circuit than to create a new one. Anytime you are faced with a new task or concept, find an analogy to something you already understand to get a jump start. This is a particularly useful skill across disciplines, as many of the same models will apply. I suggest you think of an analog scenario and start by asking "How is A like B?" Once you understand how the two scenarios

are alike, then ask the question “How is A different from B?”

Let’s take an example from science, and say you want to understand the structure of an atom. A good starting analogy is the solar system. Most people are aware of how the planets orbit around the sun. So first, how are they alike? As a first pass, you can think of an atom as a mini solar system, with the protons and neutrons bundled in the center as the sun, and the electrons orbiting around as planets. And how are they different? In this case, it’s mostly the electrons that are different, and they are different in a couple of major ways. One is that their orbits are not circles like the planets, but rather 3-d shapes that vary from simple spheres, to much more complicated objects like donuts and barbell shapes.

In just a few simple sentences you can get the gist of how something new works if you base it on something you already know.

Step 2: Groove the neural pattern

Once you have laid down an initial pattern of understanding or skill, you need to strengthen it. Here are a few ideas for how to do that:

- **PRACTICE FOR WHAT YOU WANT TO DO:** Understanding is different than action. If you want to play the piano, you can’t just read about it, you must play. This means that you often may need to build multiple circuits – first an understanding circuit and then an ac-

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

tion circuit. The same applies if you want to become a better public speaker or anything else that requires action.

- **RECOGNIZE YOU HAVE TWO MODES OF LEARNING AND BOTH ARE IMPORTANT:** Most people think of focused learning as “the” way to learn. Diffuse, or unfocused time, where you let the concepts float around your brain while relaxing or being otherwise engaged, is just as important. One of the more common methods to do this is the Pomodoro Technique, which formalizes this by breaking up a session into a 25-minute focused time followed by a 5-minute break, repeated for as long as you are working.
- **PRACTICE SPACED REPETITION:** Neural circuits fade over time. The best way to convince your brain that a circuit is important and should be kept is to use that circuit right before it is discarded. Flash cards have been around a long time, but now there are more sophisticated ways. There are formal “spaced recognition systems”, such as Anki, that use a scientifically determined reminder period based on how well you remember each piece of information. Tools like these can greatly accelerate knowledge learning.
- **USE DELIBERATE PRACTICE:** Practicing a very specific aspect of what you are trying to learn enables focused learning. The more specific the better. Learning tennis? Once you have the basic serve down, get more specific – practice just the toss. Or even more specific, practice the toss height. This deliberate practice also gives you something very measurable to see if you are making improvements.
- **PRACTICE TO MAKE BIGGER CIRCUITS:** Once you have the

basic parts of a concept down, work at grouping them into larger and larger chunks. Taking the piano example, once you learn the keys, practice chords, once you practice cords, practice sections of a piece. You keep making the chunks larger and larger until you can play a whole piece as a single circuit.

- **SLEEP:** One of the core functions of sleep is to take short term memories and turn them into long term memories – in effect, build the stronger neural circuits that will last. Don't short your sleep.

Given memory is the basis of knowledge, I have also learned several memory techniques that I've found very useful. You can check these out under the advanced toolkit at thiscuriousadventure.com.

Once you have the tools and approach down, you can apply this to your life in general. Here's the general approach I use:

- Pick a broad topic that I think will contribute to my life
- Find a knowledge source (book, article, person, etc – Google works wonders here)
- Digest that knowledge source into an easily consumable form (such as a mind map)
- Categorize each piece of information and store it based on how I'm going to use it:
 1. For frequently used information, my goal is to keep it in my head, at which point I generally use memory techniques as noted above.
 2. If it's something I want to do (versus just know),

