

Think Less and Execute

July 24, 2019 | 755 upvotes | by [Harry_Wangs](#)

As great as it is to think, study, analyze, and philosophize there is a time where we need to turn-off our brain and just do.

I am suggesting a detached, **low pulse, low heartbeat approach to executing tasks. Use as little brain activity as possible to begin executing a difficult activity.** This is very much different from the typical "gung-ho" approach we see from self help. There's no need to hype yourself up to do something. You'll **burn out trying to amp yourself up** for every activity and face will-power fatigue. **By purposefully turning off your brain and executing something immediately, you do not give your brain enough time to rationalize not doing something challenging.**

- Heavy weight you're afraid of? Think nothing of it, begin the set. Only after you pick up the weight you have all systems firing. (Not saying be a dumbass with floppy form)
- Don't want to run? Don't spend a second on how much it might suck, don't even amp yourself up. Put your shoes on and go.
- Cold shower? Don't tense up, get hyped. Step into the cold like it's just another shower.
- Hot girl you want to approach? Approach right away. Don't even let your heartbeat quicken, don't worry about what to say, you'll figure it out. Execute faster than your brain can give you anxiety.
- Don't want to study? Think nothing of the challenge, just open your book and begin.

Thinking about a challenge does not solve it. It just magnifies the challenge in the mind, making it more difficult to overcome. Beyond just the minimum level of strategizing, **additional analysis often becomes a hindrance.**

Further, by executing on tasks immediately, without thinking of the challenging, without over-analysis, we can reduce will-power fatigue. You **use much less will-power trying to study when you do it immediately** and use much more when you spend an hour thinking about it and procrastinating.

If you're struggling with overthinking and executing on difficult tasks, practice turning off your mind and just doing. If you're having approach anxiety, practice turning off your brain and executing in other areas of your life until it becomes second nature. Works best when you practice executing tasks that you fear - at least just a little bit and work your way up to bigger challenges.

Good luck.

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Comments

AutoModerator[M] [score hidden] 24 July, 2019 03:34 AM stickied comment

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hardly_incognito • 69 points • 24 July, 2019 05:42 AM*

This is how I begin undertaking a project.

Chaos is self-organizing, and by doing something without knowing anything about it, you will slowly start to learn. This process isn't entirely mindless, because as you spend time doing whatever task it is you embark on, with time you'll naturally devise your own systems of doing it that work for you, along with methods for preparing for more difficult challenges along the way.

The exception is in preparing for certain things that can be rather dangerous. You shouldn't go diving without absolutely any knowledge of how to use your gear, nor should you go right in on neurosurgery without going to med school.

Your goal will be incremental, small successes on a regular basis that will eventually add up into an organized system that works for you as long as you focus on improving your overall self a little bit each day.

miserablesisyphus • 18 points • 24 July, 2019 12:31 PM

I have found that the best method for any project that requires planning is to set incremental goals. Climbing a mountain is tough, but climbing 1/10 of the mountain at a time is much easier. Devising a plan is crucial for almost everything, but I do agree that over-analysing can lead to failure and anxiety. One thing that has helped me is to devise a plan for when things go well and devise a plan when things fail. If, for example, your goal is to workout 5 times a week, you need to make a plan that works. But, you also need to consider what will happen if you happen to work late and can't make the gym that night--do you go late and have a meal stored in the fridge just for that or maybe you go early the next morning on an off day.

What I don't think OP touched on is that actually thinking about the positive things of exercising or losing weight can actually lower your motivation. I call it the "what would you do if you just won the lotto". For a second imagine you just won the \$100 million lottery. Would you do with that money. Imagine all the things you can buy, places you can go, etc.. That good feeling you just experienced works in the same way when you think about losing weight and having a six pack. You imagine what it will be like and your brain gets the good feeling of having a six pack without you actually doing it.

Executing at a high level requires the appropriate balance of setting realistic goals, planning for when you meet those goals and when you fail those goals, and learning how to focus on the actual process and not the outcome.

Blaze-Bless • 18 points • 24 July, 2019 04:04 AM

Thanks for this, concise and useful.

jedicreed • 74 points • 24 July, 2019 03:41 AM

It's great novice advice, especially for guys that have just swallowed the red pill.

The great players, however, use the brain all the time. It's the adrenaline rush they learn to control with time and experience.

Harry_Wangs[S] • 41 points • 24 July, 2019 03:59 AM

Ah yes, this is just a tool and an approach of doing things and I'm not dogmatic. However, I do think most guys can achieve far more than novice results doing this, but if you can utilize adrenaline properly, it is certainly also helpful.

