

MOTIVATION TODAY

John Watson

It's better to attempt great things and fall short than it is to conquer something you know that you can already beat.

Joey Gilbert and Jesse Brinkley

Motivation Today

Introduction

This book examines eight different and four similar ways of motivating yourself to achieve your dreams. You may have come across some of them before but like all good things they are well worth revisiting.

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Chapter One Motivation By A Challenge

Many people are motivated by the thought of doing something they or others think they cannot do. They don't want to do what they already know they can do.

When I studied Taekwondo, most of the best students were slim, flexible and young. I was thickset and definitely not flexible! I was also over forty!

The instructor asked me with some curiosity why I had decided to do something which did not really suit my physical makeup.

I replied that there was no point in doing something I was already good at or likely to be good at. I wanted a challenge. This answer made sense to him.

People climb mountains because they are big challenges and when they reach the top they will feel they, too, have grown in stature.

Jim Rohn, the great American self-help guru, tells us to make a million pounds not so much for the money but for what making a million will make of us.

In the Contender reality show where sixteen middleweight boxers are pitted against each other, the prize is a final fight at Caesar's Palace in Nevada. The winner will be given a million dollars and the glory of beating their competitors.



Some of the boxers use strategy to try to win the prize. They want to face the weaker boxers so that they will stay in the competition and will suffer fewer injuries.

They are regarded as cowards by some of the others who proudly or recklessly choose to face the toughest boxers on their route to the top.

In the week when only 8 boxers were left, Joey Gilbert was thinking about fighting Anthony Bonsante who had an injured hamstring and was therefore vulnerable.

Jesse Brinkley was disgusted with his attitude:

"Do you want everything given to you?"

Jesse even went so far as to accuse Joey of cowardice. But then he had managed to accuse nearly everybody except himself of cowardice! Was this his strategy?

In fact, Jesse had been planning on fighting Bonsante himself. He decided to win the weekly challenge so that he could decide who would be in the next fight.

Jesse won the challenge and decided to make Joey earn his way by fighting Peter Manfredo Junior - one of the best fighters. This would leave the way open for Jesse to fight his preferred opponent - the injured Bonsante!

Jesse had earlier accused Bonsante of being a coward as well!

His corner man told Joey:

"Everything you need to win is inside you. You are a winner. Don't get into 'He can do this or I can do that.' When all the chips are against you, that's when you fight the best."

Peter Manfredo's dad showed up to be in his corner. Peter commented: "He'll inspire me."

A repentant Joey accepted his lot and changed his attitude:

"I came here for a challenge and I got it. Jesse's right. *It's better to attempt great things and fall short than it is to conquer something you know that you can already beat* and this is one of those times. I know I have a hill to climb. I'm the underdog but I know I can pull it out with my heart if I dig deep."

Peter gave his thoughts before the fight:

"I'm anxious to get in there especially with my father being here. I've never lost in front of him yet and I don't want to start now. I know I'm one of the best fighters here and I guess I'm just going to go for it."

Peter won the first round with some heavy punches. Joey told his corner: "My rib is broken". Peter won the second round. Joey again commented: "My rib is gone."

In round three, Joey forgot about his rib and put up a real fight. Before the fourth round, his corner man urged him on:

"Let's go baby! Let's go baby!"

Joey won round four and his corner man continued to motivate:

"This is the last round for the rest of your life, son!"

His words were prophetic as Joey was accidentally head butted by Peter in round five. His head would probably need about forty stitches and the fight was stopped so that Joey could go off for treatment. Peter won by split decision. He was quietly elated:

"Tonight was a great night. My heart goes out to Joey and his family. Joey is an awesome kid. He has a heart of gold. He kept coming. He wanted to win. I give him all the credit in the world. I've won two fights - I've got one more to go. I won't celebrate till I go to Caesar's.

Joey was upset but not too despondent:

"I fought for five rounds with one of the best in the world, Peter Manfredo Junior. I might even have been able to beat him had I finished that fifth round.

"Part of me always knew that I was capable of competing at this level but part of me doubted it because I had always been told that I was a college boxer and couldn't compete with pro boxers. ***But I learned that I can do it.***"

Joey continued his extensive reflections on the fight:

"A champion's heart is made of gold and it means you don't quit and it means that you fight on and I tried to show the heart of a champion and I never quit and I never gave up because I could look right and see my family and see my father."

Joey still had more to say:

"I didn't want to let them down. My grand father used to say that your family is the most important thing you have in your life and I can definitely say that's true for me.

"The tournament, the Contender, for me was one of the toughest challenges I've ever put myself through. It's done and it's one of the best times in my life. It's something I'll never forget as long as I live."

Sugar Ray Leonard was impressed by Joey's performance: "If you look up the word 'heart' in the dictionary you'll probably see Joey Gilbert's photo!"

Boxing is all about motivation and the readiness to face challenges. It is about having the heart to persist in the face of mind numbing pain. It is about facing fearsome opponents and digging deep to make your family proud.

It's about believing in yourself even when others doubt your ability and call you the underdog. Boxers have much to teach the rest of us.



