

What's Next

How to do online work you love
from anywhere in the world.

Jay Cradeur

What 's Next

*How to do online work you love
from anywhere in the world*

Jay Cradeur

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my Dad, Jerry Cradeur. I was lucky. I got a great Dad. While I was growing up, I knew I was loved. Still, the things that we remember as kids are usually the little things. I remember Dad getting up early every day to head off to work at the Safeway store. At 5AM, I heard rustling in the kitchen, and then the back screen door closed, followed by the sound of the gate closing. Dad was gone, off to work. He led by example. I remember the excitement when, every once in a while, I would come home from school and Dad would be there in the front yard, raking leaves, having taken a rare afternoon off.

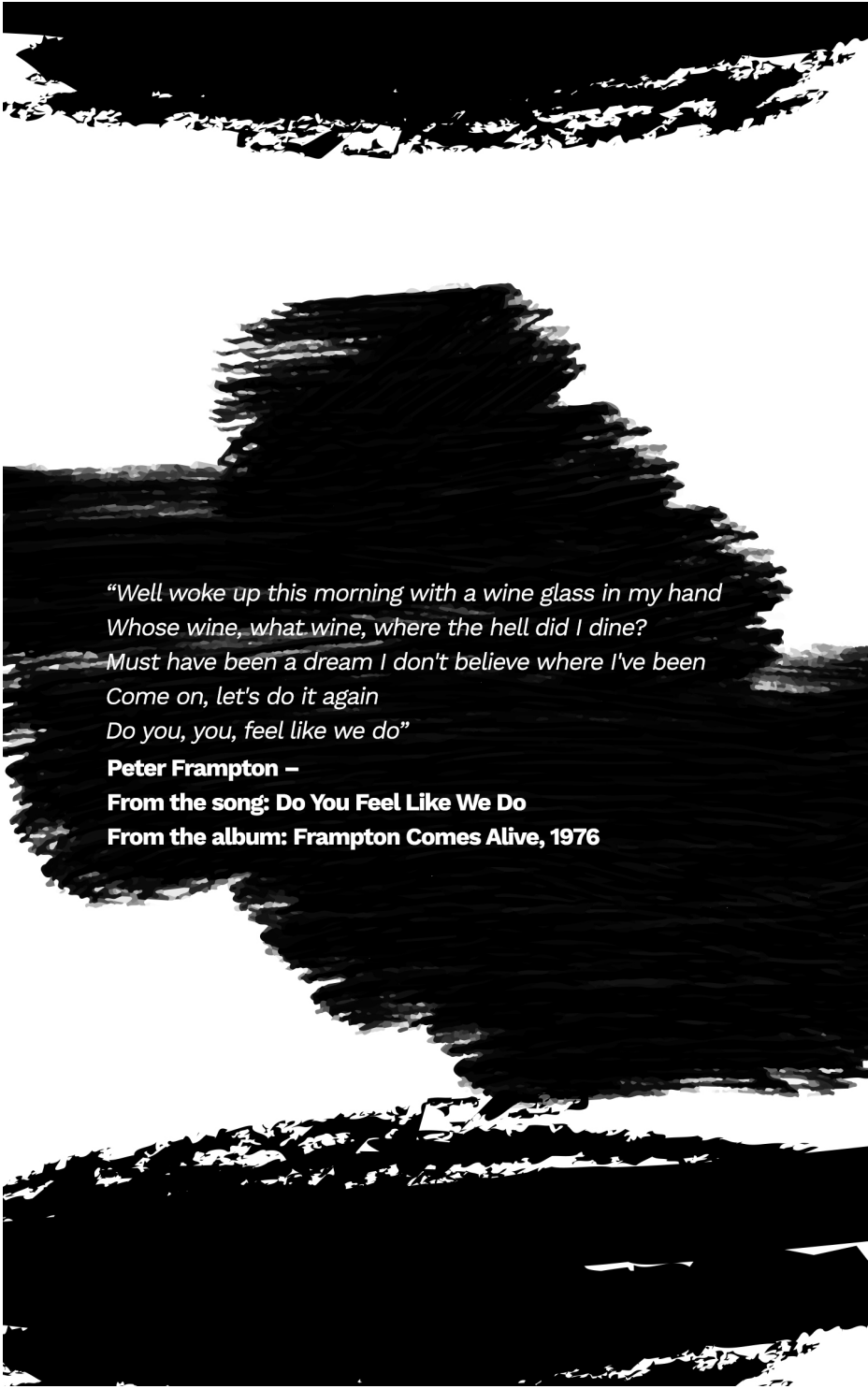
My Dad worked hard for us. I did not appreciate it then. I was a kid and all I wanted to do was play. But I do appreciate it now. My Dad taught me to work hard. I knew that when I got my first job as a paper boy at the age of 13 in Pleasant Hill, CA, I had better do it well. It has been the same for every work assignment since.

Jay Cradeur

Doing a job well, working hard,
leading by example, it is in my
bones. Thank you, Dad.

Table of Contents

DEDICATION.....	III
INTRODUCTION: AM I YOU?.....	8
CHAPTER 1: WHAT DO YOU WANT?....	19
CHAPTER 2: REFRAME IT ALL.....	30
CHAPTER 3: CHOOSING CREATIVITY..	41
CHAPTER 4: EMBRACE SILENCE.....	50
CHAPTER 5: DIVE IN HEAD FIRST..	68
CHAPTER 6: BEING YOUR OWN CEO...	77
CHAPTER 7: OPEN THE ROOM.....	90
CHAPTER 8: GET SOME SLACK.....	101
CHAPTER 9: DOING THE WORK.....	110
CHAPTER 10: WANT TO BUY A PENCIL?	126
CHAPTER 11: YOU DESERVE IT. REALLY!.....	137
CHAPTER 12: NEW CREATIVE PARADIGM	148
RESOURCES.....	161



*"Well woke up this morning with a wine glass in my hand
Whose wine, what wine, where the hell did I dine?
Must have been a dream I don't believe where I've been
Come on, let's do it again
Do you, you, feel like we do"*

Peter Frampton –

From the song: Do You Feel Like We Do

From the album: Frampton Comes Alive, 1976

Introduction:

Am I You?

I am a man in my mid-fifties. I am a boomer approaching retirement age. I recently ended a marriage of 20 years and I have four children. I have worked for a dozen different companies and built three companies of my own. My career has been full of sales jobs with a healthy dose of entrepreneurship. Still, four years ago, I felt stuck. I felt that if I was not careful during this delicate time, life would pass me by, and before I knew it, it would be over. One day in 2014, I realized that there are things in this life that I still want. I felt a strong feeling of being sick and tired of being sick and tired. Something had to change. I was healthy and full of a desire to live the rest of my life fully engaged and with passion.

What's Next

I had talked about writing and traveling. My friends were sick and tired of hearing about my dreams without seeing me take any action. Does this sound familiar? No longer would I talk about it. Instead, I would do it. I discovered that the only thing that would change my life was action.

Action!!!

I needed to take action. My life depended on it in every way possible. I needed to get off my ass, stop talking, and begin doing. I planned a 6-month trip to Playa Del Carmen, Mexico, to eat fresh fish, gorge on ripe sweet fruit, swim in the Gulf of Mexico, and write the book that was dancing in my head.

3 months before my trip, I watched an Anthony Bourdain travel show on Chiang Mai, Thailand. He spoke to me. Anthony Bourdain, God bless him, gushed about how Asia had transformed his life. He shared

Jay Cradeur

stories about the people, the food, and a land full of verdant rice fields. In that moment, I decided to nix Mexico and head off to Thailand. Three months later, I landed in Phuket, Thailand, and began what would be the happiest and most fulfilling year of my life. Since then, I have traveled to a dozen countries and created a lifestyle that allows me to do the work I love and travel at the same time.

I have learned many things along the path, and this book is designed to share what I feel are the most important solutions to a life that seems to be stuck and in transition. Do you feel stuck? Do you feel you have something to share? Do you feel the need to make a contribution? Do you feel vital and alive and up for the next phase of what could possibly be the most exciting and fulfilling time of your life?

What's Next

The work environment has changed dramatically since the rapid deployment of technology. Companies are not hiring men nor women in their 50's or 60's. No. And this is a blessing if you roll with the changes. We all have an opportunity, an opening for a rewarding and satisfying life that combines work with our deepest passion to make a contribution and to make a change.

Never in human history has it been easier and as affordable, with very low barriers to entry, to create a new business, to get your message out to the masses, and to earn a tidy profit doing it. The Internet has been the quintessential game changer. However, it can be overwhelming. You may feel inadequate to the task, but this book may help you to find your way. The concepts are simple. The work is not. Let's talk about the elephant in the room.

Jay Cradeur

Fear is a powerful ally. Yes, I said ally. If harnessed properly, fear and the silence in which it lives will provide you with all the juice you need to begin your new creative endeavor. But will you take action? So much of the fear lies in a lack of knowledge. Allow this book to inform you, remove all the mystery, and systematically move you toward your goal.

There are four components to each chapter. First, there is a song lyric from popular songs from the generation that I love. It is my intention that these lyrics bring you back to a time when hope sprang eternally, and anything was possible. I believe that today, as much as back in the 70's, you can do anything you want.

Each chapter has at least one quote which captures the essence of the key components of the chapter. Seeing that other people – people with whom you may be

What's Next

familiar – are saying much the same thing, does add credence and social confirmation to the message of the chapter. The message of the chapter is then the third component.

The final component is a short assignment. Please take these seriously and spend some time assessing your responses. The assignments are designed to allow you to dig deeper into yourself and more fully move forward to the next chapter of the book.

Now, let us talk about what we will be doing together during the course of this book. In chapter 1, we will look at what you want. I have a firm belief, based on my experience of coaching over 5,000 individuals, that by starting a project with an end in mind, you are more likely to strive to achieve your goal. Chapter 1 will ask that you clarify your vision for your future. Chapter 2 introduces the concept of

reframing. Reframing is a fancy word for looking at something in a different way. By reframing not only your past but also all of your upcoming challenges as an entrepreneur, we are able to derive great power and a steadiness of course. Chapter 3 asks that you choose creativity as a life goal. You will be offered two options, one which will foster growth, and another that many of us are all too familiar with, which halts momentum. Chapter 4 introduces the concept of embracing silence. As a creative being, whether you are creating a business, a book, a blog or an online course, you will have a predictable daily battle with silence and silence's partner, tension. This chapter asks you to embrace the silence and use it to produce your best work.

Chapter 5 invites you to use all the creative sources at your disposal. This chapter introduces the concept of immersing yourself

What's Next

in the work of others in order to synthesize your own unique message. Chapter 6 shatters the myth that you must be an expert in social media, website development, or graphic design in order to be successful online. This chapter implores you to delegate all but the most essential of your work to those who are far more talented and significantly less expensive than yourself.

Chapter 7 dives into the topic of vulnerability and its ability to transform your presence and how you speak with authority. Chapter 8 introduces the concept of slack, of creating space and reducing inputs so you may properly hear subtle messages which will inform your decisions as you move forward with your creative project.

Chapter 9 invites you to declare yourself a professional. Distinctions are made between a professional and an amateur. You are a professional and this

chapter will delineate the necessary requirements.


Chapter 10 tackles the topic of enrollment, or sales, which will be an essential component of any business venture. The word “sales” carries quite a bit of baggage, and this chapter will begin to unpack the essential nature of enrollment so you can do it with joy and alacrity. Chapter 11 comes just in time to break down some feelings you may have which can be encapsulated in the term “imposter syndrome.” By the time you get to this chapter, fear may be creeping back in and you might be asking yourself: “Am I good enough to do this?” Yes, you are, and this chapter will tell you why. Our final chapter, Chapter 12, presents a new paradigm for creative work, incorporating 5 elements, which together, form a powerful platform to ensure your creative success and ongoing productivity. This is

What's Next

a great deal of fun as we begin to make our dreams a reality.

"Do you feel like we do?" As I travel the world, I see that we are all very much the same. We all want to do work that matters, that makes a contribution, and that bring us joy. What's Next is not just a book title. It has been a mantra in my life. Each time I dig into me, I find the answers. So, join me now as we embark on the most exciting of life's adventures: self-discovery for a purpose.

Let's get started.



*"If I leave here tomorrow
Would you still remember me?
For I must be traveling on, now
Cause there's too many places I've got to see..."*

Lynyrd Skynyrd –

From the song: Freebird

From the album: Pronounced 'Lēh-'nérd 'Skin-'nérd, 1973

Chapter 1:

What Do You Want?

What is it that will provide the fuel for your journey? What will be such a powerful force inside you that it encourages you to change your behavior and begin to create real change in your life and in the lives of others? What can you tell yourself that will inspire you to get off your ass and get to work on building a life that gives you everything that you truly desire? In this chapter, we explore the power of Why?

What is your Why? Have you heard this question before? It has become a popular refrain from self-help experts. Why? Why? Why? Why do you want to cultivate stillness and dig deeper in your life? Here, as with most salient questions, the answer lies within. It will take some delving, but your Why lives very close to the

Jay Cradeur

surface. It is an exciting discovery, so let's jump right in.

Your Why is a very real, clear and life-altering reality. My Why, as it turns out, is very simple and plain. It is nothing fancy. I want what many people want. I want fulfilling work that allows me to travel the world, *"cause there's too many places I've got to see."* That seems quite simple. That is my Why in one sentence. I discovered late in life that travel fills my heart with joy. It is the one thing that wakes me up in the morning full of excitement and passion. Going to different countries, interacting with the local people, eating their own brand of food, exploring their customs, witnessing the beauty of their land, and feeling the sameness which we all share, all magnificently informed my path in life.

Fulfilling work! Let's break this down. My work must be virtual. It

What's Next

must be work that I can do in a hotel room with a strong Wi-Fi connection. It must be something that I can transact through my MacBook Pro. It must be work that allows me to express my gifts. And it must be work that pays me enough to do the things I want to do, none the least of which is travel.

A Vision

I see myself in Kenya. In the morning, my travel companion and I are going to jump in a jeep and look for elephants that roam the red African tundra. Before we go, I wake up early and begin typing on my computer. This day, I am working on a home study course to support people to convert their current work to something that can be virtual. The course is called "Going Nomad" as I know there is a huge market for people who harbor the same dream as me. It is dark outside, and I can hear animals far away in the distance. I can

Jay Cradeur

smell the fresh spring rain that has fallen. I can see the color of the wicker chair in which I will write. I sit down, put a wool blanket over my legs and begin to type.

Make It Vivid

It is one thing to say you want to travel the world. It is quite another to say you want to be in Kenya, typing on your laptop before you go out on safari. The vision must be vivid for it to truly resonate with you. If it does not resonate, if it does not stir a longing in you, if it does not get you out of bed in the morning, it is of very little use to you. Your vision must be filled with specifics. Colors, textures, and smells need to seep into your vision. Specific actions must be incorporated into your vision. Your Why must be a Technicolor dream!