I've also oversimplified things. Typically, you're brain will still be quite active, but this is a mindset that helps control over-activity.

umizumiz • 19 points • 24 July, 2019 12:44 PM

"When you feel anxiety, tell yourself it is really excitement."

Rkingpin • 14 points • 24 July, 2019 06:54 AM

This is a good habit to ingrain. Overthinking a killer of men and leads to procrastination.

The time wasted deliberating over unnecessary details would mostly be better spent getting to the job at hand quickly.

Especially for cold approach, the first few seconds are where the magic happens.

MilkMoney111 • 6 points • 24 July, 2019 04:14 PM

Common thing they teach officers in the military is to make a decision and make it fast. The wrong decision is better than no decision. Indecision can get you killed. The wrong decision can as well but at least it's 50/50 and if you survive, you get a valuable learning lesson

Project_Zero_Betas • 2 points • 25 July, 2019 02:48 AM

Most people don't recognize that analysis paralysis is a real thing.

tenpointmatt • 7 points • 24 July, 2019 09:05 AM*

Yes and no. Not all the items you mention can be treated the same.

If doing something relatively passive like taking a cold shower, eating something disgusting, or enduring something uncomfortable, it helps to focus only on performing the bodily action, whatever it may be. Just FORCE your body to perform the required motions- move your legs, get under the cold water, keep chewing, whatever. Control your physical movements, and treat the discomfort as something external that you can't control, and just deal with it.

But for lifting, this doesn't work. When Eddie Hall deadlifts he says he imagines lifting a car off his kids:

<https://twitter.com/dabblingfrancis/status/1138189203337043978>

umizumiz • 14 points • 24 July, 2019 12:45 PM

That's funny, I imagine I'm setting a car on top of my wife...

weezylane • 6 points • 24 July, 2019 04:49 AM

I could already feel my brain trying to stop me from doing this. Beta patterns die hard.

MrGreySD • 4 points • 24 July, 2019 02:43 PM

Really great post. It's simple but difficult to actually do. Kind of like cutting body fat.

I think you could have made the post even better by relating it to "flow-state". Generally, once you're in flow state, things become effortless and much more comfortable. So just switching off and jumping in initially is the best way to get there.

Can be applied to anything. Work. Study. Being social. Even just general anxiety. Put your brain on pause and just go outside. Then the cylinders gradually begin to fire one by one.

Tjommas • 3 points • 24 July, 2019 04:48 AM

I imagine making the Jim Carrey face from dumb and dumber, then getting to work. Am I doing it right?

InscrutablePUA • 3 points • 24 July, 2019 07:13 AM

Simple and great post. I've found I'm at my best when I consciously turn my brain off and just do shit. Make the decision and execute. Our brains are great at sabotaging our own ability to act.

eeehshure • 3 points • 24 July, 2019 07:29 AM

what is the point of cold showers? ive seen it being mentioned every now and then on Manhood articles. is there any benefit to it?

[deleted] • 6 points • 24 July, 2019 04:09 PM

Discomfort. You take cold showers to learn how to deal with discomfort.

eeehshure • 2 points • 25 July, 2019 07:19 AM

why on earth would i put my body in discomfort for something that gives me no results? i would put myself in discomfort when i approach some girl, because i know i could get her number or get laid. what do i get from cold showers? its just snake oil

that_star_wars_guy • 2 points • 29 July, 2019 04:45 AM

This is the "why do I have to learn math , I'm never going to use this in real life..." question in RP form.

You put yourself through uncomfortable situations, so that *when* you are in uncomfortable situations, you already have a grip on the feelings and sensations that will overwhelm you in the moment.

You have to approach *cold showers* (or any situation that makes you inherently uncomfortable, be it physical or mental), as training your body for the next situation where your response matters.

eeehshure • 1 point • 30 July, 2019 12:34 AM

This is the "why do I have to learn math , I'm never going to use this in real life..." question in RP form.

math teaches actual problem solving that you need in certain situations in life not related to math. Cold showers teach your body to not be afraid of cold, which is quite useless in modern days. Of course there is a psychological lesson on taking a cold shower (to conquer fear), but as i said, there are better exercises for that that give you actual results, such as taking the courage to talk to a girl

TheDroogie • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 07:46 AM

Words from the wise Wim Hof: <https://www.wimhofmethod.com/benefits-of-cold-showers>

eeeehshure • -2 points • 24 July, 2019 11:18 AM

so there are no benefits unless youre an athlete (or really fat)

lala_xyyz • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 09:16 PM

no benefits for lifters as well

hearse223 • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 03:08 PM

Do you know why men used to call their testicles "two below"?