Chapter Two Motivation By Kicking Butt

Some people respond to being yelled at and even sworn at. This brings out that extra bit of effort and they become highly motivated. Others are just angered by the apparent lack of respect shown them and will walk out of whatever training program they are in.



However, if you can accept a kick up the butt in the spirit in which it was intended it can provide useful motivation. When I trained in Shotokan Karate many years ago, the instructor, Graham, believed in kick butt or kick stomach motivation.

He would have us running over each other's stomachs in the warm up and in one lesson commanded us to kick each other in the stomach as hard as we could. He warned my partner that he must kick me harder or he would kick him. My partner took the hint and I could feel the vomit rising up into my throat. The threat of being kicked hard by the instructor had definitely increased his motivation!

This kind of kick butt motivation does work so long as the students do not leave the class but it is not too healthy. However, to be fair, Graham, who worked in a hospital, once skillfully restored my finger which had been dislocated by a kick from that same partner, Dave.

Balance was restored a little when Dave threw a kick at my ribs in a free sparring session and his instep connected with the point of my elbow. He collapsed in agony on the floor. I felt no guilt or pity; just quiet satisfaction!

Gordon Ramsay is a three star Michelin chef who yells and swears at the people he is training. Some people hate this approach; others admire it.

What motivates Gordon is a quest for perfection. His father prompted him to be the best at what he did and Gordon used his own steely resolve to reach high standards at whatever he was interested in.

He became a soccer player for the top Scottish club, Rangers. The great Rangers manager, Jock Wallace believed in a tough approach and this probably influenced Gordon Ramsay.

Jock Wallace was a fitness fanatic. He made his players run up and down the sand dunes until they dropped. He would punch his players in the stomach as they were walking down the corridor. If they collapsed in pain, he would make them go to the gym and do 200 sit ups to toughen up their stomach muscles. He reminds me of my karate instructor!

Jock became one of the greatest managers that Scotland has ever known. His methods obviously worked. Probably his players shared his ambition for success and were ready to put up with some harsh treatment to reach it.

Often the tough men have a real liking for their protégés but do not want to show their softer side. The players sense their affection and grow to respect and like their managers in return. They also find that the harsh treatment raises their standards to a point where they can see the benefits of hard work for themselves and no longer need to be kicked into working hard.

Gordon eventually had a knee injury and became a chef instead of a footballer. He still gave 100% effort to achieve his goals even though his former friends felt he was taking up a woman's trade.

He was not prepared to settle for anything except 3 Michelin stars. He would swear and bully his trainee chefs to gain perfection. When criticized for bullying them he would reply: "We're on a mission and that mission is perfection." Eventually he got his 3 Michelin stars and has become a household name in the UK.

I don't like his swearing and bullying but can't help liking his dynamic energy and zeal for perfection. Some one commented that he was like a man with a firework up his backside. He can't stand still. His swearing is not necessary in my opinion but it does express energy and force and generates a swift response.

He can also give people confidence and he really cares that things should be done properly. Sometimes we all need a kick up the butt to motivate us and need kindly Beelzebubs like Jock Wallace and Gordon Ramsay to provide the kicks.

If they are not around, we may need to give ourselves a good kicking. Kick butt motivation definitely does have its place but needs to be used sparingly and in a way which does not cause permanent physical or psychological damage.

If you would like a great kick butt book to help you give yourself a good kicking, try this one by Larry Winget:

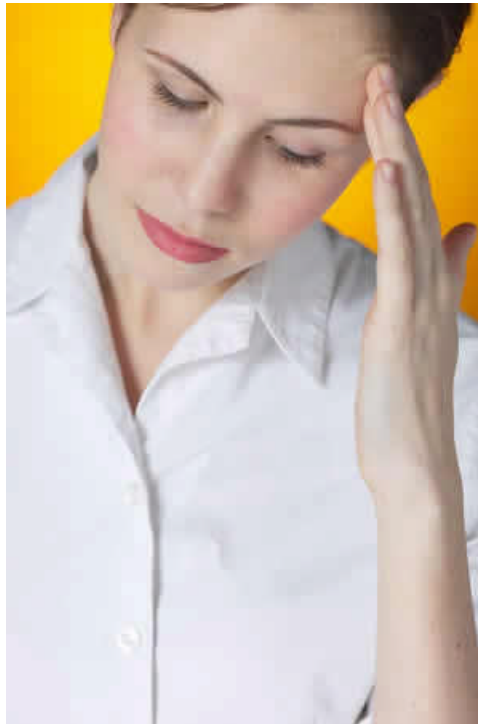
"SHUT UP, STOP WHINING AND GET A LIFE!"

He gives three reasons why you and I are not successful:

1. You are stupid
2. You are lazy
3. You do not give a damn.

He comments: "The common word in each of these reasons is *you*. *You* are the reason your life sucks. In other words, if your life sucks it is because *you* suck. It is not because conditions suck. It is *you*."

Great stuff!