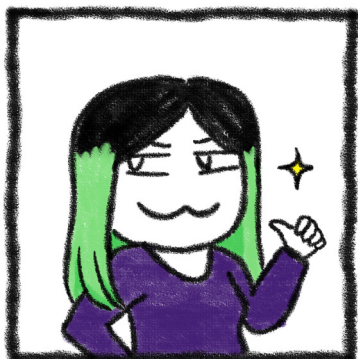
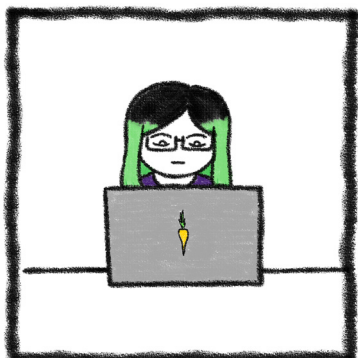
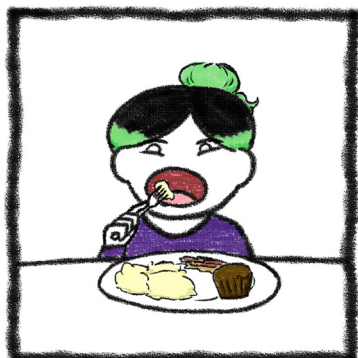
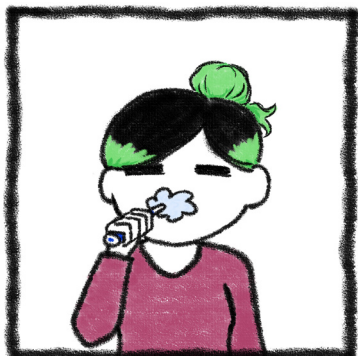
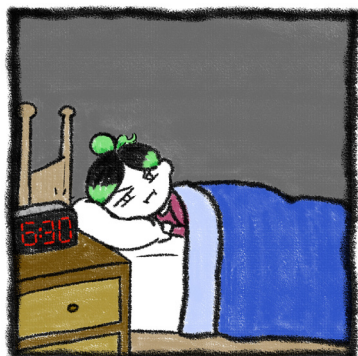
THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

I then create a practice schedule to get it up to my desired level of competence.

3. For concepts that I might come back to later, I make sure I have the general idea in my memory and then store the mind map or other material in a central place (I have found Evernote to be a great tool for this purpose).

It's safe to assume that at least one thing that you want out of life requires new knowledge or a new skill to get it. Learning how to learn is the first step in that process.

12TH PIECE OF ADVICE: GET BETTER AT LEARNING. IT'S A SKILL JUST LIKE ANY OTHER.



Chapter 14

Learn How to Manage Your Habits

“People do not decide their future. They decide their habits and their habits decide their future.”

- F.M. Alexander

Habits are those neural circuits that you have grooved so strongly that they will execute without you even thinking about them, or perhaps even being aware that you are doing them at all! If you have good habits, they will protect you from many of the inherent problems with being human. If you have bad habits, they can do a significant amount of harm.

That means that habits are the most important neural circuits in your life and you should manage your habits closely. Managing your habits allows you to make yourself the person you want to be.

At its core, behavior change requires “focus and discipline over time”. Habits are simple and powerful. You can read more about them in [The Power of Habit](#) by Charles Duhigg, but in short, they are made up of three phases:

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

1. **CUE:** A trigger that tells your brain to go into automatic mode and which habit to use
2. **ROUTINE:** What you do (can be physical, emotional, or mental)
3. **REWARD:** What you get out of it (which helps your brain figure out if this loop is worth remembering for the future)

In order to change a habit you need to do a little thinking about what is going on in your life and start to introduce very specific changes. Specifically, you can use the following four steps to change a habit:

1. Identify the routine (What happens step-by-step?)
2. Experiment with rewards (What is it really? find a substitute)
3. Isolate the cue (Location, time, emotional state, other people immediately preceding action)
4. Have a plan (What exactly will you do to reengineer the routine/habit?)

In many respects, humans can be considered a collection of habits. And unfortunately, habits we like might fade over time and habits we'd rather avoid start creeping into our lives. I find it useful to check in every once in a while and do an inventory of my daily habits to see if it needs any maintenance.

13TH PIECE OF ADVICE: ACTIVELY CREATE YOUR HABITS TO SUPPORT WHAT YOU WANT.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 15

Learn How to Manage Your Time

*“All we have to decide is what to do
with the time that is given to us.”*
- J.R.R. Tolkien

Rich or poor, young or old, there is one thing that all people have in common every day – time (1,440 minutes to be exact). Time is the great equalizer. If you want to make a difference at work or in life, the only real question is how to spend your time.

The challenge is that there are significant forces that can throw you off course by having you spend time on tasks that don't impact things that are important to you. It is a constant battle, but if you build the right skills and habits, you can significantly increase the amount of time that you spend the way you want.

Here are some of my favorite tips and techniques for prioritizing and being productive.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

PURE FOCUS: THE ONE THING BY GARY KELLER

If you don't know what you want to accomplish, spend some time thinking about that first. It can be a life goal, a career goal, or even a goal for this week. The more important it is and the more you want it, the easier it will be to cut away the rest of the clutter and keep your focus on that item.

Once you have it in mind, ask yourself "What is the ONE thing that I can do that will make everything else easier or unnecessary?"

Then do that thing above all others until it is done. Then move on to the next one.

This is the simplest method, but also the hardest, as it requires an iron discipline to say no to the million other things that demand your time. Give it a try!