Without a clear, tangible vision, you are like a boat without a

What's Next

rudder. Your Why is like a compass which guides you on your journey. It is the measure by which all your actions will be accessed. Your Why is your true north. Once it is crystal clear, your life will be about one thing, and that thing is what you are moving toward. All actions will focus on achieving your goal. Everything you do will be accompanied by this question: "Am I moving toward what I want?"

Having a Why is what drove Mark Zuckerberg to create Facebook. His vision was to connect the world. Having a Why is what drove Larry Page and Sergey Brin to create Google. Their vision was to provide immediate information access to the world. Why did Elon Musk create Tesla? He had a powerful vision to rid the world of gas guzzling and environment polluting automobiles. These are some remarkable visions. Your vision may be as equally grandiose, or it may be as mundane

Jay Cradeur

as mine. Regardless, this Why is what drives artists and change makers to create and work toward their goal day after day.

Francis Ford Copolla

Recently, I streamed a wonderful show called ***The Director's Chair*** with Robert Rodriguez. He interviews movie directors about their careers, their big wins and losses, and their big challenges to produce great work. Copolla said something that really struck me. He was talking about my favorite movie of all time, *Apocalypse Now*. No studio would provide the funding. Yet his vision was so big and so powerful, he put up all his own money to make the film. This was after he had already produced both the *Godfather* films and won numerous Academy Awards.

"I was so scared. Not only was I on the hook for the whole cost, but interest in those days was going from 17 to 18 percent and it

What's Next

became 22% so I not only owed \$30 Million dollars or whatever it was, but it was at an interest rate you could never pay... I was scared stiff as you can imagine."

-Francis Ford Copolla. The Director's Chair with Robert Rodriguez

There is great power in a well thought out and tangible Why. It sets you on a mission. It empowers you to take focused action towards your vision. If you need to start on your mission while also working a regular job, you may soon realize you need to lose those 20 pounds so that you have the energy to wake up early to get on it. Suddenly, you have a powerful reason to make changes in your life. No longer are you wading through life, muttering a story about what you want, a story you and those close to you know won't happen. You don't want to be that guy or that woman.

Jay Cradeur

Rather, you will become a living example of someone who is making things happen. You will shine as a beacon of hope for everyone else that is still locked into wishful thinking while they toil at a dead end job. Do you think Bob Dylan casually wrote all those songs? Or do you think he had a very clear vision of being a force in American music? If you listen to Bob Dylan talk about his life, he knew from an early age exactly what he was put on this earth to do. He saw it. He could taste it. He went after it. I can imagine it is not easy to create a group of songs, cut an album and then put it out there for the world to listen and judge. His vision ruled the day. Everything else was backstory, the stuff you hear and ignore as you motor on toward your goal.

I desire a simple life. I have never wanted a large house, a bulging bank account, nor a "look at me" car. You, however, may want

What's Next

all those things. This is your opportunity to discover what you want. What do you want so bad that you can taste it in your mouth?

*"Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom?
'Cause all I ever have
Redemption songs"*

**–Bob Marley,
Redemption Song**

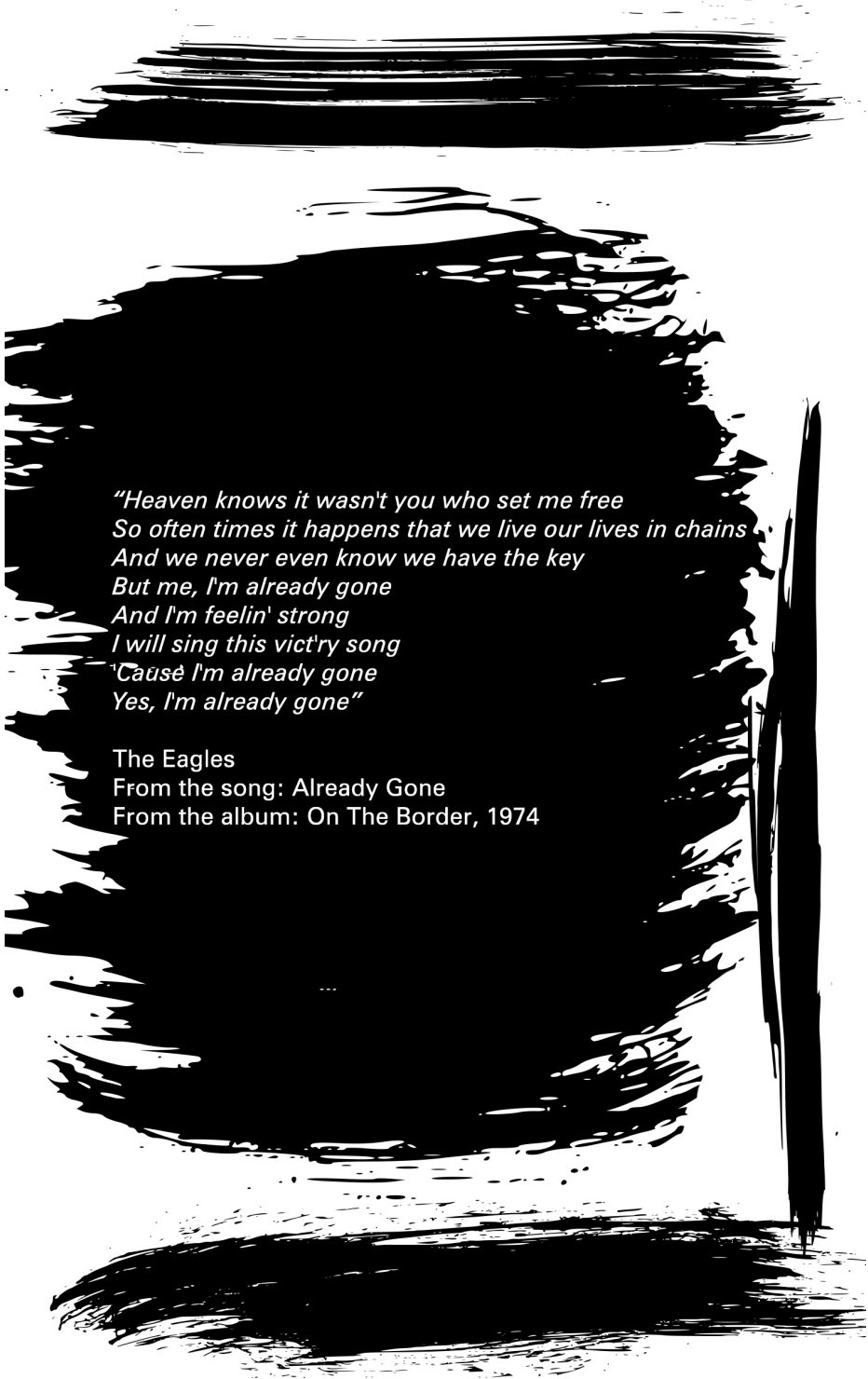
What will fill you with joy and excitement and passion, such that you will take the daily steps to achieve it? Rome was not built in a day. In order to achieve your goal, you will have to take on the posture of a professional, one who works diligently to achieve the end result. You will embrace delayed gratification, for you already know where you are going. Now we are going to dig deeper and look at several roadblocks that must be broken through in order to get to where you are going. Having a vision is not enough if you

Jay Cradeur

still have leg weights holding you back. Let's get unshackled!

Assignment

What is your redemption song? Write down what you want in as much detail as possible. What is your Why? Where do you see yourself once your next project is done?



*"Heaven knows it wasn't you who set me free
So often times it happens that we live our lives in chains
And we never even know we have the key
But me, I'm already gone
And I'm feelin' strong
I will sing this vict'ry song
'Cause I'm already gone
Yes, I'm already gone"*

The Eagles
From the song: Already Gone
From the album: On The Border, 1974

Chapter 2: Reframe It All

“The only thing standing between you and your goal is the bullshit story you keep telling yourself as to why you can't achieve it.”

– Jordan Belfort

You have a story you tell about yourself. In fact, you have many stories running around in your head. Most of these stories involve excuses, rationale, and other assorted and various drama you have concocted to support exactly where you are in your life. While these stories have supported you in the past and kept you sane, you will need to reframe them to support you as you move forward. Without reframing your past, these stories you tell yourself will drag you down to the bottom of the ocean like a pair of cement shoes.

What's Next

Example

In my first job out of college, I worked for a prestigious advertising agency in Chicago. After 2 years, I was demoted because I had repeatedly missed deadlines. I then took a position with another advertising agency in San Francisco. I was fired after 1 year for not being good at media planning. I then took a job as a salesperson for a small software startup. I quit after one year because I did not trust the owners. I then began working for a large media representative firm as a salesperson. I did well but I quit after one year because I felt I was underpaid. I then got a job with another rep firm that paid me three times more than the previous employer. I was fired after 6 months because I did not accept my boss's unreasonable demands.

My story at the time was this: I was a loser, someone who could not hold a job, and someone who had

many dream jobs but always managed to screw it up. I was thirty years old and had absolutely nothing to show for it.

Reframe

I discovered I was good at sales. I discovered that I needed to work on my own without a boss. I now knew what kind of job would allow me to prosper. After this string of unsuccessful jobs, I began my career as an independent contractor for a media sales company. In my first year, I made more money than in any of my previous jobs. I was awarded top salesperson honors. I worked when I wanted to and took time off when I wanted to.

Evaluation

None of this would have happened for me had I stuck to my original story. *"So many times it happens that we live our life in chains, and we never even know we have the key."* If I had doubled down on

What's Next

chasing a high paying job with a boss, I would have had the same dismal outcome. In reframing your past, you can reevaluate everything you have learned about yourself and begin anew.

Seth Godin introduced me to the concept of Sunk Costs. As I interpret sunk costs, they are the totality of your experience up to this exact point in time. Let's, for the time being, focus on work. Everything you have done to this point is your sunk cost. It is the work that you have already done, which has prepared you for what you will do today and tomorrow.

I find this concept to be very liberating. Rather than carrying around your past like a ball and chain, you can evaluate what the ball and chain has taught you, and then release it. All that weight you have been carrying around can now be reframed as a wealth of knowledge that has led you to this exact point in time. The past has

Jay Cradeur

made you who you are, but it does not have one bit of impact on who you are becoming now and in the future.

Atlas Shrugged

Ayn Rand wrote a seminal book entitled *Atlas Shrugged* which I read in my late twenties. Atlas, the great warrior god, was carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. At last, he shrugged and let the weight fall away. This is your opportunity to evaluate all your past actions, take the valuable nuggets of knowledge, and let the rest fall away and crash loudly on the ground at your feet.

Reframing means that you look at something in a completely different way. This chapter asks you to reframe your past. Look at the stories you tell yourself. Take the knowledge and discard the rest. The old story no longer serves you,

What's Next

but the lessons do serve you. The lessons are driving you to create a remarkable life full of joy and contribution. So, go ahead and shrug. As Tom Robbins wrote in his classic book, *Jitterbug Perfume*, “Erleichda”, which, loosely translated, means “Lighten Up” or “Let It Go. “

“The master has failed more times than the beginner has even tried.”

–Stephen McCranie

Nothing presented in this book is a magic pill. Having a vision will not turn you into Superman. Reframing your past will not instantly turn you into a millionaire. These are all tools, albeit the most powerful tools I have discovered, which will support you on your path. However, the path is littered with challenges, little land mines that can derail all your hard work and leave you lost and confused. Therefore, you must be able to reframe these challenges on a

daily basis to stay firmly entrenched on your journey.

Challenges are the most powerful and yet grossly misunderstood components of a life well-lived. Many see challenges as roadblocks, or as I mentioned earlier, landmines which bring about feelings of confusion, frustration, and wanting to give up. But they are not. Early in my career, I learned about the concept of trim tabbing. Trim tabbing is what airplanes do every minute of flight, to keep on course. A gust of wind pushes the plane a few degrees off course, so the pilot or autopilot makes a small adjustment and the plane resumes on course. Making small adjustments is what we call trim tabbing. This is a valuable tool for reframing challenges as opportunities to get back on course.

Example

What's Next

In 2015, I published my first book on Amazon. It was called Radical Freedom. It had 44 chapters and 270 pages. Virtually nobody bought nor read the book. I had spent one year of my life on that book. I put my heart and soul into it, sharing everything I knew on the topic of freedom. And yet, only a few people read it. This was, for me, a big challenge. The question is, how do I evaluate this challenge?

Option 1 is to feel dejected, rejected, and deflated. Perhaps writing is not for me. Perhaps no one read the book because the book isn't any good. Maybe I should look into doing something else.

Option 2 is to reframe this challenge. I wrote a book! How many people talk about writing a book and never do so? I actually did it. How can I write a second book and make it better, more readable, more consumable and less daunting? Hence, I undertook to learn more about writing a book. I

took a course and learned that a nonfiction book written in the 21st century should be short and concise with potent bits of information. The ideal size is 110 pages, with no more than 10 chapters. The result of reframing this challenge is this book you are now reading.

“Develop success from failures. Discouragement and failure are two of the surest stepping stones to success.”

–Dale Carnegie

Reframing Challenges

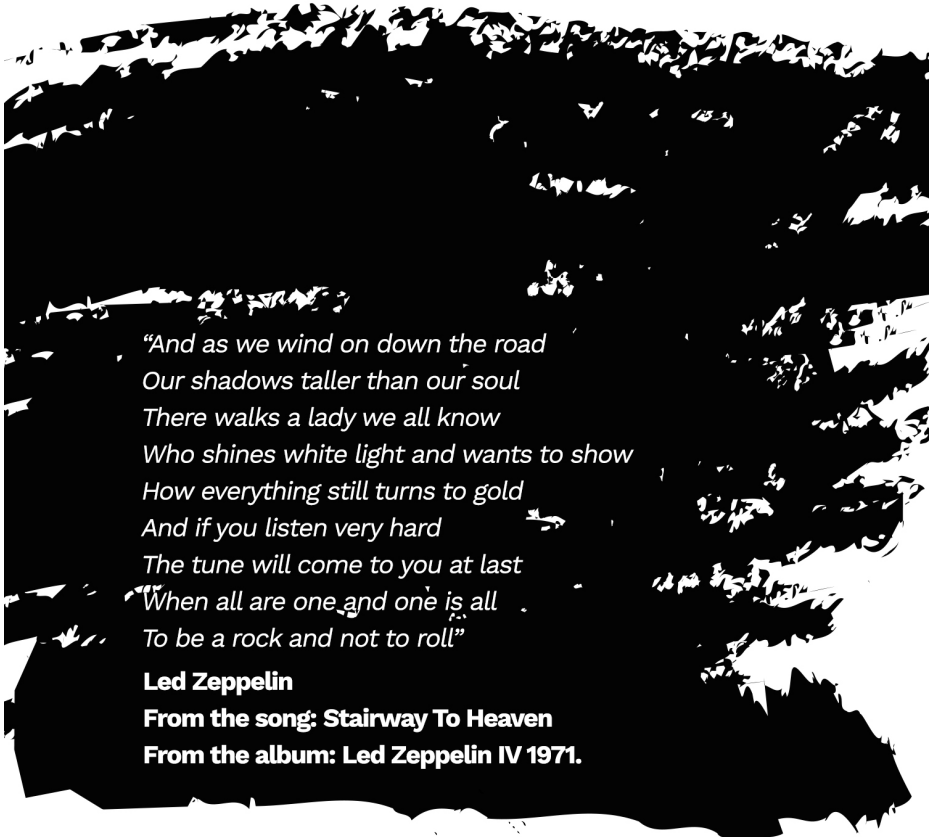
Challenges give us valuable information on the road ahead. Each challenge informs our future choices. If we ignore challenges, or worse yet, disparage them, we are missing out on the prescient guideposts that point us in the right direction. Each challenge, properly met and acknowledged, makes us stronger. Think about the biggest challenges you have faced in your life. These need not be

What's Next

solely work-related. While challenges can be difficult, I have found that each and every time, I come out the other end with a newfound knowledge and understanding of my place in the world. Reframe your challenges and squeeze every bit of learning and goodness out of them.

