



THE ACHIEVEMENT HABIT

By: Bernard Roth

ACTION ITEMS

- Read the “Adjusted American” which explains all the neuroses of the average American.
- Self-awareness. Get a list of personality descriptors and pick five that describe you. Then give the list to five friends or family members and have them do the same thing. See what remains.

INTRODUCTION

- “Design Thinking”. Design a life to accomplish goals. Don’t get stuck in a rut, or a preconceived notion of how things have to be. Focus on the end result and design a plan.
- Must start with self-awareness and honesty.
- Ask people what they want to accomplish and what is currently getting in the way of that. Very informative.
- Most of our action is from habit rather than reasoning.
- Big difference between “trying” and “doing.”

1: NOTHING IS WHAT YOU THINK IT IS

- Your outlook on life is deeply entwined in your propensity for success. Listen to clues that people give on how they see the world.
- Success is doing what you love and being happy about it.
- Nothing is what you think it is. You give everything its meaning. Be careful what meaning you give.
- Wipe the meaning from all things. Your job has no meaning, etc. Then give meaning back in a purposeful way.
- Be careful with the “scorecard.” Can give a bad “meaning” to something and be limiting rather than encouraging.
- Cannot control the outside world. Can only control your experience.
- Achievement can be limiting if you give it toxic meaning.
- Need to see old things in new ways, with new meaning.
- Be careful when you believe you are playing a game of “I’m right and you are wrong.” Doesn’t matter. You lose by playing. Like gambling in Vegas. Search for what is right.



2: REASONS ARE BULLSHIT

- Reasons are just excuses that are prettied up.
- Change the excuse to “I didn’t have time” to “it’s not a priority.” One is a victim, the other takes ownership.
- Causal fallacy. Guy in Times Square is snapping his fingers. Person comes up to him and says, “What are you doing?” He says, “Snapping my fingers to keep tigers away.” There are no tigers for miles. Pretty effective isn’t it?
- We are far better off without reasons.
- Make a pact not to use reasons unless you have to...absolutely have to. Don’t need to explain yourself. Trust yourself and act.
- Whenever someone gives you a motive for their behavior, try this exercise and substitute the opposite of the motive they gave you. “I really don’t want to do this deal...but...” View as them really wanting to do the deal.
- Projection
 - You see a flaw in others because you know you have it yourself and recognize it.
 - Those who are dishonest see dishonesty in others.
 - Make a list of things that bother you about other people in your life. Then ask yourself how these things appear in your life.
- Marrying for love is simply a reason. Not good. We fall in love with the qualities in others that we wish we had. A truly successful marriage results when both partners can just be happy being who they are and in so doing add to the enjoyment of each other. Not trying to be loved or love, but trying to enjoy life together.
- Making decisions.
 - Also, overuse “reasons.”
 - Pretend you have a gun to your head, and make a decision. Probably the right one.
 - Or future project. What does life look like after you make that decision?
- Watch advice when you are the only one that has to live with the consequences.
- When thinking about decisions, always have a bias towards action.
- “Who” is stopping you from achieving your goals?

3: GETTING UNSTUCK

- Drunk man walks into a lamppost. Backs up, walks forward again, hits lamppost. Repeats actions several times, and then finally gives up. “They have me surrounded.” Sounds funny, but this is often us encountering obstacles. We are not drunk, but our perceptions are.
- Design thinking...make sure you are working on the real problem.



- Student identifies something he wants to fix in his life. His bed was broken and couldn't sleep.
 - Begins to take on task of fixing it. Takes several weeks, issues, etc. Could have bought a new bed or reassessed the problem—he needs to get a good night's sleep.
- Solve your problem and ask yourself what it would do for you if you solved this problem or got to the finish line. I want to buy a new car...what would it feel like if you solved that problem? Is there a healthier, better way to get that feeling now?
- Twenty Two Ways to Get Unstuck
 - Hard work.
 - Create a supportive environment
 - Relax
 - Brainstorming
 - Lists
 - Meta-lists
 - List of places to visit, then list of things to do at each place.
 - Morphological analysis
 - Connecting lists. Want to build a clock. Power supply lists linked to functionality lists, etc.
 - Idea logs
 - Sketch out ideas
 - Humor
 - Conversation
 - Forced transformations
 - Modify ideas to make conventional unconventional.
 - Synectics
 - Joining irrelevant elements.
 - Diagramming the physical process
 - What if?
 - Decision making matrix
 - Working backward
 - Storyboards
 - How-why diagram
 - Nasal thinking
 - What would happen if you thought with your nose or tried not to speak?
 - Mind maps.
 - Meta summary
 - Diagram yourself.
- Find the tools that work best for you and master those. Don't need to use all these tools.



4: FINDING ASSISTANCE

- “We don’t have time to do things in a hurry.”
 - You mess up when you hurry and will have to do it again.
- You can learn from anyone. Be open to learning from everyone.
- Complimenting your rival shows class. Don’t be fearful of this.
- Find mentors.
- “Good artists copy; great artists steal” Steve Jobs.
- Build genuine, reciprocal relationships.

5: DOING IS EVERYTHING

- “For the things that we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them.” Aristotle.
- Don’t confuse “trying” with “doing”.
 - Doing takes attention and intention.
- Affirmations matter. They get your brain going and the body follows.
- Affirm efforts, not accomplishments. What you have control over by doing.
- Do something you have really wanted to do or solve a problem in your life. “Do!”
- “It’s a terrible thing in life to wait till you are ready. The reality is that no one is ever really ready to do anything.”
- The odds have always been against greatness...doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t try for greatness.
- Failure is a gift. Look for the gift, err on the side of doing!