Chapter Three Motivation By Comparison

Motivation by comparison is a dynamic form of motivation which can totally transform our attitude of mind. It is used much too rarely. It is so powerful it could and perhaps should be used every day as a part of a morning ritual of preparation for the day ahead.

Every day we should thank God or the Universe that we are not blind or disabled in some other way (unless of course we are blind). We should be motivated by comparing our lot with that of the blind, sick and disabled.

Most of us think about this occasionally. I am suggesting in this chapter that we should systematically think about this every single day of our lives especially early in the morning.

When we feel sorry for ourselves because we are faced with some problem or other, let's just think for a few moments about how we would deal with the problem if we were blind.

I have some official and confusing documents to sort out tomorrow. I am not looking forward to this but if I were blind, it would take me twice as long to get up for a start. I would also have the thought of another day without sight weighing me down and making me feel tired before the day gets going.

I would then (unless I had special technology) have to ask someone to read the documents over to me and would then have to ask someone to write the reply for me when I had thought over the problems.

This might involve paying someone to do this or waiting for a friend or relative to have the time to help me. It might take several hours if not days to sort out the problem. Without having to do all this, the problem could be sorted out within an hour or two at the most.

If I were paralyzed, I would need to rely on help and would also have to fight all the problems of poor health that immobility encourages.

I ought to be motivated by the comparisons above. Life is so much easier for me that I should be thoroughly ashamed of any self pity or lack of motivation.

I watched a tribute on the BBC1 Program 'Breakfast with Frost' to Christopher Reeve who died recently.

Sir David Frost started by saying that Christopher Reeve had been a guest on his show several times. He had always been inspirational.

David Frost continued: "The Superman in film became a real life superman when he refused to let his paralysis deter him in his fight to promote stem cell research."

In fact, Christopher Reeve, since his fall from his horse in 1995, had promoted the cause of spinal cord injury research with energy and determination. He had brought hope to many spinal injury victims including himself.

Frost decided to end the program with a tribute to Christopher Reeve by showing Christopher's answer to a key question.

David Frost asked him how he faced up to hopelessness and bleakness. Christopher's reply has many great lessons to teach us:

"The way out is to pick something very proactive, very constructive. Think of something that needs doing - some cause - something that will take you forward if you think about it.

So I just get busy with that and I am back in shape. It takes will power but fortunately I was an actor for 28 years and as an actor you get very used to rejection.

You might get one part out of twenty auditions and so I think the discipline of being an actor for all those years has really helped me because you still have to believe in yourself. And I believe in what is happening in the research.

With sheer will power you can keep your body in shape.

This is a big test, a big, big test but fortunately I have tremendous help from my family and friends and staff and we'll go forward and get out of this."

I am not sure if the last few words were actually what he said as they were a little indistinct but his attitude was mainly one of hope for the future.

Christopher used his work to lift any depression he might be feeling. He saw the promotion of medical research as a worthwhile cause. Just getting down to work promoting it put him back on track.

He also acknowledged the help of friends, family and staff in keeping him going. Gratitude is a great motivator and it opens the mind to expect and receive help from the universe

I was surprised that he linked discipline with being an actor but when you think about it discipline is all about keeping going and doing whatever needs doing even when you feel disappointed and as if you are getting nowhere.

Actors must feel depressed and think about giving up every time they are rejected at an audition. If they keep attending auditions they have discipline. Christopher kept going after his accident by calling on his history of self-discipline and will power. This kept him doing whatever exercise he thought might help.

The other thing that keeps an actor going is belief in himself or something else. After his fall from his horse, Christopher's belief in medical research kept him promoting the research to the general public.

If he could show this kind of discipline, will power and belief in the face of the big, big tests he faced, surely we can show the same qualities in the face of the much smaller tests that we face. If he had lived in the UK, he would probably have been knighted both for his films and his work to relieve suffering. Americans have honoured and will honour him in their own way.

A little time spent comparing ourselves with Christopher Reeve should provide us with an endless source of motivation in the future. Motivation by comparison works.

Sadly, Christopher Reeve passed on not that long after his interview with David Frost. He died as a real life superman and his example lives on. We could all aim to be supermen or superwomen at whatever we do. The woman below may not be a superwoman but she looks like she keeps herself healthy and in shape and this is a start.



Chapter Four Motivation By Consequences

In 2004 seven badly behaved teenagers were sent to a brat camp in the USA by desperate parents whose lives had been made hell by their own offspring. All seven were from the UK.

At Turnabout, the Brat Camp in Utah, the brats started the rehabilitation process by sitting in a stone circle for three days on their own to reflect on their lives and why they had been sent to the camp by their long suffering parents.

They needed to understand that their poor behavior had already had consequences. Why else would they be stuck in a desert in Utah? *Because consequences do not always arrive quickly* both adults and youngsters often fail to be aware of them and need time to become aware.

Sitting in the stone circle was a rite of passage for Indian Braves. One of the girls argued that she was not a Red Indian and was not a man. She had missed the whole point of the exercise.



Four girls from the UK group were given an extra day in the stone circle for smoking at night and then for refusing to tell on whoever brought the cigarettes in. Grassing was regarded by the camp leaders as simply being honest.