Assignment:

Take a moment and think about your greatest challenge in life. Did you go through a divorce? Did you have a life-threatening illness? Did you lose a loved one unexpectedly? Next, reframe that incident and detail all that you learned from the experience. How did that challenge transform you? What are the gifts you received?



*"And as we wind on down the road
Our shadows taller than our soul
There walks a lady we all know
Who shines white light and wants to show
How everything still turns to gold
And if you listen very hard
The tune will come to you at last
When all are one and one is all
To be a rock and not to roll"*

Led Zeppelin

From the song: Stairway To Heaven

From the album: Led Zeppelin IV 1971.



Chapter 3:

Choosing Creativity

As I look at this blank screen, I feel tension. There is a silence that is well known, but still uncomfortable. In any endeavor, you will feel a constant gnawing tension created between your idea of doing something and the actual doing of it. The painter looks at the blank canvas. The writer looks at the large white space on his or her laptop. The salesperson looks at the phone ready to make the first cold call of the day. The Internet marketer feels the tension before creating a webinar and crafting invites.

Having tools to work with gives you the ammunition to get things done. But there is still, and ultimately, you and your willingness and courage to express your gifts. When you feel the tension, you know you are doing the work that matters, the work

Jay Cradeur

that may make a difference in someone's life. Digging deeper into yourself is not for the faint-hearted. It takes a certain kind of courage to go to places you have not been to before. The tension created by the silence is part of the job requirement. While tension is the hardest part of the bargain, it is also the most rewarding.

Fear lives behind the silence, which creates the tension. Having spent a great deal of time digging deep into myself, I can quickly identify the fears. As I sit down to write (this is where I most often feel the tension), I think to myself: "Can I write anything good today?" "What if I have nothing to say?" "What if what I write is complete crap?" "Why do I do this every day?" "I'm not as good as (Insert almost any author), so why do this?" Yes, this is my daily ritual. My job – my real work – is to embrace this tension and pernicious self-

What's Next

talk and use it to produce good work.

Understanding Creativity

Instead of feeling this tension as a sign that you should not be doing what you are doing, since we would all rather avoid the tension all together and go to the beach, feel the tension as a sure sign that you are on the right track. This is where creativity is born. Use the tension to guide you and alert you to the importance of your work. When you feel the tension, let it bathe you in the certainty that you are pursuing a noble goal. Tension is the fuel that empowers you to produce the best you have to offer.

You Have Two Options

When you feel the tension, you have two choices. There are two directions you can go. Both ways offer you relief from the tension,

however, one produces results and the other produces frustration.

First is the option most often taken by amateurs. This option is to do something, anything other than creating, that will alleviate the feeling of tension. Popular examples of this are eating, procrastinating, sex, drugs, suddenly thinking of something more important to do, reading emails, answering the phone, making phone calls, scanning your Facebook feed, telling yourself you are not ready to do your best work today, getting a massage, cleaning your space, shopping, and jogging. This list can go on and on, and I bet you can come up with some of your favorites as well.

Now, some of these things are very good for you, but some of them are not. However, no matter how you justify it, you are creating a reason to not do your work. You start out with the best intentions, then you feel the

What's Next

tension and flee the scene. This is an amateur move, and the primary reason most people don't fulfill their obligation to produce their best work.

Ultimately, we are talking about a feeling. The tension that lives in the silence is a feeling. For me, the feeling is akin to dread. It starts before I go to bed. I know that I will be getting up early to face my commitment, open up my laptop, feel my fear, and then begin typing. I know that as I type, I will question myself almost every minute, thinking about the quality of what I am putting down in words. "Is it good enough?" I will think of Charles Bukowski's comment about another writer when he said:

"He could really put down the word."

Can I put down the word? My response to all of this can be, "No, I can't", or it can be, "I

Jay Cradeur

don't know, but I am going to give it my best effort."

Then there is the second and recommended option: Do the work! *"And if you listen very hard the tune will come to you at last."* Led Zeppelin is my favorite music performer of all time. I listened to them in high school, and have continued to listen to them to this day. Some songs make me cry. Some songs fill me with energy. And some songs go thud. You see, you and I and Led Zeppelin don't really know what is our best work. Who am I to judge? Led Zeppelin did not know that Stairway to Heaven would become an anthem for a generation, but it did not matter. What mattered is that they put out the work, word after word, riff after riff, drum beat after drum beat, and some of that work was spectacular and some was not.


If you are going to do something that will make an impact on someone's life, then you have to

What's Next

do the work. We do the work. Led Zeppelin did the work. No one hits 100% every time. The most important things I do each day is sitting at this keyboard and writing. Period.

Assignment

Determine what it is that you need to do each day to fulfill your creative needs. Don't think your goal is to create a beautiful painting. Instead, think that your goal is to paint each day. How do you paint?



*"The screen door slams, Mary's dress waves
Like a vision she dances across the porch as the radio plays
Roy Orbison singing for the lonely
Hey, that's me and I want you only
Don't turn me home again, I just can't face myself alone
again"*

Bruce Springsteen

From the song: Thunder Road

From the album: Born To Run, 1975

Chapter 4: Embrace Silence

*“Let us be silent, that we may
hear
the whisper of God.”*

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

The world is changing. In fact, it is changing at a pace never seen before in human history. When I was a young boy, I played with simple toys. My number one go-to was a gold Schwinn two-speed bike with tassels coming out of the handlebars and a banana seat. We did not have smartphones, video games, apps, nor virtual reality headsets. When I called up a friend, I stuck my fingers in the phone and turned seven times. Some of you may remember this experience.

As I drive people around in my Uber car in San Francisco, I hear and engage in conversations about radical shifts in biotech

What's Next

research, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and how our smartphone usage informs marketers on how to sell us more stuff. Build an app and maybe you can become a billionaire. The world is in transition. Not only are we in transition, we know that with the birth of computers, and now AI, our lives will transition faster and faster as time goes by. We see entire industries knocked out of existence. Coal is replaced by natural gas. Natural gas will soon be knocked out by green energy such as solar and wind. This is taking place all over the world as countries wake up to the potentially fatal impact of our dirty energy burning ways. Kodak film, once a staple of photography, is now gone. The record industry is now gone as streaming content rules the day.

What will be here tomorrow?

What will be gone tomorrow?

How does one find any stability in a world of chaos?

Imagine this.

You are in a small spaceship. It is shaped like an egg. You are protected from all the change and chaos around you. As you navigate your ship, you are in the quiet and still center of the ship. No matter what happens outside of you, you and your protective ship float through unimpeded. You are on a mission. You know where you are going. And most importantly, you know that no matter what happens, you will continue to move forward to reach your goal. This is the great power of stillness. This is a superpower that all human beings possess, but it most often lies dormant.

But Jay, you say, how can I remain still when everything is changing so fast? If this is a question you are asking, then you have not yet learned how to cultivate stillness. Cultivating stillness is not only your greatest gift, but it may become your greatest joy. The very deliberate and

What's Next

profound decision to cultivate stillness in your life will transform you and the way you interact with the world. Rather than being a ping-pong ball getting whacked about by the winds of change, you will be an observer of the tidal waves of life while maintaining a true course to your goals and dreams.

The best way I know of to cultivate stillness is through meditation. Oh, there it is, the M word. You hear it all the time these days. "So and so meditates every day." There is quite a bit of baggage associated with the word and practice of meditation. Some conjure up images of a monk sitting in a cave on a block of ice, eyes closed, experiencing a world of bliss and nirvana. Some see groups of people at a temple in Bali, all with their eyes closed, connecting with Vishnu or Ganesh or Krishna. But it is not normally like this. It is much simpler. Let's take a stab at

reframing meditation so it can be approached in bite-size chunks.

Think of meditation as a technique for cultivating stillness. It is a tool you can use to find inner peace. Meditation is a way you can connect to your own inner voice which will inform you of your own deepest knowledge and wisdom. Through meditation, you may be able to answer the most fundamental of human questions: "Who am I?" Wow, that sounds pretty good. Knowing that all of this is available through meditation, you may wonder why so few people actually do it.

Meditation is a practice. That means you need to practice to get good at it. It is something that builds in you cumulatively over time. You will never lose what you learn. You could meditate for one year, then stop, and then start again after a long break. You will find yourself right back to where you were when you stopped

What's Next

meditating. I know many people who meditated for many years, learned what they needed to learn, and then stopped. At some point, you will find that 24-7 life with eyes wide open is an opportunity to meditate.

What is meditation? There are different styles of meditation. I prefer the simplest method, which is to sit down in a quiet place, close my eyes, and stay there for twenty minutes. This is a very simple daily practice and you will experience immediate results. I always, ALWAYS, experience a greater sense of peace and well-being after a twenty-minute session. This is a practice that has not changed over time. Human beings are the same now as they were at the dawn of time, some 200,000 years ago. This is something that is not changing.

There is a huge misconception about what we as human beings are. Most think of us as a body that

carries around a mind, which does all the thinking. It is a self-contained unit. Ask yourself this question: "What am I?" Another question that arises and gets answered through meditation is: "Where do thoughts arise?" It is remarkable that in this day and age, these questions are not presented in grade school. Is this not the most fundamental area of self-knowledge? Yet, for most of my early adult life, I thought I was a body carrying around a brain that did all my thinking. Where did Einstein's theory of relativity come from? Where did Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa come from? Where did Steve Jobs' iPhone come from?

Author, Tim Ferris, who has a very popular podcast, interviews top performers in all industries and athletic endeavors. He reports that 90% of those top performing individuals, people like Arnold Schwarzenegger and Tony Robbins, have meditated on a daily basis.

What's Next

This is not a coincidence. The meditation helps these people not only to cultivate stillness but also to generate ideas. What most people don't understand is that in the stillness, ideas are allowed to arise and be heard. It is with those ideas, or what I would rather call knowledge, that people can learn and then share for a profit, or for a win.

Meditation helps you to become sensitive to the subtle messages, the inner voice. There is a distinction between hearing the voice and ???

Ideas arise independently of you. They are like a warm summer breeze that comes and goes like the waves of the ocean. I still remember being in an est training in the 1980's and we were invited to exert our human will and stop our thoughts. As hard as I tried, they did not stop. I realized that day that I am not in control of the thoughts in my head. They come and

they go. The thinking process is completely independent of me. This seems completely counter-intuitive. They are my thoughts, in that I have them. But they are not coming from me. Right now, try and stop your thoughts. Go ahead, I dare you.

Neil Young, who has written some of the most powerful music of his generation, songs like ***Cinnamon Girl*** and ***Down by The River***, shared on a Charlie Rose show how much he values his ideas above all else. When he has an idea for a song, no matter where he is or what he is doing, he will stop and write it down. His priority in life is to honor those thoughts and capture them so he can make a song which will impact millions of listeners.

"It isn't necessary that you leave home. Sit at your desk and listen. Don't even listen, just wait. Don't wait, be still and alone. The whole world will offer itself to you."

-Franz Kafka

The trick of all of this is to create an environment in which thoughts can flourish, and in which a more senior quality of thoughts may arise. This environment is stillness, which can be most powerfully cultivated during meditation. This is the missing link for most people. While you can't control your thoughts, you can control the environment in which these thoughts show up or arise. This is the message of this chapter. Create a thought-supportive environment so that you can harness the power of your human capacity to think and create ideas. Stillness is the key.

Let's go back to our spaceship moving through chaos image. Imagine not only are you able to navigate through the chaos, but while doing so, you are supporting yourself to generate the best thoughts for yourself. You have

Jay Cradeur

all had “aha” moments. Why limit yourself to the occasional aha moment? Why not have each day bring you an abundance of aha moments? The why not is because cultivating stillness is not a priority. It should be, but it is not. Instead, we busy ourselves with a life full of commitments and dalliances. Agreed, staying busy can feel good. Agreed, life is hard and making it day to day can be a challenge. But what if you can make a quantum leap in your life and leave all of that chaos behind? You can, but will you?

I do most of my writing between 3AM and 6AM. The world is quiet. I won't be disturbed. The energy of the early morning is very supportive of thought generation. Others who write find the nighttime to be a similarly good time to create. Why would I get up so early? Because it works! Why would I spend 20 minutes each day in silence? Because it works! The

What's Next

questions I had to ask myself before I had this revelation was this: "Do I want to change?" "What is the game I am playing?" "Is this a big enough game for me?" "What game can I play that will quite literally force me to make the change?"

Listen to the Master: Ernest Hemingway

You may not believe in Karma, energy, other dimensions or spirit guides. I do. I have experienced them. But many classify these topics as "woo woo" which is a nice way of saying, "bullshit". That is OK. Regardless of your beliefs, this stuff works. Simply by opening yourself up to new ideas, you will be able to realize tremendous benefits as a creative being.

In the early days, the well in the center of a village was a source of life. Men and women went to the well to get water, which was used primarily for cooking,

Jay Cradeur

drinking, and cleaning. Without the water, the tribe would not prosper. Without water, nothing would grow. As a creative person, you are going to the well, day in and day out. Your well is silence, the silence you experience during your daily allotment of time for your work.

"I had learned already never to empty the well of my writing, but always to stop when there was still something there in the deep part of the well, and let it refill at night from the springs that fed it."

- Ernest Hemmingway

It's All About the Silence

Silence is an artist's well. You need it. It is silence that provides an opening for ideas. *"Don't turn me home again, I just can't face myself alone again".* The more comfortable you can become with the tension of silence, and the more you understand the importance of it,

What's Next

the more engaging content you will be able to produce.

"Since I had started to break down all my writing and get rid of all facility and try to make instead of describe, writing had been wonderful to do. But it was very difficult, and I did not know how I would ever write anything as long as a novel. It often took me a full morning of work to write a paragraph."

- Ernest Hemmingway

You can bet that Hemmingway, arguably America's greatest author, experienced tremendous silence in a full morning of pondering which produced one paragraph. And out of that silence came some of our greatest novels such as my favorites "Old Man and The Sea" and "The Sun Also Rises". Out of the silence came a unique voice, a terse style that resonated with generations of readers.