MULTIPLE FOCUSES: HOW TO SORT WHAT YOU'VE GOT ON YOUR PLATE NOW

Most of us will find the ONE Thing approach a little too intense, as we have several things on which we need to focus. However, I think it's a valuable, if not quite attainable, philosophy. The more often I ask this question and the closer I can come to one core focus, the more productive I am.

Day-to-day, I use a similar but broader context of focusing on the three Most Important Tasks (MITs), which is

a commonly recommended approach. I personally have MITs for the year, MITs for the week, and MITs for each workday, which all tie together. Having three “must do” things a day keeps me focused on making sure I don’t get distracted by incoming action items, emails and other noise. I try to get them done as early in the day as possible, ideally first thing.

If you are not sure which are your three most important tasks, you can use a technique called the “Eisenhower Box” to sort them. It’s a very simple concept: a 2x2 grid with Important/Not Important on one axis and Urgent/Not Urgent on the other. The meaning of the quadrants are pretty straightforward:

1. Not Important / Not Urgent - Tasks to eliminate
2. Not Important / Urgent - Tasks to spend as little time as possible on (or delegate if possible)
3. Important / Urgent - Where most people spend their time
4. Important / Not Urgent - Where most people should spend their time

I’ve found that most of the truly meaningful impacts that we make fall in the “Important / Not Urgent” quadrant. Exercise is a simple example of one of these items. If you don’t exercise, nothing bad will happen immediately or even in the near future, but it is well recognized that it is needed for long-term health. A simple goal is to increase the amount of time spent on these activities. I aim for 30% of my time here. Ideally, it would be more like 50%, but if I can keep it above 25%, I can see material move-

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

ment on my key objectives.

HOW TO DEAL WITH INCOMING REQUESTS

To spend appropriate time on your key wants, you need to be able to keep the rest of the world in line while you do so. There are plenty of organizational systems out there, but I have had the most success with David Allen's Getting Things Done, which is essentially:

What is it and is it actionable now (as opposed to “some day”)?

- If it is actionable, then:
 1. Will it take less than 2 minutes? If so, do it now.
 2. Are you really the best person to do it? If not, delegate it to someone else (and do it now).
 3. Defer for now - either schedule time when it will be done or put it on your “to do” list.
- If it is not actionable, then there are 3 possibilities:
 1. It is not needed - trash it.
 2. It is reference material (you might need to look this up at some point) - file it in a good system.
 3. It's a maybe/someday item - add it to an “ideas” list that you check periodically.

Then, once a week, look at your overall lists of projects and actions to make sure you have everything (thoughts, ideas, projects, to do's) captured in one of those categories.

There is a bit more to it than that, but this gives you the

basic idea. Many similar systems exist, which one you use doesn't particularly matter. What matters is that you have a system and use it.

CHECK UP QUESTION: "How much offense am I playing (vs defense)?"

Offense is when you are doing things on your agenda. Defense is when you are doing things on someone else's agenda. Look back over your activities this past week. How much time was on offense? This is a good "check up" question you can ask yourself periodically.

Here are some other general tips and tricks I use:

EMAIL SCANNING

Email is by far the biggest drain of time in the corporate world. When scanning email, I find it useful to use the following filter:

- Look for what action you must take, including date/deadline
- If there is one, check that it meets the following CLEAR requirements:
 - Connected to current projects
 - Lists next steps - what to do
 - Expectations are clear - what does success look like?
 - Ability to execute - you know how to get it done
 - Return - What's in it for me? (WIIFM)

If there is no action or the action is not clear, it is not par-

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

ticularly useful. Be smart, but I've found there is a high probability that you can ignore the email.

This is also useful when you are writing an email that requires action from others. Make sure you hit all the CLEAR requirements to increase the likelihood that the recipient will actually do it.

MEETINGS

For those of you who work in a typical corporation, meetings tend to be the second biggest drain of time. The first question to ask is why are you attending the meeting? Often the same thing can be accomplished with a quick phone call or email. I find that there are only a few types of meetings that deserve attendance, in order of importance:

1. Outcome Driven (Brainstorming/discussion or decision making that can't be done over email)
2. Relationship Building (Building your network and relationships)
3. Information Sharing (Although consider if there is a more efficient way to get the information, such as reading the material)
4. Required/mandatory (Ideally these should not exist, although they tend to in the corporate environment. First check your assumption - why do you assume it's mandatory? Can you catch up later with someone who did attend?)

If you can't figure out which one it is, my advice is just don't go.

Even if you know why you are attending a meeting, you should also filter based on how well run the meeting is. Does it have clear objectives and material with action items and follow ups as appropriate? If not, you can talk to the organizer to make sure that it does going forward. If it still doesn't happen, avoid the meeting if possible.