The boys got a decent meal and a day off the stone circle. They were learning that good behaviour usually produces rewards while poor behaviour usually results in some kind of uncomfortable, boring and even painful experience.

For the first time, the kids felt the need to behave themselves. Some started to think: "We are going to stay in line and get some good food."

They also began to realize that not every one in the world would treat them as indulgently as their parents. Alex was told her hair would have to be dyed its natural color. She said: "It won't happen."

Four hours later it did happen. There was no getting round the staff. She learned that some people could not be manipulated to indulge her whims.

Eventually the brats moved on to level two of their training but there were still rules to be obeyed. On level two youngsters had to be neat and tidy and ask permission for everything.

Jenny struggled with tidiness. Wayne, the camp leader, taught her to put things away: "I'm not your ma. I may be as pretty as your mum but I will not put things away for you."

He told Jenny to walk around the cabin shouting "I will put my gloves away."

At Turnabout they never ignore a problem. They face up to everything fair and square. Jenny ended up back in the stone circle.

Jenny then pretended that her wrist had been badly sprained but this did not wash with Wayne. *There was no escape from the consequences.*

Idle chatter was off the menu. Complaining about the food was also against the rules. *The brats had to learn that negative talk has bad consequences.*

More were beginning to get the message. Jemma commented:

"You've got to be good all the time."

One of the boys had also got the message: "Every rule here, no matter how small, you get consequenced for."

Many adults never get this message. We keep doing silly things and are still surprised by the bad consequences. We all need to learn that the Universe is not an indulgent parent who will let us do whatever we feel like doing and then will protect us from the harmful results.

We need to learn that *every action we take, no matter how small, has good or bad consequences.*

We are even surprised when good things happen when we follow the rules of the universe. Fortunately the universe is impartial. If we start eating right we will be amazed at how much better we feel.

Eventually we will realize that the remorseless law of consequences is something we should be grateful for. It can work for us or it can work against us.

Maybe we should all sit in a stone circle every day and reflect on the power of consequences. A few weeks in Utah, Stonehenge or our own stone circle would do us all some good.



Chapter Five Motivation By Daily Applause

One of our most powerful psychological needs is the craving to be appreciated by our fellow humans. Often the quickest way to receive the applause we desire is *to keep working hard without it.*

Those who work hard on their own in private usually end up receiving applause in public. Just the thought of this future applause can provide powerful motivation.

In the film "Topsy Turvy", about the relationship and work of the comic opera geniuses Gilbert and Sullivan, Gilbert's wife tells him how she would have loved to be an actress. She had noticed how an actress often receives rapturous applause from an audience after each performance. She exclaims to Gilbert:

"Wouldn't it be wonderful if ordinary people gave themselves a round of applause at the end of the day."



Probably, this is why many of us dream of being a great speaker or actor on stage receiving a standing ovation. Applause is a powerful motivator. A young lad who is currently acting Billy Elliott in the musical of that name described how there was no applause at his rehearsals and then suddenly at his first performance the applause hit him like a wave - wow! He felt the 'buzz' instantly.

We all work hard when other people are watching. The runner speeds up as he or she approaches the crowds near the end of the race. Even if he or she is amongst the tailenders a sudden burst of energy will manifest itself. The footballer plays out of his skin in front of a big crowd.

However, anyone who can work hard without an audience will usually end up receiving applause from an audience. *Whatever you do in secret whether good or bad frequently becomes public.*

The man who does daily sit ups in private looks good in public. The man who does not do regular sit ups may look obese in public. The woman who takes care of her money in private can drive an expensive car in public. The woman who wastes her money in private may end up cadging lifts from her friends.

The writer who can write for a year or so on her own without encouragement produces a blockbuster like "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" and then is surrounded by admiring audiences wherever she goes.

In the meantime, let us praise ourselves and those around us who live a great day and then receive no applause.



Chapter Six Motivation By Desire

Many of us have lost sight of what we really desire in life. We probably need to remind ourselves of the importance of rediscovering our desires and regaining the spark which makes life worthwhile.

If we fail to do this we will just settle for mediocrity and never make the most of our potential. Of course, illness or death can spoil our dreams but if we have tried our heart out up till then we will have nothing to regret.

Steve Prefontaine, the great American 5000 metre runner, is one person who did not settle for less than his best although sadly he died before he could achieve all his dreams.

I recently watched the film of his life and found it moving to say the least. Above all, the film showed what focused desire can achieve even when it is interrupted by death.

At sixteen, Steve Prefontaine was clear about his dream. He wanted to run and win gold at the Munich Olympics. **"No one is going to stop me."** Running became his life.

Bill Bowerman, head coach at the University of Oregon, wrote him a letter on the front page of a newspaper: "Dear Pre, If you want to come to the University of Oregon there is no doubt in my mind you will be the greatest distance runner in the world."

He understood what would appeal to the mind of a winner.