There is no writer's block if you are able to sit with the silence and allow the ideas to spew forth. Writer's block comes from too much thinking. Stop thinking, embrace the silence, and allow the never-ending source of ideas to bring you your daily bread.

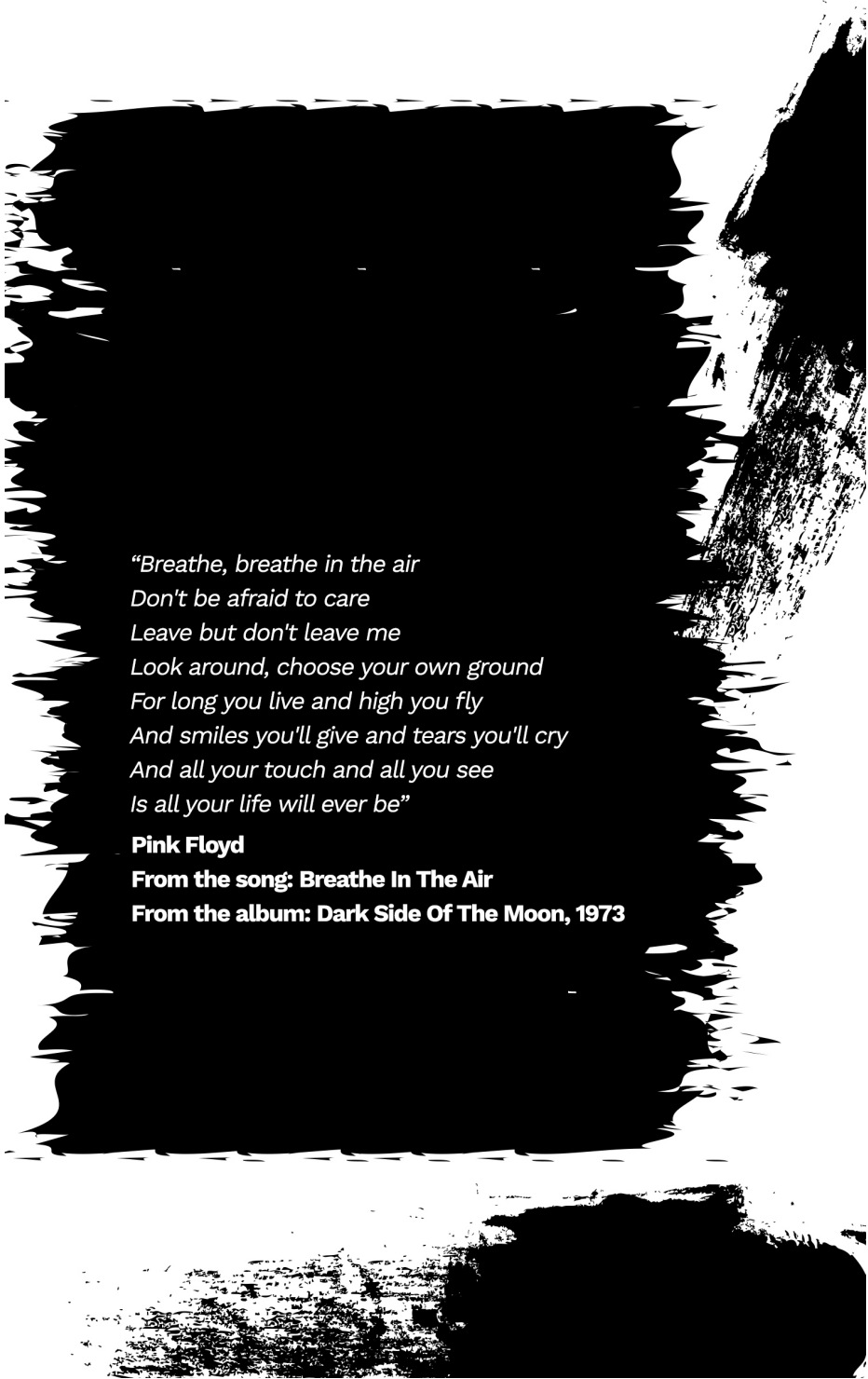
This chapter lays the groundwork for everything you do in your life. It is the fundamental component of establishing a passionate future. I'll assume you are reading this book about what's next in your life because you want something more. You want more connection, more money, more power, more status, more fulfillment, more gratitude, more wisdom, more knowledge, and even more awakening.

Assignment

In the next chapter, we will dig deeper into what you truly want out of this precious gift of life. In the meantime, think about how you can create more moments of

What's Next

stillness in your day. What can you do now to find just 20 minutes of unplugged silence?



*"Breathe, breathe in the air
Don't be afraid to care
Leave but don't leave me
Look around, choose your own ground
For long you live and high you fly
And smiles you'll give and tears you'll cry
And all your touch and all you see
Is all your life will ever be"*

Pink Floyd

From the song: Breathe In The Air

From the album: Dark Side Of The Moon, 1973

Chapter 5:

Dive in Head First

"Nothing is original. Steal from anywhere that resonates with inspiration or fuels your imagination. Devour old films, new films, music, books, paintings, photographs, poems, dreams, random conversations, architecture, bridges, street signs, trees, clouds, bodies of water, light and shadows. Select only things to steal from that speak directly to your soul. If you do this, your work (and theft) will be authentic. Authenticity is invaluable; originality is non-existent. And don't bother concealing your thievery – celebrate it if you feel like it. In any case, always remember what Jean-Luc Godard said: "It's not where you take things from – it's where you take them to."

– Jim Jarmusch, Film Maker

What's Next

Recently I read a book entitled, "Steal Like an Artist." It changes everything I thought about creativity. If I were to boil down the book to its essential message, it would be this: all creative endeavors are a copy of someone else's work, but delivered with your own unique voice. This came as quite a revelation to me. I had always thought I needed to work in a vacuum and create something that had never existed. The idea that there is nothing new under the sun allowed me to begin creating with wild abandon.

The first step to any creative endeavor is to immerse yourself in your field. Allow your natural curiosity to guide you to all the resources you can obtain.

Example

I am wildly curious about anything that has to do with creativity, performance, Internet marketing, travel, and coaching. I buy books like "Tools of Titans" by Tim

Ferriss, the aforementioned “Steal Like an Artist” by Austin Kleon, and “The Coaching Habit” by Michael Bungay Stanier. I subscribe to blogs by Steven Pressman (author of “The War of Art”), Seth Godin (author of so many wonderful books), and Neil Patel (Internet Marketing Guru). I listen to the “Waking Up” podcast by Sam Harris, “Entrepreneur on Fire” by John Lee Dumas, and “The Tim Ferriss Show”. I watch everything Anthony Bourdain has put out.

I do all of this for several reasons. First, I love it. Everything I described above hits me where I live. It turns me on. It excites me. Second, I learn from the masters. Each new bit of information that I consume makes me more of an expert in my field. Third, this material allows me to fine-tune my own voice, my own contribution to the field.

“Those who do not want to imitate anything, produce nothing.”

-Salvador Dali

Copy vs Imitate

There is a fine distinction to be made between copying and imitating. Copying someone's work will get you nowhere. You are bringing nothing new to the arena. Imitating, on the other hand, suggests that while you recognize the contribution of others, you are up to the task of presenting your content in your own unique way. Don't copy. You are better than that!

Oliver Sacks, the author of "Awakenings" and "The River of Consciousness", offers a three-part prescription for creativity: time, forgetting, and incubation. He added more guidance with the following quote:

"All of us, to some extent, borrow from others, from the culture around us. Ideas are in the air, and we may appropriate, often without realizing, the phrases and language of the times. We borrow language itself; we did not invent

it. We found it, we grew up into it, though we may use it, interpret it, in very individual ways. What is at issue is not the fact of "borrowing" or "imitating," of being "derivative," being "influenced," but what one does with what is borrowed or imitated or derived; how deeply one assimilates it, takes it into oneself, compounds it with one's own experiences and thoughts and feelings, places it in relation to oneself, and expresses it in a new way, one's own."

– Oliver Sacks

Let's break this down:

Time: You have already, most likely, put in the time. If you are interested in creating a business that utilizes your skills and knowledge from your career, then you have put in your time. If you are starting on something new, start putting in your time now.

What's Next

Forgetting: I find that I must have a healthy dose of relaxation and play in between my focused work time. But by setting aside time away from your work, you are actually helping the creative process along. We can break this down even further by using the Pomodoro method: Work for 25 minutes and then take a 5-minute break. Take a short walk, feed the dogs, or do some yoga poses. Do this four times, and then take a longer 30-minute break. I find it useful at times to take a quick shower. The water seems to clear my head and get me feeling refreshed immediately. If I feel really stuck, I take a cold shower. Yikes! The most important part of this strategy is to get away from your work, distract yourself from the work, and give your mind a rest. This is an essential part of your creative process

Incubation: This may seem similar to time. I take this to mean

Jay Cradeur

spending time alone and in silence, hence my fascination and dogged determination to convert everyone into an avid meditator. By going to a state of silence, your ideas will naturally gestate and become fully formed. I think of it as a little bit of magic we all have at our disposal.

“Substantially all ideas are second-hand, consciously and unconsciously drawn from a million outside sources,”

– Mark Twain

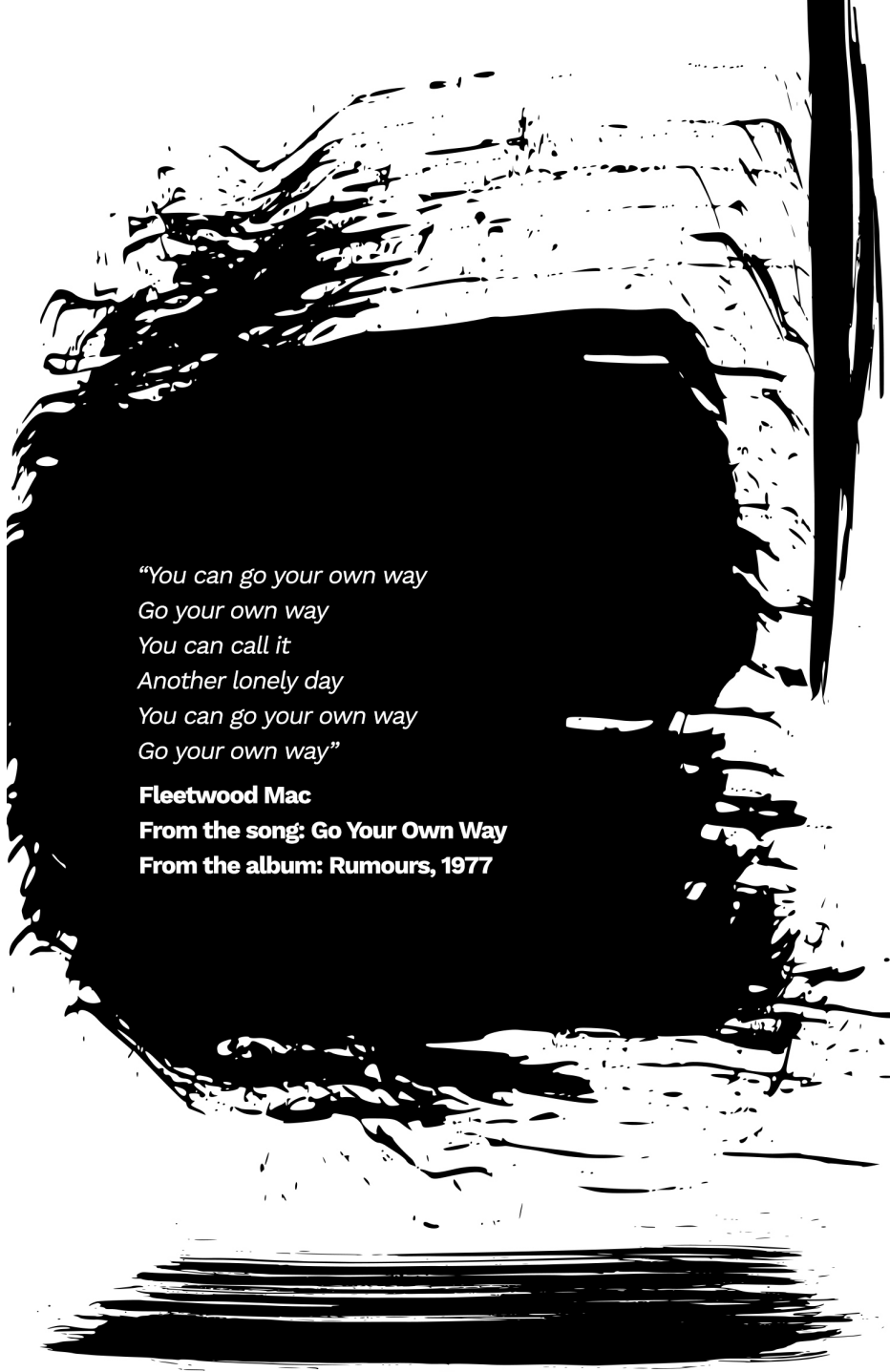
I find all of this to be extremely exciting and flat-out fun. This chapter is an invitation to run exuberantly towards everything that interests you. How great is that! Dive in headfirst. See what is out there. Feel for what resonates with you. These feelings will guide you on your creative journey. As the song says, *“Breathe in the air, don’t be afraid to care.”* Breathe in all that interests you and all that

What's Next

you care about. Not only is it the most fun you can have while working; this process will naturally guide you toward your own unique voice and your own unique way of doing your work.

Assignment:

Today, subscribe to 3 blogs, 3 podcasts, and order 3 new books that are in your field of interest. Dive in. Immerse yourself. Become an expert. Learn your trade. Then you can begin to share it.



*"You can go your own way
Go your own way
You can call it
Another lonely day
You can go your own way
Go your own way"*

Fleetwood Mac

From the song: Go Your Own Way

From the album: Rumours, 1977

Chapter 6:

Being Your Own CEO

"It is likely that most of what you currently learn at school will be irrelevant by the time you are 40...My best advice is to focus on personal resilience and emotional intelligence."

-Yuval Noah Harari

In order to be successful in your venture, you will need to learn to delegate all but the most essential of your work. You can't do it all and you shouldn't try to do it all. By trying to do it all, you will burn out and your deliverable product will suffer.

The skill which you must master right now, the task in front of you, is to learn to say and define exactly what you want. By becoming crystal clear about the end result of your project, you will be able to impart precise instructions to

those who can undertake the smaller components of the project.

Technical Know How

One trap many fall into is the claim (or excuse) that you don't know how to set yourself up to present and share your content. How do you build a website? How do you create a blog? How do you set up an e-commerce site? How do I make compelling Facebook ads? Today, on the Internet, there are people in all the countries around the world who are looking for you to be their customer. Websites like Fiverr.com, Upwork.com, and 99designs.com all provide lists of people who are experts in all the fields mentioned above and more. Global competition is wonderful for you, the consumer. You can get a logo made on Fiverr for just \$10. Someone can set you up for blogging for the same price. You can pay more to hire someone's Facebook advertising expertise.