SPEED THINGS UP

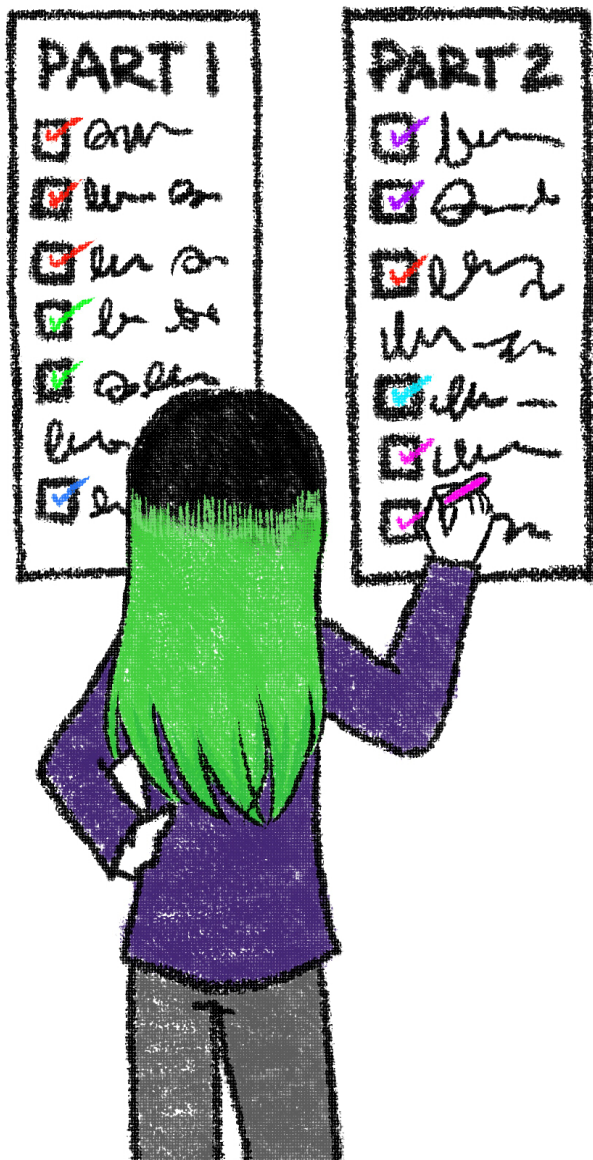
Given the prevalence of email and computer-based activities, two simple things you can do are: 1) learn to touch type (go for 50 words per minute or greater) and 2) for any repetitive actions, learn or create keyboard shortcuts (I use a lot of them in Outlook, since that's where I spend the majority of my computer-based work time).

KNOW WHAT NOT TO DO

If there are items that you tend to do, but know you shouldn't, you can create a "not to do" list. Just like a to do list, you keep this with you and check it occasionally. Only in this case, you want to make sure you aren't spending time on any activities that are on the list.

14TH PIECE OF ADVICE: PURPOSEFULLY MANAGE YOUR TIME.
THE REST OF THE WORLD WILL INEVITABLY TRY TO TAKE YOU OFF TASK. RESIST IT.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 16

Learn How to Plan for a Goal

*“Plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.”
- Dwight Eisenhower*

Most goals require more than one step, sometimes quite a few. If you are not the planning type, the advice I have for achieving a goal is to pick something that moves you towards it and go do it. Repeat as necessary.

That works often enough, but I have made significantly more progress towards my goals by setting out a plan and using some form of external system for support.

There are many systems out there, but if you are just starting, choose a simple option. One of those is the “Kan Ban” method, which keeps tasks in one of three buckets:

- To Do - The queue of things left to do
- Doing - Things being actively worked on
- Done - All of the completed items

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

Many tools, such as Trello, (which I use) provide easy and intuitive implementations that you can use for free. You can use these tools for many different methods, whether Kan Ban or David Allen's "Getting Things Done".

Once you have a system in place and know where you are going to keep all your tasks and associated material, you can start planning how to achieve your goal. Here are the basic steps:

1. **DOUBLE CHECK THAT YOUR OUTCOME IS CLEAR ENOUGH:** Before you go too far, make sure "what you want" is as clear as possible.
2. **LIST ALL THE TASKS FOR YOUR GOAL:** Use SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) to define tasks, which you can think of as mini-goals. If you are not sure what steps are needed, the best way is to find someone who has done what you want to do and start with their steps. If you can't find any good examples, another good question to ask yourself is "What's working and how can I do more of it?"
3. **THINK ABOUT DEPENDENCIES:** Are there some tasks that need to be done before others? Put the tasks in the order that makes the most sense.
4. **THINK ABOUT WHAT COULD GO WRONG:** Do some contingency planning. A useful technique here is the pre-mortem: "Imagine a year into the future. We implemented the plan as it now exists. The outcome was a disaster. Take 5-10 minutes to write a brief history of