6: WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE

- How we communicate with people has a significant effect on their opinion of us. It’s not just what we say, but how we say it.
- Yes and No
 - We are way more comfortable saying “yes.”
 - Be aware of how you are using these phrases.
 - Other ways to say yes.
- And/But
 - “But” creates conflict where there may not be conflict. “I want to go to the movies, but I have work to do.” They are not mutually exclusive.
 - Where are you putting your “buts”?
 - What if you replace your “buts” with “ands”?
- Have to/want to
 - Replace “have to” with “want to”



- Shows what you have chosen to do.
- Can't/won't
 - Test "can't" against "won't"
 - Change "can't" to "won't."
- Help and should
 - Change "help" to "assist."
 - Shoulds are absurd. Why is it a should?
- Why questions
 - Instead of asking why, use I.
 - Not: "Why did you choose Jane as your co-leader?"
 - Use: "I felt hurt that you chose Jane over me as your co-leader" More to the point, more honest.
 - When others ask why, dig deeper.
- Context matters. Make sure it is the context you want to share.
- Tools
 - Speak from your own experience. Don't tell people what to do.
 - Don't interrupt
 - Don't follow with one of your stories.
 - Speak for yourself. "I know" "I think" "I feel", not everyone knows, everyone feels.
 - Don't be judgmental.
 - Acknowledge other people's issues Don't solve problems unless they ask you. They want to know that you heard them.
 - Don't ask "why" questions. Puts people on the defensive. Make declarative statements about your position.
 - Really listen.
 - Don't prepare your reply
 - Don't try to accelerate by summarizing/advancing
 - Telling a story--be clear and to the point.
 - Make sure your message was received as intended.
 - Make sure you heard someone correctly.

7: GROUP HABITS

- What happens in groups in a story:
 - "Why don't you use your turn signals when driving?" "I don't like other people all up in my business."
- Constructive criticism
 - I like....I wish
 - I like what you did here. I would like or I wish that you did ...
- Icebreakers
 - When was the last time you...



- Cried
- Laughed
- Had trouble sleeping
- Etc.
- Do you have the correct name?
 - 1-10? How do you feel about your name?
 - What would your ideal name be?
- Be inclusive rather than competitive. Shouldn't be competing against each other but an outside force.
- Consider group space.
- No blocking/improv exercise.
 - Take a concept, move it forward, don't kill it.
- Streaking
 - Random interruptions in a dead room.

8: SELF IMAGE BY DESIGN

- What you achieve in life is often centered around your self image. Ask yourself where your self image comes from and does it suit where you want to be?
- Who were your role models?
 - What did they pass on?
- Examine
 - How do you think about money?
 - Work?
 - Authority?
 - Which views do you agree with and don't you agree with?
 - Life view?
 - Religion?
- Be kind to yourself. Don't beat yourself up about past mistakes.
- What is your intention with your work? Make money? Fulfill an internal need? Once you are honest about your basic intentions, then focus on filling that need.
- List five short 1-2 word descriptions of who you are. Then ask five friends or family members to do the same. See where there are agreements.
- You can go through exercises to get people to see themselves differently in ways that will help them accomplish their goals. Need to be more creative? They have exercises that will get you there.
- Exercise
 - Close your eyes and give your issue physical presence.
 - What does it look like? How tall? What color?
 - What kind of object is it? A thing? A person?
 - Go back to the first time it appeared.



- Go back to the physical properties and see what it feels like.
- Recall the things that you are sure are correct about the issue.
- Go back to the physical properties.
- Ask yourself what might be correct about this issue.
- Ask what is incorrect about this issue.
- Ask yourself what does this issue do to you physically? How does it make you feel?
- What emotional states does this issue take you through?
- What sensations are associated with this issue?
- What are the evaluations and judgments you have about this issue?
- What is it doing for you to keep this issue in your life?
- Imagine being upset about this issue. Imagine not being upset about this issue. Go back and forth with this several times.
- Brainstorm all the things and people's names that are keeping this issue in your life.
- Now erase all the things and people that are nonsense. That shouldn't be keeping this issue in your life.
- Now imagine pushing that board over a precipice.
- Now imagine yourself on a beach, or place of most relaxation, doing your favorite thing. Open your eyes and get up.
- Exercise
 - Imagine you have 10 minutes to live.
 - 10 hours
 - 10 days
 - 10 months
 - 10 years
 - What would you do? Who would you be?

9: THE BIG PICTURE

- "Insanity in the individual is rare. Insanity in groups is the rule." -Nietzsche
- Work is a basic human function that needs to have meaning beyond the pure economic benefit. How are you tapping into that and allowing those around you to tap into that?
- Be very careful of following a path simply because someone expects you to go down that path. Friends? Family? Beware.
- If you are going to attempt something outlandish, you need a team or you will seem crazy and lose momentum. Need a support group to build a tribe.
- Enough people doing it and doesn't seem crazy anymore. Uber, AirBNB, etc.
- When you mess up...fess up. You will mess up. Just hit it head on.



10: MAKE ACHIEVEMENT YOUR HABIT

- “Problems” have a negative connotation. They shouldn’t. Imagine a life without resistance, without something to strive for, without challenge. How boring is that? Problem is your brain telling you that you are at point A and you want to get to point B. That is a good thing.
- Prototypes are simply ways to test getting from point A to point B and see if the concept works.
- Project based learning greatly increases motivation.
- Be the cause in the matter. Take action. Make a difference. Don’t wait for others to act.