Aces in Their Places

What's Next

My friend, Doug, from Tennessee shared this phrase with me back in 2004. I was heading up a team to handle the logistics for a 3-day workshop. I was assigning tasks and some of my assignments were not using the full capacity of the team members. Doug is a professional chef. At first, I did not have him working in the kitchen. With Doug's salient comment, I put Doug in charge of the kitchen. I needed something to be built, so I put my contractor friend in charge of that project. You get the point. Aces in Their Places. Knowing how to do all the technical stuff is not your job. You are most likely not an ace at graphic design. It is easy to get distracted by all the various components of sharing your work. These technological tasks can sap your creative energies and rob you of your most valuable commodity: time. Don't fall into that trap. Hire the experts. Let them come back to you with a solution. In the meantime, we work. We Write.

We sculpt. We conduct interviews for a podcast. We blog. Do your thing. Let the experts in their field do their thing.

Example

Recently, I had written 30 blog posts for another website. I was proud of the work, but all the posts, each with a picture, lived on someone else's website. I wanted those posts transferred to my website. Now, I could have copied and pasted all 30 blog posts myself. I could have downloaded all the photos and set them up in WordPress as the featured image. But Why? Why would I do this when I could hire someone else to do it?

I took 5 minutes to write up exactly what I wanted to be done. I then went to the website www.fiverr.com and selected 3 providers who specialized in WordPress work. I asked each of

What's Next

them for a quote on my mini project. Within 24 hours, I had 2 quotes. I made a selection and paid \$40 to have the work done. Within another 24 hours, all my posts had been copied over and were living on my website. This was a very good use of my \$40.

The other option I had was to do the work myself. I imagine it would have taken about 5 minutes per post, or nearly 3 hours to do this work myself. Let's say I value my time at \$100 per hour, this would be a \$300 investment. Instead, someone more skilled did the work, and I saved \$260.

Opportunity Cost

"A benefit, profit, or value of something that must be given up to acquire or achieve something else. Since every resource (land, money, time, etc.) can be put to alternative uses, every action, choice, or decision has an associated opportunity cost."

– www.businessdictionary.com

I invite you to begin thinking in terms of opportunity cost. What do you give up when you choose to do work such as designing a logo, or a home page of a website, or setting up an email funnel, rather than delegating it to someone who specializes in such tasks? Begin to ask yourself, “What is the most important work that I do?” If there is a job that needs to get done and it does not require you to do your most important work, delegate it.

Example

Recently, I was listening in on a Frank Kern live Facebook session. If you are not familiar with Frank Kern, I suggest you Google him. He has been making millions of dollars via Internet Marketing for close to 20 years. I think of him as the Grandfather of Internet Marketing. During the session, he said:

What's Next

"The formula is simple. Create a lead magnet, give it away for an email address, and put them in your email funnel. We all do it over and over again because it works."

He makes it sound so simple, but it is not. What kind of lead magnet should you use? What should be in your emails? How many emails should you send? What will be the upsell product? There are many facets to this "simple" formula. Why not delegate it?

Just this week, I met a woman who works for a one-year-old startup called Growlabs. Their website states they are an "all in one marketing and sales automation" company providing "targeted lead generation with powerful automation." This is an example of the power of delegation. I could try and figure out how to create the best lead generation system. But Why? Why would I spend an inordinate amount of time when I

Jay Cradeur

can hire someone else, an expert in this exact arena, to do the work at a much higher level? This company only does one thing. By hiring this company to do what they do best, I am freed up to do what I do best.

Your most important work is your most creative work, the work that requires the most out of you, that pushes you towards vulnerability, and that requires all that you have to give. If you are a painter, it is painting. If you are a writer, it is writing. If you are creating a new business, it is creating the business plan and then executing. If you are delivering a podcast, the work is conducting interviews.

Your job as a CEO is to clearly state what you want. You must specifically know what you expect of the finished product. This is the work of the delegator. The clearer your instructions, the better the final outcome and the

What's Next

less time you will spend on revisions.

"I find that many entrepreneurs are trying to do everything when it would be cheaper and more time-efficient to delegate, even if there are monetary costs associated with that."

- James Altucher

If I want a book cover, I delegate. If I want someone to edit my book, I delegate. If I want someone to set up an email funnel, I delegate. If I want someone to create a Facebook campaign, I delegate. The only thing I cannot and will not delegate is exactly what I am doing right now. Writing! I must focus on waking up early each morning, drinking my coffee, opening up my trusty MacBook Pro, and putting my fingers to the keyboard. This is my work. The more I can delegate, the more time and energy I have to do my true work.

Reducing Overwhelm

The other tremendous benefit to delegating is you will begin to reduce the amount of overwhelm you feel. Being a CEO of your own venture is challenging. By learning to delegate virtually everything other than your most essential work, you will begin to feel empowered rather than burdened by the task in front of you. You don't have to do it all. Rather, you will build a team of contributors and manage their work. To use a football analogy, you are the quarterback and not a lineman. You get to see the big picture, the 30,000-foot view, and utilize the various members of your team as you see fit to accomplish your goals.

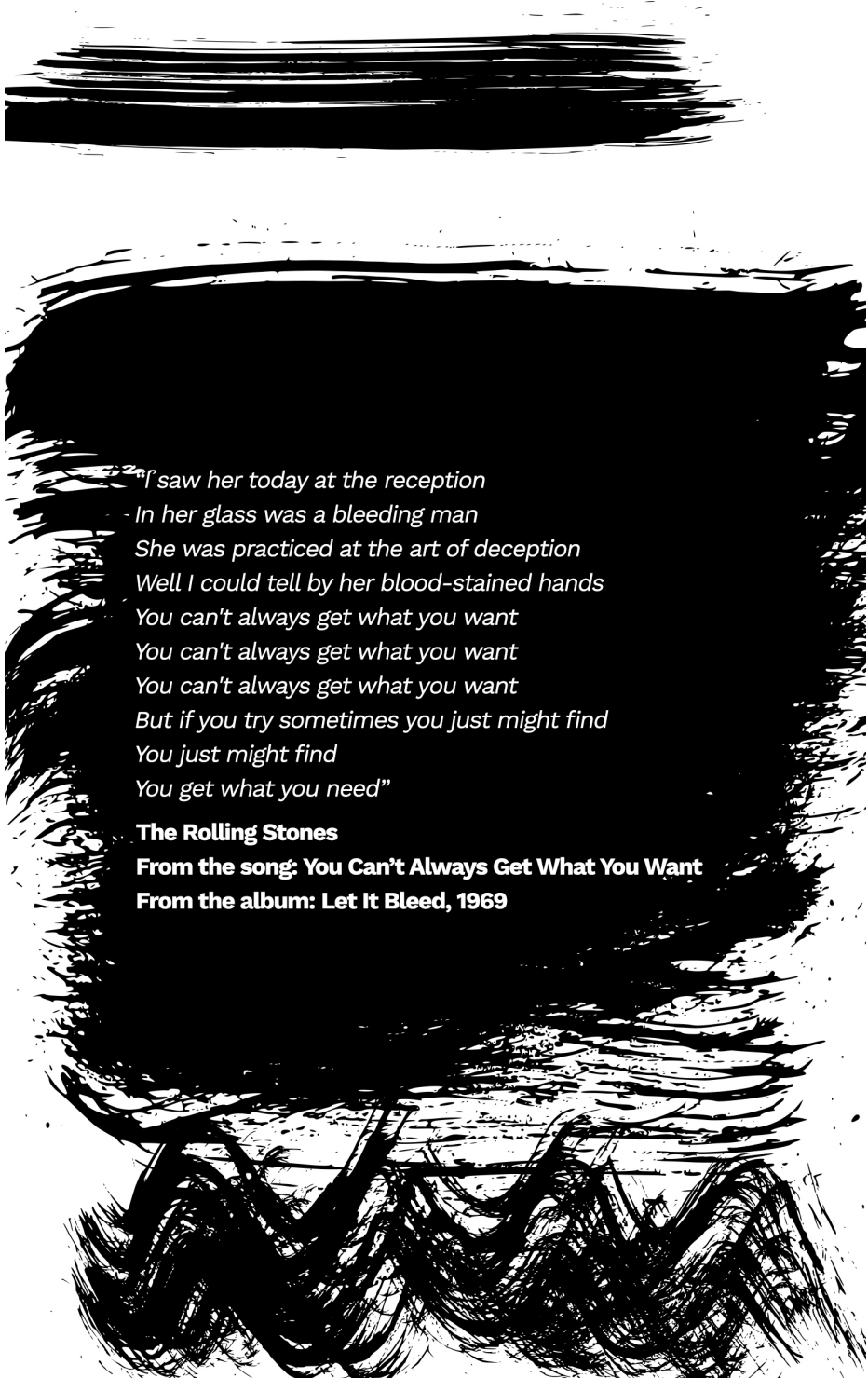
Begin to think about all that you can delegate. How many tasks can you outsource so that you can focus on your real work? This is how a CEO thinks. This is how you must begin to think in order to be

What's Next

competitive while also allowing you to create your best work. This is exactly how you *"go your own way."* You are your product. Focus on that.

Assignment

Determine one task you can delegate right now. Clearly define the final result you desire. Go to one of the websites mentioned in this chapter and request a quote from 3 providers. Then select one provider and get the work done.



*"I saw her today at the reception
In her glass was a bleeding man
She was practiced at the art of deception
Well I could tell by her blood-stained hands
You can't always get what you want
You can't always get what you want
You can't always get what you want
But if you try sometimes you just might find
You just might find
You get what you need"*

The Rolling Stones

From the song: You Can't Always Get What You Want

From the album: Let It Bleed, 1969

Chapter 7: Open the Room

“It’s very hard to put yourself out there, it’s very hard to be vulnerable, but those people who do that are the dreamers, the thinkers and the creators. They are the magic people of the world.”

– Amy Poehler, Actress

For many years, 15 or so, I participated in numerous men’s events. Some were weekly men’s groups. Others were 3-day events in which men flew in from around the country to sit together, share together, and learn together. Some of these I led, and for others, I was a participant. One concept that always hit home for me was the concept of speaking to open the room. It is a powerful way to increase your presence in the world. It is a tactical way to become a leader in your field.

What's Next

Another way to think about this concept is to substitute the word heart for the word room. Speak to open hearts. In our events, we were invited to speak authentically in a way that would open the hearts of the others in the room. During my weekly men's group, we would consistently challenge each other if we did not feel the sharing was "deep" enough.

Example

Compare these two shared stories:

#1. "There is a way that people communicate. People should communicate better. They only share things that don't really matter, things like the economy or the weather or their political thoughts. People need to start talking about real things. People should understand how important it is to be real with each other."

#2. "Last week, I was talking to my buddy, John, and he was going

on about American politics. I felt this was really a lost opportunity. I felt like, "hey, here we are, two guys, and we get a chance to connect, to share, and all we are going to talk about is politics?" So, when I had a chance, I said, "Hey, John, can I talk to you about my relationship with my wife? I have been having some real challenges and I would love to hear what you think." John really perked up and I told him about an argument that happened the night before. I immediately felt vulnerable. I shared all the details and I could see he was moved. He then shared a similar experience with his wife. In that moment, I connected with John in a way I had never before."

How Do You Open a Room?

In example #1, you will notice that I did not share any real feelings. Instead, I pontificated. I immediately began to teach and I became preachy.

What's Next

This is the surest way to close a room. No one wants to hear a lecture. There is no juice, no humanity, nor emotion for any of us to connect to.

In example #2, I shared real feelings. I shared a feeling of loss and then a feeling of connection. I have noticed over and over again, that by going to a vulnerable space and staying there, my words and the corresponding feelings will almost always open the room. Did you feel the difference between the two examples? *"In her glass was a bleeding man."* Similarly, in this lyric is an image, a feeling, and a compassion which opens the room.

Sharing with "I" Statements

Whenever I feel the impulse to go into teacher mode or preachy mode, I need to stop and ask myself, "what are my feelings about this topic that I want to share to open the room?" For example, I might say something as innocuous as

“People should pay more attention to how they drive.” How can we turn this around? Instead, I could say, “Yesterday, some guy in a red Prius cut me off as I was trying to get on the freeway. When he did that, I got very angry and felt like throwing an egg at his car.” Do you see the difference?

By putting your focus on “I” statements followed by real feelings, you will notice that people are more likely to listen to you and engage with you. It is a very powerful way to speak. As I write this, the holiday season is upon us and many people will be spending time with relatives and living through varying degrees of familial stress. Speaking with “I” statements can be a very effective way to communicate with others.

Let us imagine a scenario where you are feeling shamed by someone in your family. This seems to happen quite often when parents

What's Next

are together with their children. Usually, when this happens, the person being shamed feels bad. However, instead of being upset or snapping back, what if you could say something like: "You know, Uncle Jack, when you say that about me, I feel shamed and it really hurts my feelings." This way, you are taking complete ownership of your feelings, and without disparaging Uncle Jack, you are sharing how his words are impacting you.

The world is full of people who will tell you how you should do this or that. The world is also full of people who will only talk about superficial topics. However, the world is full of those same people who are longing for connection. Connection opens the room. Connection opens hearts. You can be the source of the connection by allowing yourself to be vulnerable, to be scared, and to say it, whatever it may be, anyway. Whenever I hear someone share something that

Jay Cradeur

brings up fear and vulnerability, it is always a powerful and heartfelt experience. I feel both honored and grateful to be witness to such genuine self-expressions. In that vulnerability lives our humanity and we all thrive to feel our humanity together.

How Does This Impact Your Work?

“Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity and change.”

– Brené Brown

Whether you are a writer, a podcaster, an accountant, or a social advocate, the more you are willing to share your deepest self, the more response and engagement you will garner. Recently, an associate was sharing that during his podcasts, his guests were not sharing many interesting details. I suggested that he lead by example and share some interesting, heartfelt stories of his own struggles and

What's Next

trials as an entrepreneur. In this way, he would be inviting his guests to do the same thing. It works.