Steve went to Oregon at the time of the protests against the war in Vietnam. *He appreciated his good fortune:* "Man, if it wasn't for running I'd be dodging bullets in 'Nam instead of training for Munich."

He *visualized his success* frequently both on his own and in the company of his girlfriend: "You really know how to sweet talk a girl." Mac Wilkins, the great discus thrower, thought he was a "cocky little mother."

But the head coach knew his cocky attitude was worth its weight in gold: "I'd like to bottle it and force feed it to the rest of you guys."

The coach knew Steve had the heart of a winner and was motivated by the desire to win.

His room mate commented: "Back then everyone had either dope or beer. *Pre's drug was winning at everything.*" Steve's words to the press were sometimes arrogant. The assistant coach told him that, as a result of his words, every athlete in the country would be gunning for him. "Bring them on." Steve replied.

He always made time for kids "He saw himself in their little faces." But he wouldn't let a nine year old beat him in a race. "You can't let a losing mentality creep in here (pointing to his brain). All my life people have said to me: 'You're too small, Pre; you're not fast enough, Pre; give up your foolish dream, Steve.' *They forgot something: I have to win.*"

His girlfriend commented about him: "He always had a great need; just an endless need; it came from somewhere." Steve had a huge desire or need to win and to be the best. He is the only man to have held every American record between 2000 and 10000 metres. This has never been equaled.

At the Munich Olympics in 1972, Israeli athletes were taken hostage and then murdered. The Games continued nevertheless and Steve Prefontaine was given a chance to win gold in the 5000 metres.

Things didn't go to plan, however, and he came in fourth. Viren of Finland who won the race was 23. Steve was 21. Steve was distraught. He just banged his head against the wall. "It's my fault. I messed up." The assistant coach said "You ran your heart out. You've got to let it go, Pre."

Back home his girlfriend told him that she and the whole town were very proud of him. Steve was not convinced: "Yeah, sure; they'll probably name a street after me. They'll call it 'Fourth Street'."

He told his coach, Bill, not to retire but Bill had had enough: "He who runs against time has an adversary not subject to casualties. I'm 62. I'm getting too old for all this. I presided over the worst performance of the US team in Olympic History."

Steve replied: "That wasn't your fault. You couldn't run those races for us. We were the ones that blew it. I blew it." Bill did not agree:

"You could have run for the bronze or the silver. You ran to win. I couldn't ask more than that from an athlete."

Steve confided his feelings: "Its funny; these days I don't know whether I want to train like hell and kick Viren's ass or stay in bed."

Bill Bowerman told him that he was a grown up now. No one would wipe his bottom for him: "If you want to run, you run. If you don't, you walk away from it. *No one can coach desire, Pre.*" We all have to discover our own desire and, as adults, are the only ones who can follow up on our dreams.

It took a while but Steve bounced back and found his desire again. But he knew now that he needed to compete with the best to beat them. He fought for better support for American athletes after their college days were over. Eventually, this victory was won.

In the mean time he managed to organize a visit to Oregon by a Finnish team. Mac Wilkins was able to beat the world record holder at this meet.

At the after meet party, Mac Wilkins expressed his new found respect for Steve: "You know something. All those years to me you were a talented little jerk. I never understood you, but I now I do. I live and breathe the discus, Pre. I hate Christmas and Thanksgiving and Easter and anything that disrupts my routine."

Mac had the same burning desire to be the best as Steve. In 1976 he broke the world discus record and also won gold at Montreal. Desire for gold makes athletes hate anything that interrupts their plans to win. It makes them get up early in the morning to train.



Steve's desire had returned but sadly he was killed in a car accident the evening after the farewell party for the Finns. He never had his second chance to win gold.

Bowerman commented on his life: "He was a rare runner - the kind a coach sees only once in a life time."

His first love said sadly: "I realized that I had kind of settled for things when we broke up and he never did that."

The assistant coach commented: "Let's be honest. The only reason we're sitting talking about Pre right now is that Pre was a winner. People need winners. Pre went to Munich to win and Montreal, by God, he would have."

The funeral hearse went round the track at Hayward Field, Oregon. Bill Bowerman gave a funeral speech: "Pre ran every race as though it was his last. This is his last. This is the bell lap for Steve Prefontaine."

The attenders at the funeral called out: "Go Pre! Go Pre!" as his hearse came past just as they had done in his running days. He never won gold at the Olympics but he left a golden example behind him. He showed us the mind of a winner whose desire or need to be the best was huge. We can all learn from this.



Chapter Seven Motivation By Facing Facts

"Things is either done, or they ain't done." Marlon Sanders

Some of the greatest truths are the most obvious. But they are also the most overlooked. Many of us need to take a look at the importance of facing the facts and accepting that more usually needs to be done to complete whatever we are doing.

It is very easy to kid ourselves that we have done something or finished something when we haven't. We need to be motivated by taking a thorough look at whatever we are doing to check that it really is finished and finished well. If you are tired and think you have already done a good job it is tempting to stop work before the job is properly completed.

Whenever I mowed the lawn and considered it mown, I could guarantee that my mother would be able to point out long grass at the edges of the lawn that had not been properly mown.

