

Take 5

A five minute read that could change the way you do business

Excite Me

The opposite of happy is not sad, it's boredom

I'm reading a book by a guy called Timothy Ferriss at the moment and he reckons we should be able to achieve what we need to at work in four hours per week. That's an idea that's got my attention. One of his assertions is that we should go beyond goal setting and figure out what gets us excited. The specific questions you could ask in order to understand this are 'what could I get excited about having?' 'What could I get excited about doing?' 'What could I get excited about being?' He goes on to say that if we are excited and enthusiastic about what we are doing then we will do only what is necessary and we will do it effectively.

This suggested thinking framework has got me thinking. Regular readers will recall a few months ago my musings over the difficulties of long term planning; that is, that shorter, (say, one year) time frames were more achievable for me. Maybe for some of us we can better define our mission (in the sense of our long term purpose or ambition) by focusing first on what excites and motivates us and then deriving some near term actions to achieve the end state.

From time to time in our everyday life we find excitement through stress. Let's understand that there are two types of stress, good stress and bad stress. Good stress, or eustress, is experienced when we are out of our comfort zone. This might be in a physical sense, learning a new skill or exercising to improve fitness. It could also be in an emotional situation, such as socializing with a group of strangers or working through a job interview. This positive stress can help us to grow. As we acquire the skill, we become more emotionally secure and we are able to convert apprehension into excitement. We need positive stress to stimulate growth

Do you have positive, memorable moments that are etched in your mind because of the stress that you experienced? It could be the bungee jump or abseiling experience, asking someone out on a date or making a cold sales call and succeeding? When we push through stress and extend ourselves we grow.



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Just as love and hate are not opposite emotions but rather extreme ends of the relationship spectrum, happy and sad are different places on the same emotional wave. For me, the opposite of happy is bored. The opposite end of this enthusiasm scale is excitement.

What gets you excited in your life? I really hope for the sake of your sanity there's something that gets you going. If we can work through a process and identify what bores us and what excites us, maybe then we can start to shape a fulfilling life. But (and there always seems to be a 'but') we can work out what it is that we get excited about but then we think about all the 'reasons' that we can't. I'd love to live on a yacht and spend time sailing amongst the tropical islands, but...and you can insert as many excuses as you like here to justify the fear of letting go and doing something different.

You might find it an interesting exercise to write down something you would love to have or do or be and then write down all the 'reasons' why you can't. Then confront this list of 'why nots' and chances are you will discover that they are nothing more than self imposed limitations used as a protection from stress. You remember stress – its that thing you sometimes need to experience growth.



If you want to really move from boredom to excitement you could try a little ute rafting!

If your life is one long succession of happy and fulfilling times then I wish you well and congratulate you on a life well lived. If, like most of us, you have those times when life lacks that spark, then you might like to think a little more about what might get you excited and set you free from the boredom monster. When you find something that does inspire enthusiasm or even excitement then make sure you also confront all those 'reasons' that might stand in the way. Dream, think, take action, be challenged, grow, it's all do-able.

A last thought- I am discovering that being and doing are far more fulfilling than having.

Enjoy the ride.

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