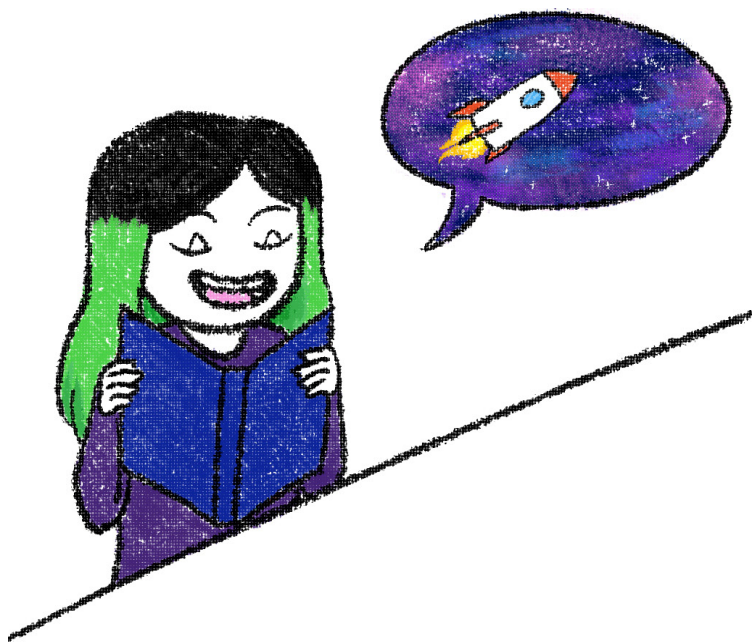
that disaster.”

5. **GO DO SOME OF THOSE TASKS:** Somewhat obvious, but this is both the hardest and most important part.
6. **CHECK IN ON YOUR PROGRESS:** After doing a few things (can be daily, but at a minimum after a week or two of activity), look back. Revisit steps 1-4 to see if any changes are needed. Was the scope clear enough? Did any new tasks come up? Did any key dates change? Once you make your updates, continue with Step 5. Repeat until you’ve achieved your goal.

The amount of detail needed for a plan depends on both your personal preferences and what you are trying to achieve. I personally go for the minimum detail needed that will allow me to make notable progress. How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. If you are moving in the right direction, getting things done, you are making progress and will eventually get there.

15TH PIECE OF ADVICE: HAVE A PLAN TO GET WHAT YOU WANT. A PLAN WILL MAKE YOU MUCH MORE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THE INEVITABLE CHANGES.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 17

Learn How to Tell a Story

“It has been said that next to hunger and thirst, our most basic human need is for storytelling.”
– Khalil Gibran

For thousands of years humans have communicated through stories. You are a storyteller whether you think of yourself that way or not. The only question is, how good a storyteller are you?

There are two main reasons to tell a story: to entertain or to influence. While having entertaining stories is important for a rich life, this section will focus on influence, as that is generally more applicable to getting what you want out of life.

STEP 1: Figure out why you are telling a story

To influence is to get someone to behave differently as a result of what you just did. Bill Jensen in his book Simplicity Survival Handbook recommends four main dimensions to consider:

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

- **KNOW:** What will they know (and more specifically, retain) after your story?
- **FEEL:** How will their feelings change?
- **DO:** What will they do as a result of hearing your story?
- **WHAT'S IN IT FOR THEM? (WIIFT):** What will they get out of your story? How you can make it worthwhile to listen?

Covering all four makes for a powerful story, but the third (Do) is by far the most important in achieving your objectives.

The process for figuring out your “why” is iterative. You won’t get the best answer the first time:

1. Write out (or think out) a short summary of why you are spending the time and effort to tell a story.
2. Edit it to make it simpler, shorter and more precise (you can use the standard “SMART” goal technique).
3. Repeat. **NOTE:** This is by far the most powerful step. The more important the story, the more times you should repeat the editing exercise.

Sales Example (this is an “easy” domain): When I finish telling my story, the client will understand our product’s capability (**KNOW**), will be excited that it will solve their problem (**FEEL**) and will sign the purchase order (**MOST IMPORTANT - DO**).

STEP 2: Gather and prioritize your core content by how well it supports your “why”

Following the sales example, here are a few pieces of content in priority order:

1. Our product will replace product X for ½ the cost (clear value, clear WIIFM, high influence ability)
2. Our product has successfully saved Y companies Z% of their costs annually (clear value, but for someone else, moderate influence ability)
3. Our product has won “best design” awards (marginal value, limited influence ability)

STEP 3: Make it relatable to your target audience

We all tend to create stories for people “like us”. Be conscious and try to avoid a personal bias (just because you like it, doesn’t mean your audience will). For each piece of content that makes the cut, determine the best “frame” for presenting the information. Who is your audience? What form do they respond to best?