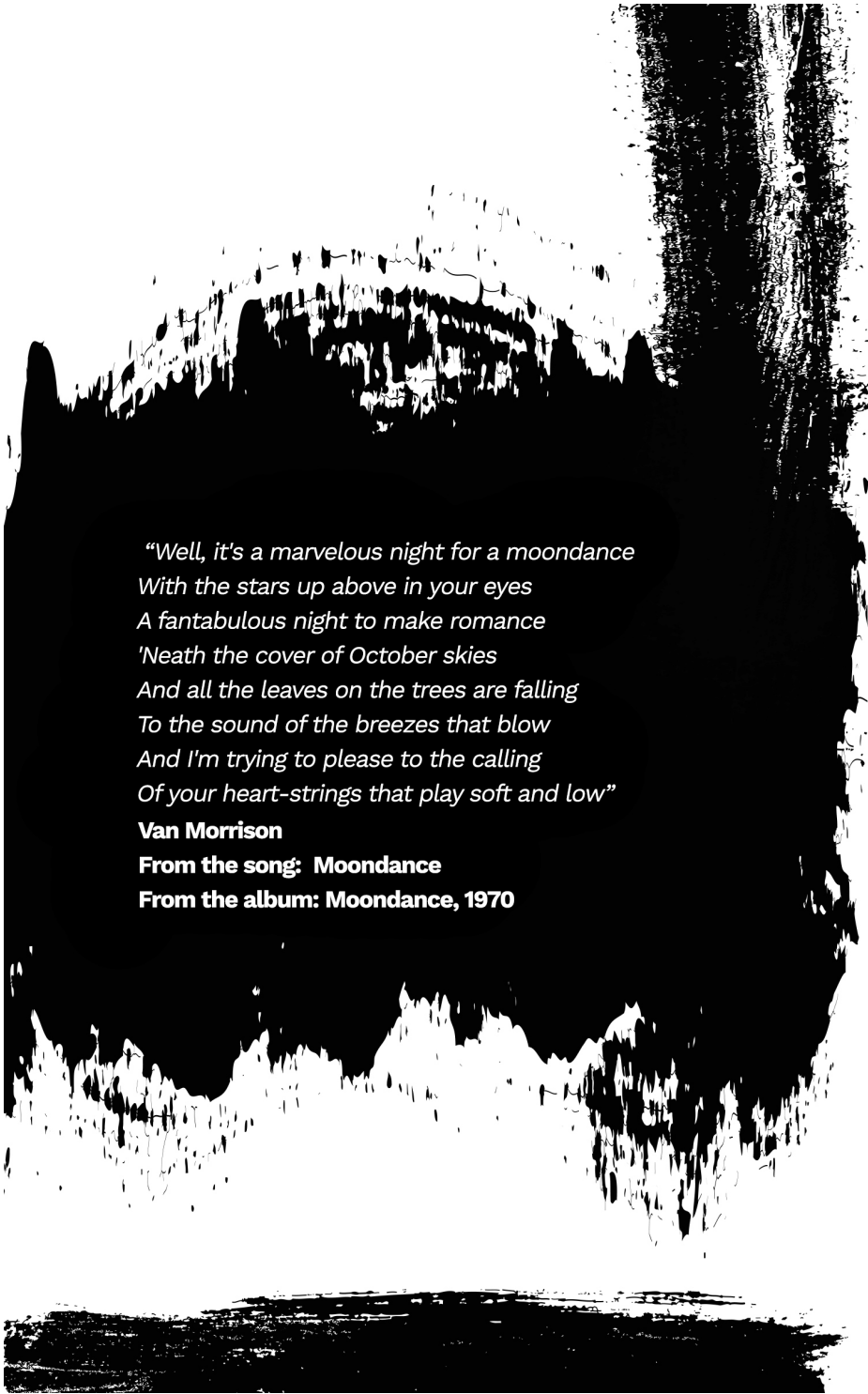
In all my years of sales, I learned that if I wanted to get close and intimate with someone, I needed to lead the way. I have always lived by the credo that 90% of sales is relationship. I needed to share something that would make me vulnerable, human, real, compassionate, and that would speak to my prospect. I needed to open the room while others would list features and benefits and close the room. Without my vulnerability, I was just like every other salesman. The only way I could truly stand out was to be authentically and personally me. Sharing “me” is my deepest gift. And it is for you too.

Assignment

Take a few minutes and think about your project. How can you make it

Jay Cradeur

more uniquely “you?” How can you speak more authentically so that you open the room to your project where more people will be allowed access?



*"Well, it's a marvelous night for a moondance
With the stars up above in your eyes
A fantabulous night to make romance
'Neath the cover of October skies
And all the leaves on the trees are falling
To the sound of the breezes that blow
And I'm trying to please to the calling
Of your heart-strings that play soft and low"*

Van Morrison

From the song: Moondance

From the album: Moondance, 1970

Chapter 8: Get Some Slack

*“Do you have the patience to wait
Till your mud settles and the
water is clear?
Can you remain unmoving
Till the right action arises by
itself?”*

– Lao Tzu

Right now, you are under attack. Every moment, companies are plotting against you in order to get you to do what they want. Not what you want. What they want. What they want from you is face time, your attention on their website or service. Google, Facebook, Amazon, Twitter, Netflix, Hulu, Snapchat, Instagram, and a hundred other online entities want you to look at their offerings. It's business.

I invite you to experience these assaults as inputs. We all need

Jay Cradeur

to get better at managing inputs. Inputs like those mentioned above not only zap us of our creative energy; they also fill our consciousness with needless and useless information. They degrade us. They mute us. They make us less potent.

The Internet is not the only source of inputs. We get inputs at work, in our relationships, in the news, and in our music. I liken these inputs to static or white noise, and our job is to reduce the static so that we can not only think clearly, but also be a clear vessel for our own inner knowledge to speak to us.

Inputs force us to react. As a creative being, our preference is to be proactive. But if all we are getting is static inputs from all directions, it is virtually impossible to create effectively and in tune with our inner voice.

Imagine a glass of water full of mud. When you constantly jiggle

What's Next

the glass, the water is dirty, grimy, and dark. But what happens when you stop the jiggling? When the glass becomes still, the mud settles and the water gets clear. Now we can see through the water, through to our vision.

Creating slack means to create space within yourself so that you can focus on the task in front of you. I invite you to conduct an experiment. Go one day without accessing the Internet. You can make phone calls, but don't go on Facebook or any of the social media services. Notice how much you want to check in and see what is going on online. Feel how you are pulled toward the latest tweet, or text, or WhatsApp message.

Creating slack means to cultivate stillness. In doing so, you will be creating an environment in which you can do your best work. In many ways, cultivating stillness requires you to break an

Jay Cradeur

addiction. You will need to see the bigger picture in order to stay strong in your efforts to maintain a feeling of inner stillness.

When you create slack, you free up your energy to listen to the subtle signals of your own consciousness. Creating slack allows you to focus, devoid of all the distracting inputs, and tap the magic that lives within you. This book was originally titled: Embrace Silence. This is how important I feel it is that we entrepreneurs manage our inputs and live in the silence which births creativity.

The only place from which you can listen is a place of silence. Ask yourself, how much silence do you experience in a day? These inputs for which you are addicted are a loud noise in your life. How likely are you to hear the whispers of a brilliant idea when all those around are yelling at

What's Next

you? You will miss it each and every time.

Limiting input is a key to your creative process. This applies to every aspect of your life including your work, your marriage, your children, and whatever you consider to be your passion. This cannot be stressed enough. You are a pawn being played by big corporations. Now, more than ever, technology has allowed others to influence your behaviors while, at the same time, making it seem like it is all your choice. It is brilliant, but it is also destructive.

*"How can the prisoner reach
outside except by thrusting
through the wall?"*

**-Captain Ahab,
Moby Dick by Herman Melville**

Positive Constraints

When we take something away from our lives, it is generally considered a bad thing. "Why

Jay Cradeur

can't I have it all?" I suggest that there are certain things that don't serve you and for which you should severely and, without prejudice, significantly reduce in your life. I love the term, positive constraints, for truly, constraints are what will allow you to flourish in this next exciting phase of your life.

Remember the quote, "hard choices, easy life. Easy choices, hard life." This may seem like a hard choice, but it will make your life so much easier in the long run. Start with baby steps in the beginning. Limit your Facebook time to 15 minutes per day. Only watch 30 minutes a day of Netflix. Do what you can to reduce the inputs and increase the positive constraints.

The other thing that dramatically increases the slack is meditation. I wrote an entire chapter on it because of the power of this simple practice. If you could

What's Next


substitute 20 minutes of Internet time for 20 minutes of meditation, you will see an immediate and exhilarating shift in your creative energy. You will get more done and you will see more clearly. Your inner voice will have a listener who is attuned and ready for the subtle messages that emanate.

Assignment

Tomorrow, keep track of how much time you spend on the Internet, watching programs, buying things on Amazon, and any other activities that are not focused directly on work, your relationships, and your creative efforts. Create a chart that shows the inputs and time spent. Next, challenge yourself to cut out at least one hour of these inputs and substitute 20 minutes of quiet time. You can meditate, take a walk, sit in nature, and listen to *"the sound of the breezes that blow."* Commit to

Jay Cradeur

this for one week and see what
comes your way.



*"When Black Friday comes
I fly down to Muswellbrook
Gonna strike all the big red words
From my little black book"*

Steely Dan

From the song: Black Friday

From the album: Katy Lied, 1975

Chapter 9: Doing the Work

*"Inspiration Is for **Amateurs**—The Rest of Us Just Show Up and Get to Work!"*

– **Chuck Close**, Artist

This chapter is about decimating the fantasy, the myth, the bullshit surrounding doing the work you love. You may have passion. You may love it. You may not be able to think about doing any other kind of work. However, it is still work. As the quote indicates, if you are waiting around for inspiration to hit, you are an amateur. There is nothing wrong with being an amateur, but it may not be what you are looking for. Amateurs work when they want, write, paint, sculpt, create a video, or post a blog when they want. It is very hit or miss. Ultimately, I did not find it very satisfying. Is this your dream

What's Next

vision of you, to be an amateur at what you do? Or are you, instead, aspiring to be a professional?

The good news is that you can transform from an amateur to a professional in an instant. How do you do it? You commit right now to spending a certain amount of time each day doing your work. No matter what, you work, day in and day out. You may feel some fear rising up from your gut right about now. This is a good sign. Your gut, or better stated, your intuition, is telling you that you are on the right path.

Being a professional means you will have to become friends with your fear. You will have to incorporate everything we have covered in this book thus far. You will have to change your narrative. You may have been telling yourself this: "I have been an amateur for so long, how can I change?" Let's transform. Now you may tell yourself:

Jay Cradeur

“Everything I have done to this point in my life has led me to the choice to become a professional now. I am ready!”

Each day, you will come up against your biggest challenge, which is your resistance. This cannot be avoided. It can only be managed. You will need to see each challenge as an opportunity to overcome that which is in your way. Each challenge has the seed of self-knowledge, which is the greatest gift you can give yourself.

Example

A common challenge I face is this thought which appears from time to time: “I will run out of good things to write (or create or do, or share, or whatever your case may be).” If I share my heart and put it down on paper, maybe I will run out. Then what will I do? How can I commit to a life of writing when I fear I only have a few

What's Next

important things to say? Perhaps you can relate.

Resolution

Bring it on. As you will discover, as I have discovered, the best stuff comes from this place of not knowing. My best work has come from the simple act of sitting in front of my laptop with absolutely no idea what I will write about. I call this experience, staring into the void. Once you have done this a few times, you will see how there is a well of creativity just waiting to be unlocked. The really good stuff lies beyond the thinking mind.

Professionals know this. This is perhaps one of the most exhilarating aspects of being a creative being. We face our fears, we prepare for work, and we begin creating and editing. *"Gonna strike all the big red words from my little black book."* What happens next is a type of magic. Words and images and ideas come

Jay Cradeur

forth out of nowhere. The simple act of putting yourself in a position to do the work creates an energy that generates work.

“Be regular and orderly in your life, so that you may be violent and original in your work.”

– Gustave Flaubert

Good analogy.

You can push a boulder up a hill. This is the thinking mind. Or you can allow the boulder to roll back down the hill. This is the void. You can force it up the hill, but then it will roll down the other side. What if you don't know that getting that boulder up the hill is the right thing to do? What if everything you want is right where you are? Letting the boulder do the natural thing may lead to a very valuable question: “Now what?” And there it is, the void again.

Now what?

What's Next

As a creative being, you will be having a daily dialogue with yourself, however, it is with your deeper self. "Now what?" This is a very powerful place to be, completely devoid of any answers. This is where you embrace the tension, the silence that is the most seminal part of the creative process. Embrace it and do the work and you are a professional. Feel it, and make yourself a ham and cheese sandwich, and you are an amateur. Now what?

Suffer a bit. It's good for you.

Over the past 10 years, I have participated in over 50 Native American sweat lodge ceremonies. This is one of my favorite of all rituals. A group of us gather together with one intention: suffer for the good of others. When the ritual begins, we crawl into the lodge which is like a hut but only 3 feet tall. It is tall enough to sit in and crawl in, but not tall enough to stand. When the entrance is closed, the hut is

pitch-black. In the center of the hut is a 3-foot circular pit about 1-foot deep. Outside of the hut is a large fire, which has been burning for 3 hours, heating up 40 or so lava rocks (they hold heat very well). Once we are gathered in the hut, the leader of the ritual asks for rocks to be brought into the hut, one by one. Each rock is red hot, and in the darkness, they look very beautiful.

Once half of the rocks have been placed in the pit, and the room is getting very warm, the fire master enters the pit and the door is closed. What happens next is both fearful and exhilarating. The leader begins to pour water on the rocks, creating an extremely hot steam that permeates the hut. At first, it feels unbearable, frightening, and life-threatening. Thoughts of getting out soon appear. Next, we are invited to speak. The speaking in a sweat lodge is very honest. We are all suffering from the heat. There is

What's Next

no time to be cool, or clever, or superficial.

After a while, the leader calls for the door to be opened and we get a respite from the heat as cool air rushes in. It's a good feeling. However, we all know that there is the second half to go. After a few minutes, the remaining rocks are brought in, and we begin what is usually the hottest part of the ritual as more water is poured on the remaining rocks. Here, the sharing gets more personal, more intimate, more real. Some have to leave the lodge as fear gets the better of them. Others put their mouth toward the ground where the air is the coolest. Others sit upright, knowing this is the work, and it will eventually come to an end. This too shall pass.

While the sweat lodge ritual is one of purification, there is also an element of suffering for the good of the tribe. The Native Americans believe that by putting

ourselves in this very challenging environment and enduring the heat for an hour or so, we are indirectly contributing to the benefit of others. In the same way, by enduring the tension and showing up each day, we suffer in our own way for the good of the work and the people the work will impact. We, as change agents, as professionals, face our demons, learn to understand the process, experience the magic of translating messages from the void, and create our work. We do not, however, perspire as much as sweat lodge participants.

Being a professional is a choice. Being in a sweat lodge is a choice. They are uncomfortable choices for sure.

*“Hard Choices, Easy Life
Easy Choices, Hard Life”*

– Jerzy Gregorek

When you look back at your vision for your life, is being a professional in support of your

What's Next

vision, or not? If your vision is big enough, being a professional is seminal to your success. Can you structure your life so that you can do your work every day? It is a matter of priorities. Allow your vision to guide you.

Creating your work environment.

It is important that you create a daily work environment and routine. Otherwise, it is far too easy to get distracted by outside influences or buy into your chattering mind's completely reasonable reasons for why you don't need to work today. My own routine involves preparing tea, putting a green sarong over my legs, inserting earbuds, playing Spotify's Peaceful Piano playlist, lighting a candle, and beginning to type. Once all systems are Go!, I begin. How do you begin? In my case, I begin to type.