She was right; the lawn had not been properly cut at the edges. The job was not done. No job can ever be completed perfectly but it should be completed well enough to pass some scrutiny.

Recently, a parcel sent to me at No 19 arrived at No 9. The postman had not bothered to read the number properly. The people at No 9 had to finish his job for him. He had not delivered the mail.

A few months ago, I came across a great account by Martin Avis of a talk given by Marlon Sanders, the great internet guru, in Birmingham, UK in January 2005. My thanks to Martin for giving me permission to copy his account of this talk.

I heard Marlon myself some years ago in London and he knows how to hold an audience. Before he even started his talk, he arranged to have the whole audience blowing bubbles. By the time he started speaking everyone was relaxed and ready to listen.



In Birmingham, Marlon told his listeners to remember:
"There's only two things that matter:

'Things is either done, or they ain't done.'

As Marlon spoke his voice became louder and louder:

"When sumthin's done you gotta product, you gotta promotion, you got sumthin' that's gonna make you money.

"When it ain't done, it don't matter if its half done or nearly done or gonna get done someday - IT AIN'T DONE."

The volume reached the point where people in the hotel next door started paying attention.

"And if it AIN'T DONE, it's jack."

"DONE equals making money, sitting on the beach, taking long vacations and havin' fun. DONE equals a smiley face.

"AIN'T DONE equals nothin'. No product, no vacation, no beach, no money and no fun. AIN'T DONE equals a sad face."

Marlon smiled and knew his point was made.

He said a whole lot more in four hours of sessions over that weekend, but from that day forward the 35 people there will always think in terms of DONE or AIN'T DONE. (Martin's account ends here.)

Simple but powerful stuff. As usual Marlon goes right to the heart of success.

Success has been described as both doing what you plan to do and also not doing what you plan not to do. It could also be described as *"getting it done and not half done."*

Success and failure could be summed up in the immortal words:

"DONE or AIN'T DONE."

Motivate yourself by facing the fact that you have not finished. And then when you have finished you will be motivated to move on to the next challenge.

Chapter Eight Motivation By Gratitude

Whenever you feel lethargic and depressed by your situation in life reflect on how much worse things could be. This solution to depression sounds obvious and simplistic but it works.

Gratitude for what we have in life lifts the spirit especially when we realize how much more we have to be grateful for than many others.

In the Western, "High Plains Drifter", Clint Eastwood, the hero, corners the men who had bullwhipped him years before when he was a young marshal trying to do his duty. He shoots one of them in the right ear.

The man cries out in plaintiff and astonished agony: "He shot my ear off! He shot my ear off!"

His partner has little sympathy.

"Well he could of shot your whole damn head off!"

Whatever situation we are in, there is always a worse situation possible.

If you are being attacked by a rottweiler, you could have been facing a bear instead!



If you are being mugged by two men, it could have been three!
If you lost ten thousand pounds, it could have been thirty thousand etc.

I once lost about \$48,000 when I invested with an investment group which turned out to be the front for a group of ruthless con artists. I thought that was a big loss until I heard about a man who had lost \$48,000,000.

Some of the above are fanciful examples but you get the picture.

It is always worth being grateful that things are not worse.

If you are overweight, at least you can remedy this condition.

If you have a terminal disease, you cannot.

If there are books you have not read, at least you can still read.

A few daily moments of meditation on these lines can motivate us to be grateful for what we have and inspire us to get on with making the best possible use of all the advantages we still have.



Chapter Nine Motivation By An Audience

The main idea in this chapter is almost identical to the idea in Chapter Five but it is worth taking a second look at.

Sooner or later, if you keep working hard in a focused way on a skill or project, you will have an audience even if it is an audience of one.

People are naturally attracted to the hardworking, skilled person and will want to watch or learn.

Having an audience motivates most people and the larger the better. Even an internet audience that you cannot see in the flesh can motivate you. Jack Humphreys writes:

"From providing a killer product or service, to top-notch customer service, webmasters get way more professional when a lot of people are looking and buying. After all, it is embarrassing to get all that traffic and have people landing on a dud page with crud products and ugly, broken links."

A big audience is a great motivator. Some sportsmen and women only perform at their best when they have a huge audience. Wayne Rooney, the latest soccer sensation in the UK, tends to score goals when he has a big audience as in the recent European cup competition.

Teams in the lower leagues of the soccer championships in England tend to perform miracles when they take on the top teams in front of large audiences. They frequently defeat the teams from the higher leagues.

There is a danger that a large audience will be so motivating that you freeze and do not do your best. However, usually a large audience will bring out the best in you especially if you decide to go for it.

Not all of us can have a huge audience, however, but we will have some kind of an audience over a period of weeks and months. If we lose weight, for example, large numbers of people will notice this over the next few months.

Just one person that we respect and/or love can be enough of an audience to bring out the best in us. Most of us go to great lengths to please our parents even after they have died. We see them as looking down on us and approving our efforts.

The key point in all this is that whatever we do in private, whether it is good or bad, usually emerges in the public world. The thought of this can motivate us to do more.