Here is an example borrowed from Made to Stick, trying to convince people to donate to a charity. Which is the more powerful influencer?

- There is a 35-year-old weaver in India - a master craftsman with 20 years of experience. He earns a good living and uses his income to send his kids to school. As he ages, his eyesight begins to degenerate, and he is increasingly unable to accomplish the “up-close” work that’s the heart of weaving. He begins

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

to rely on his children to help, which means they miss days at school, and it just gets worse from there. Here's a man who is at the height of his skills, but can no longer provide for his family - and the solution is as simple as a pair of reading glasses that you could buy at a drug-store for \$5.

- There are 900,000 poor adults with declining eyesight in Mumbai, and we need your help to start solving the problem.

Most people would say the first one (it is specific, personal, emotional, and has lots of detail), and in general they would be right. However, if you were talking to finance people, or a highly analytical group, then a numbers-driven presentation might be more effective (although you would need to rewrite that bullet to focus on insights, not just the raw data).

BONUS POINT: When looking at communication styles, most people are visual (versus auditory or kinesthetic). One key reason most people respond well to the first story is that it creates an image in your head. The best stories cover all three.

The better you understand **WHO** you are trying to influence, the better job you will do. Be as specific as possible - named individuals are best (e.g. I want Jane Smith to do X.)

A good way to verify if you are communicating with your audience is to think about “what questions do I want my audience to ask?” If they start to ask them, it's a good

sign you are on the right track.

STEP 4: Create your story

There are many ways to tell a story, but you can generally use the same structure they teach in grade school:

- “THE HOOK”: What is the opening and how will it grab people’s attention enough to listen to the rest of what you have to say. If people don’t already know why they are there (ie. it’s not a charity dinner), the opening hook should make the “why you are here” clear.
- “PROOF POINTS”: Weave your content from steps 2 & 3 into the story based on a “U” shape of influence power (or “W” shape if it’s a long presentation so you don’t lose people in the middle). If you had 5 points, point 1 would be used for “the hook”. The rest would be arranged as follows: point 3, point 5 (weakest point in the middle), point 4, then save point 2 (another high powered point) for “the ask”.
- “THE ASK”: Finish with a strong recap of what you want them to do, weaving in another high-powered persuasive point. If your “hook” is by far the most powerful point, you can also recap your “hook” point as part of the ask.

STEP 5: Practice the story and then make it better

By practice, I mean “deliberate practice”. You will also get more out of practice if you can do it in front of someone who can give you honest feedback and role play. For example, if it’s a teammate and you will be presenting to your manager, ask them to try to play your manager on a bad day. If you practice in a challenging setting, the real

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

thing can often seem easy.

Good storytelling is a lifelong skill and one that you can continually get better at forever. You can do it formally or informally, with coworkers, family, or friends. In the end, it is a journey in trying to figure out what influences people and how you can use that to make a lasting contribution to your company, your community, and your life.

The most important habit to create for storytelling is observation. When you tried an influence tactic in your story, what was the reaction? Did it work? If not, why not? If it did, could you have made it stronger? Continue to ask those questions and you will continue to improve.

16TH PIECE OF ADVICE: WHEN YOU WANT SOMEONE ELSE TO DO SOMETHING, START WITH A STORY. ALL COMMUNICATION IS ULTIMATELY STORYTELLING.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE



Chapter 18

Learn How Persuasion and Influence Works

“Nothing is as important as you think it is while you are thinking about it.”
-Daniel Kahneman

When making a decision, everything revolves around your focus. As an independent-minded person, you probably believe that when deciding, you focus on the important decision points. Surprise - it's the opposite. As Robert Cialdini described in Pre-suasion, whatever has our focus (regardless of how it got it) determines what is important.

Even more so, we often make a connection subconsciously that what we focus on is causal as well (meaning that was the thing driving the decision). For example, if we're watching a conversation of a couple deciding where to go to dinner, we will assume that whoever we are looking at was more influential in the subsequent decision, regardless of what was said by whom. This is yet another example of the cognitive biases in our brain.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

That means that if you can shape what people focus on, you can shape their decisions. Like many things, this type of influence can be used for good (a coach making an athlete better) or bad (a slick car salesman trying to sell a car at an inflated price). While we should only use it for good, there are others out there who might not, so it is important to understand these forces, as they are used on you every day.

So how exactly do you influence people's decisions? In short, you use evolutionary and social cues to activate links and set an individual up for what Cialdini calls a "privileged moment", where you can make your request for action with the greatest chance of acceptance.