*"No thinking – that comes later.
You must write your first draft
with your heart. You rewrite with
your head. The first key to*

Jay Cradeur

*writing is... to write, not to
think!"*

**– From the movie, Finding
Forrester**

Rarely has inspiration fired me up with a cacophony of witty words or salient declarations. Regardless, I start typing. At first, the words come out slowly, and it often seems nothing will be good on this day. Then something happens, and it happens each and every time. It is like a dam breaks and I get into a flow. My thinking mind is temporarily halted and a line or a paragraph comes out and it shines. Here, again, you have a choice. You can ride this wave of creativity, or you can stop. I find the energy of creating something good can stop me if I let it. My thinking mind says something like, "Great work, Jay, you wrote something good here. Maybe it is time to celebrate!" Professionals keep on going, squeezing every ounce of great material that you can while

What's Next

you are in that magical space. I have heard of authors who can write for 8 hours a day. I cannot. I usually tap out at 4 to 5 hours. Other times I want to write more, but I cannot. My mind seems to stop working creatively. It's true. I can't always get what I want. But when I give it my full, undivided attention, I get what I need.

Capturing Ideas

You will also notice that your subconscious will continue to work on your project. Throughout the day, you will get new ideas. I suggest that you have a way to write them down. There are plenty of apps available which make it easy to jot down ideas into your smartphone (I use and recommend Simpleology). You can begin to incorporate those ideas into the following day's session.

Feel the Love

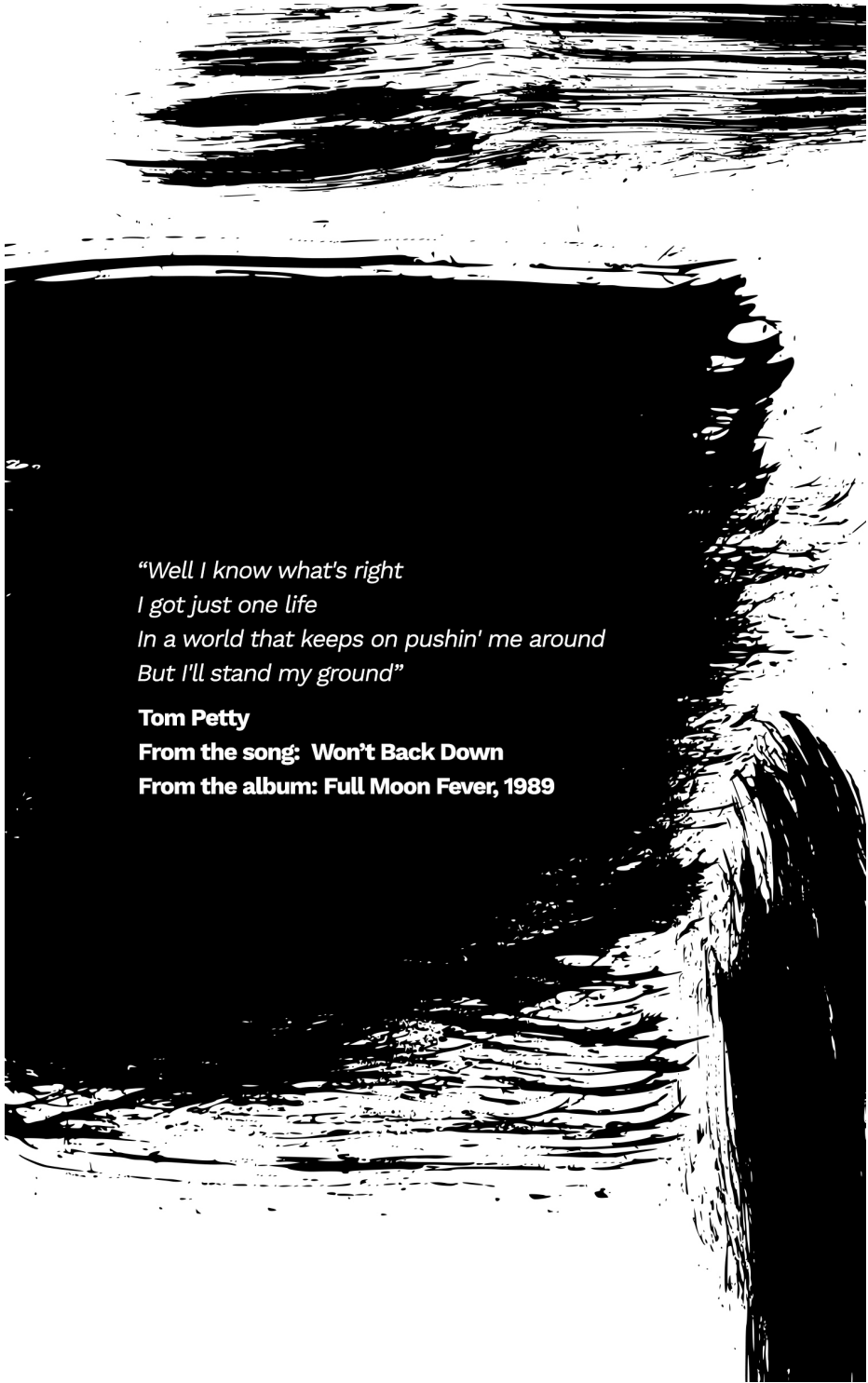
When you are done, allow yourself the joy and exhilaration of a job

well done. If you still want that ham and cheese sandwich, go eat it. If you want to respond to emails, you can do it with the knowledge that you did good work today. I blow out my candle, take a shower, and get on with my day. You will notice that your day (or night, or sleep, depending on when you work) shows up much different having done your work. You will have a sense of accomplishment, of confidence, for you embraced the silence, handled the resistance, began to work, and delivered on your promise. On days – even planned days – of not working, my days feel lacking. Something is missing. My energy is not the same. I missed an opportunity to create.

Assignment:

Create a daily schedule that incorporates creative time. At a minimum, allow yourself 1 hour for nothing but creating. Then stick to your schedule. Marvel at the amazing work you can create.

What's Next



*"Well I know what's right
I got just one life
In a world that keeps on pushin' me around
But I'll stand my ground"*

Tom Petty

From the song: Won't Back Down

From the album: Full Moon Fever, 1989

Chapter 10:

Want to Buy a Pencil?

"People have to be secure in order to transfer their money to you. Never forget that. How you make them secure is to not come at them from above (action, yang) telling them how marvelous the product is and how marvelous you are. Instead, work on their comfort zone first, keeping silent for the most part, leading things along effortlessly by asking questions (nonaction, yin). When you do get to talk, be sure to tell them that everything is cozy, safe, and secure. People need to hear that. Work on their positive energy, and tell them about the good fortune that is about to descend upon them in these exciting and positive times. Then, and only then, mention the dumb screws."

**– Stuart Wilde, Infinite Self: 33
Steps to Reclaiming Your Inner
Power**

What's Next

This is a topic that is rarely discussed in books on creativity, writing, or undertaking any project. But if you are going to create something special, you will need to figure out how to enroll others to appreciate and buy your work. Otherwise, unless you are independently wealthy, you will not be able to continue on with your passion and love for your work. Someone needs to buy what you are selling.

I have been involved in sales (the dirty S-word) for over 40 years. My career began as a 13-year-old paperboy who needed to go to each customer's door and ask for payment (payment was optional for the Contra Costa Times back in the 70's). In college, I took a summer job selling books door to door. I have sold advertising in many forms, insurance, telecommunications and Internet marketing products. In each case, I needed one vital element.

Tell a Story

People love a good story. The story may be about the service you are providing. Even better, if you can tell a story that directly relates to the lives of your prospects, you will find enrollment. By telling a story, you can put your prospects at ease. You can shift a prospect's mindset from, "I don't want to be sold!" to something like, "Oh, let me listen to a story and see where it takes me." Enrollment then is getting someone to follow along with your story. The longer you can engage them in your story, say through a blog or YouTube channel, the more likely a prospect will become a customer. The more you can share your story, the longer the prospect will become engaged without you asking them to pay you for your product.

Trust

By providing an engaging story (sharing your wisdom) devoid of

What's Next

any purchase options, you begin to build trust. Very few people will buy from you if they don't trust you. If, however, you have provided valuable materials free of charge over a prolonged period of time, it is natural for a prospect to trust you, be engaged, and be open to purchasing something in the future. The story engenders trust. Trust opens the door to enrollment.

Who is Casey Neistat?

If you are not one of the 6 million subscribers to Casey Neistat's vlog, you may not have heard of him. For two years, Casey created a 10-minute video each and every day. His videos are presented on YouTube. And yes, that is correct, he has 6 million subscribers, people who love his videos so much they subscribed to his channel. It would appear that Casey is not selling anything. But he is. He is selling his videos to anyone who will watch them. His

sales metric is eyeballs that watch his videos. YouTube pays Casey \$2 for every 1,000 views. So, let's do the math. If everyone who subscribed to his channel watched just one video, you would have the following: $6,000,000 \times \$2$ per thousand equals \$12,000. His most viewed video in which he shares his experience of flying first class tallied over 47 million views. People are engaged in his story, his life, they trust him because he is not asking them to buy anything, and they buy his service by watching his videos.

Who is Sam Harris?

Most podcasters make money by promoting goods and services by way of spoken commercials before, during, and after the podcast. Podcaster, Marc Maron, is particularly good at intertwining his advertisements into his opening monologue before he conducts his guest interview. What makes Sam Harris unique is that he

What's Next

refused to accept advertising dollars. Sam Harris presents a podcast that covers a wide range of topics including politics, the ISIS crisis, science, and the environment. He is my favorite podcaster. But rather than use advertisements, Sam asks his listeners to make donations to his podcast.

Sam Harris makes it clear that if you cannot afford to make a payment, enjoy the podcast for free. This builds trust. After the trust was built, I found myself compelled to make a donation. He is putting out great content, week after week, and I wanted to support the show. This is another example of enrollment. Engage over time and then provide an opportunity for payment or donation.

Define Your Audience

Who is your avatar? Have you heard this question before? You most likely have heard it before

because it is so important. You are not on a mission to reach everybody. Your mission is to reach those people who are predisposed to your message. I am a 58-year-old man. I am nowhere near being ready to retire. In fact, I feel I am approaching the most productive and profitable time in my life.

Statistics suggest that 90% of baby boomers approach retirement without the financial means to retire and maintain their current lifestyle. That is a huge market. What are those people supposed to do to generate revenue in their 50s and 60s? This is my story. This is their story. In my writings, I share how a baby boomer can remain vital and creative and earn money.

Touch Their Emotions

Your story must touch the prospect's emotions. If you don't speak to them where they live, your message will not resonate. I

What's Next

know that many boomers are asking themselves this question: "Now what?" While ageism is illegal in the United States, it exists. If I were to go and interview for a "regular" job, odds are I would lose out to a younger candidate. I might have more experience, be more disciplined, and be better able to immediately contribute, but I still would not get the job because I do not fit into most companies' corporate culture. I'm too old. This story touches the emotions of most boomers who are my avatar, my target audience. This is a winning combination.

The Long and Winding Road

Making money is an essential component of any artistic endeavor. If you want to keep doing what you love, you will need some money coming in. You will need to do a reality check here. Are you up for the long haul? Are you willing to create a story,

Jay Cradeur

share your story, and then ask for payment?

"The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure that you seek."

– Joseph Campbell


The model that works is to provide free content and keep giving it away, build trust, and then over time, ask for payment. *"In a world that keeps on pushin' me around.. but I'll stand my ground."* It is a long road. You will get lovers and haters. Bask in the love and ignore the hate. It is rare that someone bursts onto the scene and gets immediate recognition and compensation. But if you are up for the challenge, if you *"won't back down,"* you can set yourself up for a lifestyle of creativity, abundance, and fulfillment.

Assignment:

On a piece of paper, deliver the following:

What's Next

1. Define your audience. Who are you trying to reach?
2. Write your story in no more than 3 paragraphs. What is compelling about your story and how can you express it so that you are relatable to your audience?



*"But you're gonna have to serve somebody,
Yes you are
You're gonna have to serve somebody
Well, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord
But you're gonna have to serve somebody"*

Bob Dylan

From the song: Gotta Serve Somebody

From the album: Slow Train Coming, 1979

Chapter 11:

You Deserve It. Really!

"Only God creates. The rest of us just copy."

– Michelangelo

There is an insidious little trait that we all carry. It can paralyze you. It can make you feel like a loser. It can make you think you can't achieve your goals. This trait is comparing yourself to others. It is going to happen. It can't be helped. But it can be managed.

A Story

"Some years ago, I (Author Neil Gaiman) was lucky enough invited to a gathering of great and good people: artists and scientists, writers and discoverers of things. And I felt that at any moment they would realise that I didn't qualify to be there, among these people who had really done things.

Jay Cradeur

On my second or third night there, I was standing at the back of the hall, while a musical entertainment happened, and I started talking to a very nice, polite, elderly gentleman about several things, including our shared first name. And then he pointed to the hall of people, and said words to the effect of, "I just look at all these people, and I think, what the heck am I doing here? They've made amazing things. I just went where I was sent."

And I said, "Yes. But you were the first man on the moon. I think that counts for something."

And I felt a bit better. Because if Neil Armstrong felt like an imposter, maybe *everyone* did. Maybe there weren't any grown-ups, only people who had worked hard and also got lucky and were slightly out of their depth, all of us doing the best job we could, which is all we can really hope for."

– Neil Gaiman

The Imposter Syndrome

*“Imposter syndrome can be **defined** as a collection of feelings of inadequacy that persist despite evident success. 'Imposters' suffer from chronic self-doubt and a sense of intellectual fraudulence that override any feelings of success or external proof of their competence.”*

– Harvard Business Review

Do you ever feel like a fraud? Do you ever think you are in way over your head? Do you ever look at the greats in your particular field and think, “I can never do what they did!” Congratulations. You are human.

I most often feel the imposter syndrome when I think about Tony Robbins. I will never write as many books, give such an impressive on-stage performance, say as many amazing things, live

Jay Cradeur

in such a big house by the water,
etc. Blah. Blah. Blah. And the
beat goes on. I have similar
feelings about Tim Ferriss,
Anthony Bourdain, Seth Godin, Sam
Harris, and so many others.

So what!

That is really the attitude you
must take. These thoughts pop into
my head and your head, and we can
give them weight, or we can thank
them for sharing and get back to
work. Clearly, the imposter
syndrome does not help you or me
to produce our best work. Rather,
these thoughts are a form of
paralysis that can derail hours,
days, and even weeks of your life.

Who do you serve?

Bob Dylan says, *"you gotta serve
somebody."* I find this to be a
powerful direction for dealing
with the imposter syndrome. In the
same way that alcoholics doing the
12 steps turn over their lives to
a power higher than themselves,

What's Next

you can turn over all your thoughts to a higher goal or ideal. By doing so, you can stay focused and realize you are on your very own path regardless of what others have done before you.