When you are practicing your guitar on a daily basis, it is almost inevitable that a time will come when you perform in front of an audience. So don't wait for the audience to arrive. Just get practising on your own and sooner or later the audience will appear. A little marketing of course might help.



The writer works away on his or her own before public acknowledgement happens. Geoff Thompson wrote his first book on toilet paper in the only private place he could find - the gents. The book can now be found on many bookshelves. Geoff is now known all over the world.

So get off your butt and get working hard. Get serious and professional. The professional does whatever it takes to become highly skilled and worthy of payment. The amateur only works when he or she feels like it.

The amateur can of course reach a higher standard than some so-called professionals but usually the professional is superior in performance. The professional has to produce the goods or face the sack.

Robert Louis Stevenson only managed to finish his great adventure story 'Treasure Island' because he had been paid in advance for it as professionals often are. Before that he had failed to finish nine novels.



Work hard whether you feel like it or not and don't give up. Your admiring audience will arrive later. Even if they don't, you, as an individual who has followed your dreams wholeheartedly, will be much happier and stronger.

Back in 1990 I opened a martial arts school in Kent. I only had one student arrive on the first night but that was enough to motivate me to keep going and gradually the numbers increased. The school is still going strong 15 years later.

If you don't have an audience yet, start visualizing one. If you keep working hard at your skill or skills, the imaginary audience will become a real one. A little marketing will also help!

Those who have a skill usually end up as leaders. They lead and teach those don't yet have that skill and leaders will gradually acquire followers and followers usually provide an enthusiastic, respectful and appreciative audience.

Chapter Ten Motivation By Spring Cleaning

Spring cleaning is a great motivator. Why confine it to Spring? It is arguable that we should not only give gifts at Christmas and should not only make resolutions at the New Year.

It is worth giving gifts all year round and making resolutions to improve throughout the year. Why wait until December?

In the same way we can benefit from not leaving spring cleaning to April or May alone.

The motivational power of clearing up clutter and getting organized is enormous.

Piles of paper lying around can weigh you down as much as an extra stone's weight around the midriff. File the paper away and feel lighter, less tired and more agile.

When the material rubbish of the house is cleared away, the rubbish of the mind tends to follow. This allows new thoughts and energy to come in.

Recently after clearing away rubbish I stayed up till 6 a.m. without feeling tired.

A great way to clear rubbish is to burn it. Bonfires are fun so long as they are kept safe. They can shrink huge piles of rubbish into tiny little ashes.



Also, while the fire is burning, you get motivated to find more stuff to burn and you end up clearing away much more clutter than you originally planned. Even sensitive documents can be burned as the data will no longer be retrievable.

A daily bonfire might not be possible but a daily mini 'spring clean' is a great way to get motivated.

You not only clear your house and your thoughts; you discover things that once got you excited enough to buy them.

You will renew that excitement and enthusiasm as you see that book, which you were so keen to get, once again. You might even read it this time! As you have probably guessed when I say 'you' I usually mean 'I' as well.

I have an acronym **PALACE** stuck up on a wardrobe to focus my mind on a daily mini spring clean:

PLACE - put at least one thing in its proper place every day

ANSWER - answer at least one letter or email a day

LABEL - label at least one thing a day

ARCHIVE - archive at least one thing a day i.e. move a less important thing further away from your normal centre of activity

CHUCK - chuck out at least one thing a day

EMPTY - empty or clear away at least one piece of clutter off one surface a day

You will probably find that you apply the above acronym (PALACE) to more than one thing as you start taking action.

This daily habit could turn your home into a palace and you into a dynamic, effective person. Give it a try!



Chapter Eleven Motivation From A Great Western - We All Have It Coming

Most self-help gurus warn us against watching too much TV. Spending time with your much maligned TV set does have advantages, however. You are, for example, able to watch a great film like 'Unforgiven'. It has lessons which can motivate us and enlighten us.

Near the end of "Unforgiven", the Schofield Kid (a novice assassin) kills a cowboy who has cut up the face of a prostitute.

The kid shoots the cowboy as he is 'taking a dump' in the outside toilet unprotected by his 'bodyguards.' He is obviously shaken by the experience of having killed someone so easily and drinks heavily to calm his mind:

"He ain't gonna to breathe again ever; all on account of pulling a trigger."



Clint Eastwood, as William Munny, the experienced killer of men, women and children, feels much the same:

"It's a hell of a thing killing a man. You take away all he's got and all he's ever gonna have."

The Schofield Kid tries to make himself feel better:
"Well I guess he had it coming."

William Munny replied:

"We all have it coming, kid."

There are at least three powerful motivational truths in this brief extract from the film.

Firstly, life is valuable and easily taken away by someone pulling a trigger or by a drunk driver or by a disease. All of us need to 'seize the day' and make the most of the time we have left on this planet.

Secondly, we should feel bad about taking someone else's life away from them. I feel bad if I kill an insect or mouse. A little creature was enjoying its life until I ended it.