Let's start with the evolutionary cues.

- **PROLIFERATING OUR GENES:** We have a natural interest in anything that promotes our genetic material. It's a common theme in advertising - just check out any clothing or perfume ads. It must be relevant though. Coke once tried using that kind of advertising. As is probably no surprise, it didn't really work.
- **AVOIDING DANGER:** Self-preservation is a key instinct that drives behavior. As a simple example, scientists have found that after watching a horror movie, people are more likely to engage in group behaviors (the "herd" mentality where we want to blend in with others). On the flip side, a romantic movie will make us want to stand out more.
- **ORIENTATION RESPONSE:** Hear a loud noise from behind? Most people will automatically swivel towards it.

Something new and unexpected will take our focus whether we really want it to or not.

- **SELF-ORIENTATION:** We are very interested in ourselves (no surprise there). If we are about to speak in a group, we generally stop listening to the person speaking to prepare ourselves. Have the same birthday as someone? They instantly become more interesting and take up more of our focus.
- **EASY TO REMEMBER:** Our brains are built to remember some things more easily than others. Think of advertising jingles and rhyming words. Simpler is almost always easier and therefore more influential.
- **SOLVING MYSTERIES:** We don't like to "not know", because, back to the second point, it could be something that will cause us harm. We want to solve mysteries and we will keep our focus on them until they are solved.

There are also several social conventions that affect our influencability. Cialdini calls out 7 of them:

- **RECIPROCATION:** We will naturally try to reciprocate, even if we didn't want the gift in the first place (why do you think companies give you all those "freebies"?). Meaningful, unexpected, and customized gifts work most effectively.
- **LIKING:** The more we like someone the more we trust them and will do what they suggest. Counterintuitively, to build trust in yourself, show how much you are interested in them. As an old sales adage says, people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

- **SOCIAL PROOF:** We assume “the crowd” knows what it is doing. Label something as the “most popular dish” at a restaurant and more people will start ordering it (in a sense, a self-fulfilling prophecy).
- **AUTHORITY:** We are a society that links expertise and trustworthiness. Think of doctors and police officers as prime examples.
- **SCARCITY:** We want what we can’t have. Think of the late-night commercials with offers “only good for the next 30 minutes”. They work.
- **CONSISTENCY:** We naturally try to be self-consistent. If I said yes to you before, there is a higher chance I will say yes again later. This is why salespeople will try to get you to agree to a small thing first. Similarly, at doctors’ offices, if people write down their own appointments (as opposed to getting a pre-filled card), they will be more likely to attend, since they themselves took the first action.
- **UNITY:** Extending the “self-orientation” noted above, anything that is “like us” has more influence. That can be kinship, a hometown, a region or even people just acting together such as in a dance, march, or song (why do you think armies march in formation?)

There are also a whole set of cultural metaphors than can direct people one way or another. As one example, if there is a crime wave in a city, the preferred response of many people will depend on the metaphor used. Is crime a “wild animal” (likely answer = lock it up) or a “virus” (likely answer = clean up the environment).

Similarly, scientists took a group of Asian girls taking a math test and divided them into two groups. The ones they reminded that they were Asian (who are culturally “better” at math) by writing ethnicity on the test did better than the ones reminded that they were girls (who are culturally “not as good” at math) by writing their gender. Remember, your focus defines what is important, not the other way around.

There is also a whole field of “micro-persuasion” which are small environmental factors that can influence behavior. Holding a warm cup of coffee makes you more agreeable. Sitting on a hard chair makes you a tougher negotiator. Visit a furniture website with a cloud background and you will tend to look for comfortable chairs, change the background to pennies and you will tend to look for the “best value”.

There is one last thing to be aware of, as it is so prevalent in our society - the so-called “chute” questions. These are questions that direct you to a specific answer based on how they are addressed. “Do you consider yourself an adventurous person?” Most people will say yes as they think of moments where they were adventurous. “Do you consider yourself a cautious person?” Those same people may say yes to that as well, as they think of times where they were cautious. Selling exotic travel? Ask the first question. Selling home safety systems? Ask the second. When approached, you should listen carefully to the first question asked as that may give you a clue as to what the other person wants from you.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

While none of these individual items can force you into a decision, if engineered correctly, they can layer on top of each other to nudge you in a specific direction. And if enough engineering is there, it can nudge forcefully.

This can be useful in getting yourself to do something, getting others to do something, or being aware of how others are getting you to do something. The basic formula is simple:

1. Activate as many links as possible.
2. Make a request for action or change. The stronger the commitment, the better.
3. Reinforce behavior for lasting change.