Example

I serve my higher purpose. I feel I have a calling to write and share my ideas with others. It does not matter if others do it better, or in more volume, or with greater fanfare. I have a job to do and it is my own unique job. I have a unique voice and it will resonate with some and not with others.

By keeping myself focused on my higher purpose, all of the other noise in my head is just that: noise. It does not have any meaning. It does not need to impact me. I have work to do. I've gotta serve somebody, or something, and in doing so, I am

empowered to soldier on despite the ramblings of an insecure mind.

Who Do You Serve?

This is such an important topic. Without properly identifying and remedying the imposter syndrome, you will be hard pressed to produce anything of significance. Instead, you will be frozen with fear, mired in self-doubt, and unwilling to put in the hard work to make your greatest contribution.

Find a Muse

In his epic book, “The War of Art”, Steven Pressfield shares the final step of his daily writing preparation ritual:

“The last thing I do before I sit down to work is to say my prayer to the Muse. I say it out loud, in absolute earnest. Only then do I get down to business.”

Muse: a person or personified force who is the source of inspiration for a creative artist.

What's Next

It is not mandatory that you have a muse. I am sure many writers and artists did not. But I do know that when things get difficult, creative life seems to work better with a muse. Who do you serve?

"I show up in my writing room at approximately 10 A.M. every morning without fail. Sometimes my muse sees fit to join me there and sometimes she doesn't, but she always knows where I'll be. She doesn't need to go hunting in the taverns or on the beach or drag the boulevard looking for me."

– Author, Tom Robbins

Tricking the Mind

By surrendering your goals to a higher power, be it your calling, or a muse, or a commitment to excellence, you are telling your mind to focus on something other than your feelings of inadequacies. The predominant thought then becomes one of service. With "being of service" as your primary motive, all other

thoughts fall by the wayside. You become freed up to create. Your mind is clear. You can do your work unimpeded by doubt.

Battling with Ego

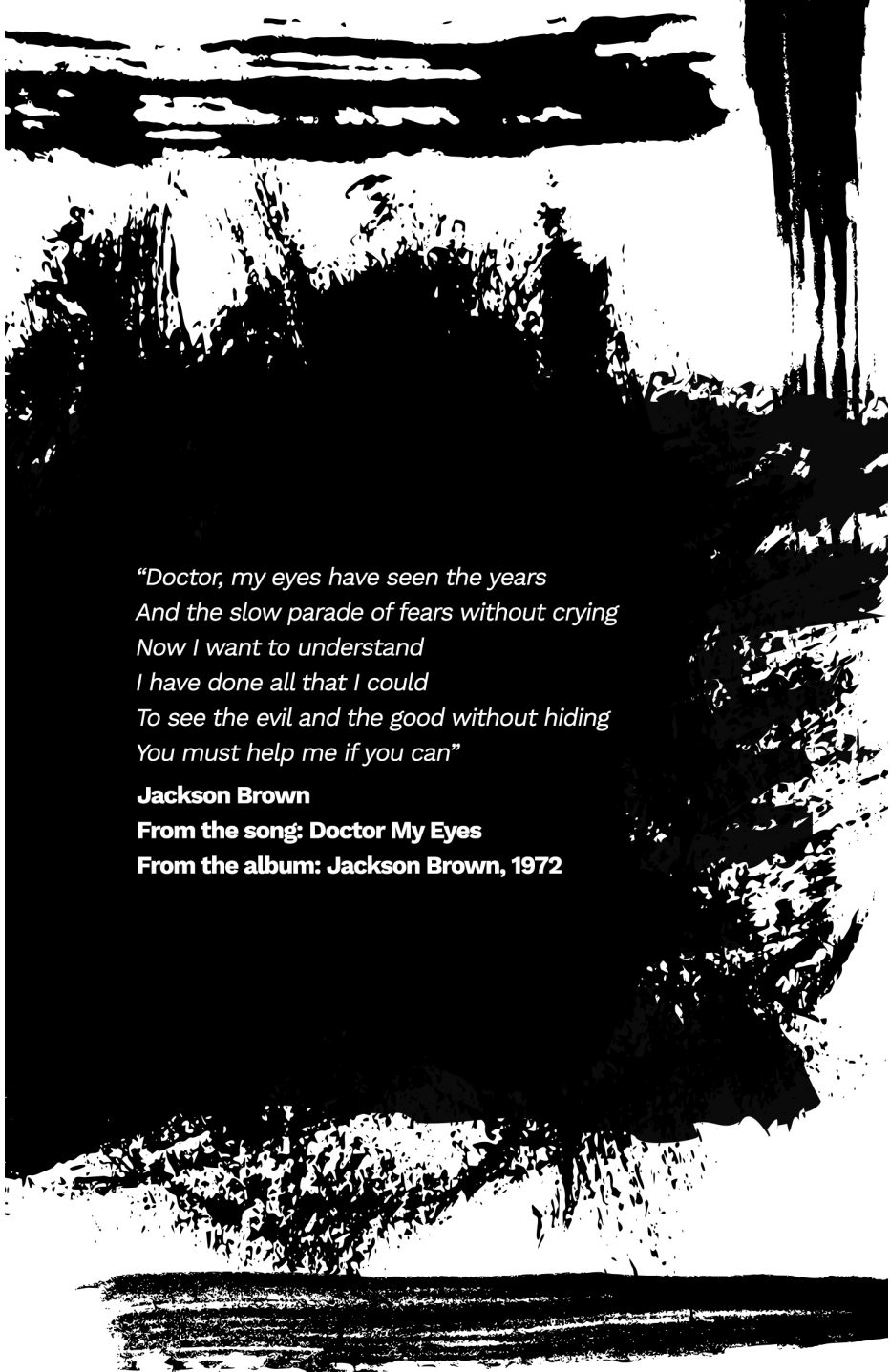
The fastest way to win over ego is to surrender. Ego, that pernicious little devil that keeps knocking on the door of your mind, gets quiet when you surrender. When you fight, ego gets strong. Ego resists. Ego wastes your time. When you soften and accept, ego has nothing to push against. You are free and, in that freedom, you can create your best work. This is the real stuff, the real work. These are the keys to the creative kingdom.

Assignment:

Write down how resistance shows up for you. What specific thoughts does your ego throw at you to derail your productivity and creativity? See if you observe a pattern. Who do you compete

What's Next

against, or compare yourself to?
Does this serve you?



*"Doctor, my eyes have seen the years
And the slow parade of fears without crying
Now I want to understand
I have done all that I could
To see the evil and the good without hiding
You must help me if you can"*

Jackson Brown

From the song: Doctor My Eyes

From the album: Jackson Brown, 1972

Chapter 12: New Creative Paradigm

“Everyone at a high level has a huge amount of chess understanding, and much of what separates the great from the very good is deep presence, relaxation of the conscious mind, which allows the unconscious to flow unhindered.”

– Josh Waitzkin, The Art of Learning

There are 5 components to get started with a creative venture so that you will maintain momentum and never look back. They are:

1. Work with a coach
2. Work together with a team who are also committed to professionalism and doing good work.
3. Share your work every week.
4. Provide and receive ongoing feedback

What's Next

5. Trim tab your work based on feedback and proceed forward with the creative process

Coaches:

In my life, I have had three coaches. They were three men who I worked with directly, not through a book, not by listening to Ted Talks, not by doing a Google search, but by engaging with them and their organizations. In all cases, I paid good money to learn, to become a better person, and to thrive on and better understand this lonely planet of ours.

In the 1980's, I was introduced to a program called the est training. I first heard about it in my apartment at UC Berkeley. My roommate, Phil, had just attended a two-weekend event and came back a different person. He seemed to know something that I did not. After a year of resistance, I attended my first est training in Chicago. After graduating from the Business School, I had taken a job

Jay Cradeur

with the Leo Burnett Advertising Agency. I knew all along that I wanted to participate in the est training, but I did not like the idea of being sold on anything. Ultimately, my desire to learn and my grandiose visions of unlocking the keys to the universe were too strong and I plopped my money down. What followed was a two-year odyssey in which I participated in many est programs, including their very demanding Guest Seminar Leaders Program (GSLP). This was a 6-month intensive in which we learned the fundamentals of enrollment.

"It is important that you get clear for yourself that your only access to impacting life is action. The world does not care what you intend, how committed you are, how you feel or what you think, and certainly it has no interest in what you want and don't want. Take a look at life as it is lived and see for yourself

What's Next

*that the world only moves for you
when you act."*

-Werner Erhard

In 1998, I picked up a book entitled "The Trick to Money is Having Some" by Stuart Wilde. I was rapt with a desire to learn how the energy which we can all create could convert to revenue. But Stuart was far more than a money guy. He was a first-class mystic. I then read his book "The Whispering Winds of Change." This book provided me with another seismic shift in my awareness of energy, and the forces that influence and bend our experience of living. I looked at Stuart's website and saw that he would be giving a weekend workshop in Sipapu, New Mexico, in October of 1999. I again plopped my money down and attended an event that was nothing short of miraculous. When Stuart entered the room, a hushed yet brilliant energy or vibe entered with him. He was like

Jay Cradeur

a lightning bolt in front of the room. I recall how he talked about how we all have love in our heart, and we can actually physically transmit that love to another by developing our mastery of energy.

"Humans need to be a little crazy, spontaneous, unusual, free-flowing, and creative."

**– Stuart Wilde,
Whispering Winds of Change**

Over the next two years, I traveled to Australia, Denver, London, Dublin, Wicklow, and back to Australia, just to be around Stuart and learn everything he had to offer. I remember being in a pub in London with a group of 10 of us aspiring mystics around a table while Stuart was dispensing what he called "Wizard" techniques. I got up to get a drink and a young man approached me. He said, "Who is that? He is the most powerful man I have ever seen!" Such was the energy and presence of Stuart Wilde.

What's Next

In 2012, I began to work in the field of Internet marketing. I was hired by Zenergy Works in Santa Rosa, California, to sell and later build and manage a team which sold Google Virtual Tours to SMBs (small and medium-sized businesses). These virtual tours allowed a business to show the inside of their establishment through 360-degree views. These tours were accessible through Google searches and really helped businesses show off their establishment. Somewhere along this path, I came across Seth Godin's blog. He immediately struck me as someone who was on to something. I was intrigued by his unique approach to business and to creating change in the world. I subscribed to his daily blog and bought his book, "The Dip."

Over the next few years, I kept reading Seth's daily blog, bought a few more books, and then learned about his AltMBA program. By this time, I had made a commitment to

write my own book and had moved to Thailand to pursue this goal. I applied for Seth's first AltMBA program, prepared to plop down the \$3,000 price tag, and engage more directly with Seth's work. I was declined. After a few more years of reading Seth's blog and working in the Internet Marketing field, I again applied for his 15th class. Gratefully, I was accepted and made my \$500 deposit. While on vacation with my daughter in Lisbon, Portugal, the balance of \$2,500 was due. I asked my daughter what she thought. I told her my history with Seth and my desired outcome, and she agreed I should make the commitment. Once again, I leapt.

"Here's the truth you have to wrestle with: the reason that art (writing, engaging, leading, all of it) is valuable is precisely why I can't tell you how to do it. If there were a map, there'd be no art, because art is the act of navigating without a map. Don't

What's Next

*you hate that? I love that there's
no map."*

– Seth Godin, *Linchpin: Are You Indispensable?*

Through Seth's groundbreaking program, I gained many substantive tools. I learned the importance of tension and silence, the absolute necessity of deadlines, the power of shipping work, and the role of storytelling in enrollment. To say "Seth is a genius" rings true for me. His approach to work has shown me just how much I can accomplish and impact others in a positive way. I have learned to be a professional and not an amateur in the pursuit of my dreams and vision.

Building A Team

Most of us can use a team to support us on our ventures. Certainly, there are those who can work on their own, grind it out, and produce amazing work. But for the majority of us, we could use a

push, a nudge, a finger pointing in the right direction, and some good old-fashioned compassion and friendship. If you are not currently producing great work on your own, then you could most likely use the support of a team to ensure your success.

I work with a team of 6 people. We are each creating our own brand of personal work. Books, podcasts, new businesses, and activism is what we are up to right now. We meet each week and share our work. We are in constant communication and can reach out when we are faced with a particularly difficult challenge. We feel like we are on a rocket ship and it is accelerating. The experience of a committed group is exhilarating. It feeds the creative process.

Share Your Work

Having a weekly deadline for your work will force you to do the work. Sharing your work on a weekly basis has many benefits.

What's Next

First, if you know that you have to deliver your work by Monday at 8PM for others to read/watch/evaluate/listen/provide construction feedback, you will do the work. Social pressure is immensely valuable in the pursuit of great work. Second, you will get into the habit of delivering your work. This is a habit that you want to have. It is a habit that will support you immensely as you continue on in your creative endeavor. Each week, I know that I have to deliver work. I may not always like it, but it supports me to put out my best work.

Feedback

You cannot create in a vacuum. The more often you can get brutally honest feedback compassionately presented, the quicker you can improve upon your work and prepare it for the final delivery. Feedback is often perceived as criticism. We need to reframe that thought. It is

not criticism. Feedback is someone providing valuable insights into your work. Someone who will take the time to consume your work and then share his or her experience of your work is a godsend. What a gift! *"You must help me if you can."* Find people who will give you honest feedback and you will find just what you are truly capable of producing.

Trim Tabbing Revisited

Anyone who has undertaken a substantial creative project will tell you that the end result is rarely what you think it will be. Creation is a process. As you jump in and begin, you will receive all kinds of messages, thoughts, and ideas about how the project should go. Some ideas you will come up with by yourself, and some you may hear from your team. Others you may steal from leaders in your chosen field and make your own. As you dig in deeper, you will discover that the process is

What's Next

fraught with little decisions and choices. Your job is to take all the inputs and synthesize them into your own creation.

Assignment

So, now what? You have read another book. That is the only thing we have accomplished thus far. None of it makes a lick of difference if you do not start doing your work. Are you ready to embrace the silence, feel the tension, dig deeper, create, and share your work?

Begin to think about how you can incorporate these elements into your creative life. Setting yourself up for success is a critical aspect of actually doing the work.

Your final assignment is to:

1. Find a coach
2. Create a team for success
3. Share your work every week.
4. Incorporate feedback
5. Don't stop.

Jay Cradeur

What's Next

Resources

For additional information on one on one coaching, group project creation and team support, visit my website at www.nomadjay.com

In this book, Jay Cradeur breaks down the essential elements of your next project:

- Marketing
- Creating Slack
- Cultivating Stillness
- Self Expression
- Feedback
- Teamwork
- Hard Decisions
- Transition
- Vision
- Commitment
- Professionalism
- Fear & Tension
- Teamwork
- Creativity

This book is a roadmap to the next phase in your life which will empower you to do online work you love from anywhere in the world.



What's Next

Jay Cradeur has coached over 5,000 individuals to achieve Internet Marketing success while traveling to over 30 countries. His passion is to help other to see the world, expand their horizons, and make a tidy profit while doing it. Jay Cradeur is a graduate of UC Berkeley's Business School.