Thirdly, we all have it coming to us. We all reap what we sow. We need to make sure we sow the good rather than the bad. Our future will be the result of what we do now.

This is encouraging. We can influence our future to some extent at least. We just need to get busy sowing the seeds of a great future.

Every time we go for a walk we are sowing the seeds of a healthier future.

Every time we do pushups or squats we are sowing the seeds of a stronger future.

Every time we do sit ups we are sowing the seeds of a better looking body!

Every time we archive or throw away some clutter we are sowing the seeds of a more organised future.

Every time we study some skill for half an hour we are sowing the seeds of a more skilful and more financially rewarding future.

Let's make sure that what we have coming is worth looking forward to.

Chapter Twelve Practical Ways To Motivate Yourself To Learn A Skill

One way to motivate yourself to work hard at anything is to risk wasting your money if you fail to put in the necessary effort.

When Charles Simeon, the great preacher and theologian, was at Cambridge, he promised himself that if he failed to get up at 6 a.m. he would throw one golden guinea into the River Cam.

One morning he had to make his way to a bridge over the river and throw in one very valuable golden guinea. He only had to do this once before he established the habit of getting up at 6 a.m.

The thought of throwing away your money is a powerful motivator! Pay for lessons in whatever skill you want to learn. You won't want to waste your money.

Personal trainers can teach you something about how to improve your physical condition but their main value lies in the fact that, if you don't do what they tell you to do, you will be wasting your money.

I regularly have lessons with a local computer maintenance expert and local web designer. They both visit my house so that I don't have to motivate myself to get in the car and travel to some distant learning center! Nor do I have to move my computer around!



For one hour I focus my whole attention on working with my computer expert. I have the motivation of working with another human being. It would be rude to doze off or watch a TV program.

I also have the motivation of making good use of the money I am paying him to teach me some very useful skills.

I work with my web designer for two hours at a time and, whether I feel like doing web design or not, I am motivated by his presence to get on with it. I also want to avoid wasting the money I am paying him.

These regular sessions usually inspire me to do more work on computer and web design skills in the rest of the week. They also allow me to make far better use of my computer and websites. All this encourages me to learn more.

When you are working on your own, you can vary the length of your work sessions to suit yourself. One hour is too long for some. *Psychologists tell us that 20 minutes is the optimum length of time for taking in new facts and ideas.*

So try working on one project for twenty minutes and then taking a small break before working on the same project for another twenty minutes or working on a different project for twenty minutes.

The advantage of working on the same project for consecutive twenty minute sessions is that you have all the materials for that project easily available and the project is fresh in your mind.

The advantage of working on another project is that the mind is invigorated by focusing on a new topic. Also the fact that you have only 20 minutes in which to make progress gives you a motivating deadline and challenge.

You start thinking "I have only 20 minutes available. I had better get a move on."

After a couple of hours work it is worth doing something physical like taking a short walk or doing some exercises. When you return to work you will feel ready to concentrate and make progress.

It also helps to map out your study schedule the night before and write it down so that your subconscious mind is tuned in to your plans and will help you achieve them.

So don't be afraid of spending your money on training by a local expert and don't hesitate to experiment with the length of your skill learning sessions. Try single 20 minutes sessions on different skills or try several 20 minute sessions on just one skill. Write out your plans the night before and let your subconscious mind do some of the work.

Finally, visualize yourself having mastered the skill you are working at. See yourself confidently creating websites and turning them into awesome cash machines or communication centers. See yourself explaining to your friends how to do what you have already done.

Or visualize yourself performing those dance steps, which you have been learning, in front of a circle of admiring fans. See yourself singing with feeling and power and touching the hearts of those who are listening to you in rapt admiration even if, to begin with, your family is your only audience.

See yourself jumping with elation after you have made your first million. Many gurus teach that what we imagine with feeling will eventually appear in our lives. So start celebrating now and attract your own good fortune to you.



Conclusion

- Accept and be motivated by the challenge of the difficult. ***It will make you great!***
- Different types of motivation work at different times. Most of us need a good kick up the butt frequently!
- ***Compare yourself daily*** with those who are disabled unless you are yourself disabled. If they can cope, so can you!
- What you sow you will reap. Realize that the laws of the universe are not like indulgent parents. ***Even if no one else sees what you do, the universe will!***
- If you work hard without applause, you will usually end up receiving it!
- ***Discover your most powerful desires*** and dreams and go after them single mindedly. Don't let anything including festivals get in your way!
- Motivate yourself by ***facing the fact that you have not finished your project.*** Get it completed now!
- Be grateful and motivated by the fact that you only got your ear and not your head shot off. Things can always be worse!
- ***Work hard and visualize*** the kind of audience you want.
- Enjoy the power and motivation that comes with clearing up your clutter. Make your house a PALACE!
- We all have it coming. ***So sow the seeds of a great future!***
- Motivate yourself by paying out good money! ***Start celebrating your success in advance!***

N.B. If you enjoyed this book please let me know at

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so that I can pass on your comments to another potential reader. Thanks!

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Good luck and God Bless!

John Watson