You can make stronger commitments by using “When-Then” statements (I find this very helpful for getting myself to do something). “When I wake up in the morning, then I will go running for 30 minutes” is much more effective than “I will run more”. You can also reinforce the behavior by having reminders of the commitment prominently displayed.

I find persuasion to be a fascinating topic. Here are some interesting anecdotes I’ve come across:

“YOU WILL PROBABLY REFUSE, BUT...”: A study got more people to donate (40% vs 25%) if they prefaced the ask with that statement. The underlying idea is that people don’t like to have their choices restricted, so will act in the opposite way to show they can.

GIVE THEM A HEADSTART: People were more likely to complete a free car wash with 3 of 10 stamps (2 “bonus”) than 1 of 8. Similarly, charities don’t announce a full campaign until it’s 50% full (to send the message that many people support it already).

IDENTITY BEATS ALL: When trying to persuade someone, Scott Adams argues that identity beats analogy, analogy beats reason, reason beats definition, and definition beats nothing. He uses the example of a Steve Jobs story in which he convinced John Sculley to leave Pepsi and work for Apple. Jobs allegedly asked Sculley, “Do you want to sell sugared water for the rest of your life? Or do you want to come with me and change the world?” In other words, what is your identity?

FOCUS IS CAUSAL: In police interrogations, as the camera is usually pointed at the suspect, which can imply guilt. The camera should be on the side, facing both (although that is apparently not standard practice). Advice from Cialdini is if you ever find yourself in such a situation then say: “I’d like to fully cooperate, but I read a book that urged me to consider extended police questioning unsafe, even for innocent individuals”.

VULNERABILITY DRIVES TRUST: Refer to weakness early, then finish with strength comes across as more honest. “I am not experienced, but I am a very fast learner”. Historically, Elizabeth I used this approach when she said, “I may have the frail body of a woman, but I have the heart of a king”.

THIS CURIOUS ADVENTURE

“LET ME IN LINE, BECAUSE....”: The idea that people will automatically assume that the “because” phrase has legitimate meaning, even if it doesn’t. So “can you let me in line because I need to make a copy” will work a good bit of the time even though it shouldn’t (if you’re in line, don’t you need to make a copy too?).

Look around at your daily life, particularly with advertisements. How many of these persuasion techniques can you find? Once you start to look for them, you will see more and more. Particularly in today’s world of social media, advertising, and connectivity, most of the content you will see is carefully crafted to influence you, which is why becoming proficient in this area will pay significant dividends.

17TH PIECE OF ADVICE: LEARN ALL YOU CAN ABOUT PERSUASION AND INFLUENCE TO MAKE YOUR STORYTELLING MORE EFFECTIVE AND TO BE AWARE OF WHEN YOUR REALITY IS BEING SHAPED BY OTHERS.

Summary

When you put it all together, my best guess can be summed up in 17 pieces of advice:

1. Accept the idea that reality is not an independent and objective concept. Expect everyone's sense of reality is uniquely their own.
2. Learn to think in probabilities, not absolutes, building a set of mental models to help you do so. Reality is complex and unpredictable, and this way you will be much less surprised at any particular outcome.
3. Unlike reality, think of humans as often predictable in ways that you can learn.
4. Understand how humans can be predictably wrong in many situations (including you). Make a practice of looking for new scenarios where that is the case.
5. Craft your internal dialog purposely and with care. Your mind is the most important tool you have, and you are shaping it every second of every day.
6. Eat well, move well, and sleep well. Your body is the only place you have to live, so treat it accordingly.
7. Design your daily environment to help you, not hinder you.
8. Understand how money works. It can't buy a success-

ful life, but it can certainly help.

9. Be as specific as possible when defining what you want. Set goal posts for what you want to make sure you are covering all the key areas.
10. Know how much you want something (and that you can change how much with just your mind). Your actions are the true indication of how much you want something.
11. If there is a decision to be made, make it actively. No decision is still a decision.
12. Get better at learning. It's a skill just like any other.
13. Actively create your habits to support what you want.
14. Purposefully manage your time. The rest of the world will inevitably try to take you off task. Resist it.
15. Have a plan to get what you want. Having it will make you much more prepared to deal with the inevitable changes.
16. When you want someone else to do something, start with a story. All communication is ultimately storytelling.
17. Learn all you can about persuasion and influence to make your storytelling more effective and to be aware of when your reality is being shaped by others.

Final Thoughts

Wherever this curious adventure takes you, I hope that you find success. If any of the thoughts or tools in this book help you on your way, even better. I've put all of this material on a web-site at www.thiscuriousadventure.com, with links to additional resources if you'd like to explore these concepts further.

If you'd like to share any part of your story with me, I'd love to hear it. You can send me a note at drew@thiscuriousadventure.com.

Happy adventuring!