Not because they are 2 balls hanging below the belt, but because the testicles rest at a temperature 2 degrees below the rest of your body. That is the reason why when its hot they hang low and when its cold the ball sack tightens up and brings them closer. This is also the reason why Arabs wear the baggy pants, like Aladdin.

When you take hot showers you are letting the hot water which hits your body drip down and heat up your balls, which does damage to the sperm. This is the reason truckers used to have problems having kids, the truck engines used to rest right underneath the driver and they would sit there for hours on end, killing their sperm.

The benefit of cold showers is preventing long-term damage done to the testicles and likely testosterone production. Hot showers are a violation.

Also stop wearing tight underwear or jock straps when you arent playing sports, that's also a violation of nature.

Dakstradamus • 5 points • 24 July, 2019 03:41 PM

Broscience to the max right here

KagoKija • 1 point • 24 July, 2019 11:01 PM

ok thats a crazy rationale... if it works for you it works for you. i take cold showers each morning to shock my system and get going.

stirlinglion • 3 points • 24 July, 2019 07:34 AM

This is great! It has hints of stoicism. Good post ☐☐

Scott555 • 3 points • 24 July, 2019 09:49 AM

Eckhart Tolle has some helpful things to say along these lines.

TheEgyptianConqueror • 3 points • 24 July, 2019 12:34 PM

This is really in line with what I always tell friends about working out;

I always say "what do you do before going to bed?" Somewhere in there, they'll say "brush my teeth," and that's when I stop them. Do you think about brushing your teeth? Or is it just something you do? That's what going to the gym has to be like. You want to go after work? Don't even think about it. Everyday, get out of work and go to the gym. Why? You just do. You brush your teeth in the morning. Why? You just do. It's so built into you don't think about it anymore. That's what the gym has to be like (or running or your pilot class or language class or whatever the hell it is you're doing)

Beardtista • 3 points • 24 July, 2019 04:00 PM

I often find that I'm most successful when I'm not trying to do the thing I want to do. However putting your self

in a position to do said thing, is important. Sometimes you just need a fuck it attitude.

only_red • 3 points • 24 July, 2019 05:16 PM

This is really good advice. When I hype myself up I almost never tend to follow through. Much easier when you just do it.

Colt420 • 3 points • 24 July, 2019 06:59 PM

"We suffer more in imagination than in reality" - Seneca

When a difficult task or something comes up that I would rather avoid, I tell myself "don't suffer twice" and just do it. Why suffer in my mind and then in reality when I can just get started and finish the task and realize it wasn't even that bad to begin with.

The-Wizard-of-Oz- • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 09:58 AM

Thank you. I myself suffer a lot from the overthinking problem. Many people have told me about it, but your short sketch certainly explained it very clearly

thepesterman • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 10:55 AM

This is the same process I've used to go cliff diving, every thought you have about jumping says don't do it, you have to just not think about doing it and go, once you've gone there's no going back. It's almost like tricking yourself into going, like, hey look over there, woah I just jumped.

rawrlolrofl • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 11:12 AM

This has a lot to do with Ego too. Or lack of it.

Toffla_ • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 11:21 AM

This is so true. The more you think about it, the harder it gets to execute the task

umizumiz • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 12:40 PM

Maybe everyone does this, but when I'm lifting I always tell myself how exciting it is and how much fun it is to lift.

Always have done that, maybe it actually IS fun and everyone else thinks the same thing. lol

Quo210 • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 12:54 PM

The good old trick your brain into doing something very difficult without it notices is doing so.

Sometimes I understand the advice from Dr. Peterson deeply, about disciplining one self - it's like doing it to another person, an unruly, lazy person. True, it might not throw a tantrum when it dawns on the fact you're being productive, but it will stress out, point out annoyances that were not there a minute ago and make you yawn. So I give the thing a treat as I'm working: music, an audiobook, a phonecall, a small workout, a very short meditation... 5 minutes of distraction and the baleful child forgets it was working, the tantrums stop.

subaruguy14 • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 01:12 PM

Zombie mentality is underrated for doing hard things. Good post.

370HSSV • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 02:08 PM

This is the cure to procrastination boys

[deleted] • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 03:12 PM

Thanks for the reminder. I've mastered this with fitness. Getting a lot better with it for approaches. But recently had a month long paralysis by analysis with getting a side hustle up and running. Need to just execute, act and it will sort out later like it always does.

nuufo • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 03:21 PM

Nice post! I always tell myself this:

"It doesn't have to be hard. It just needs to be done."

[deleted] • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 04:04 PM

Had a situation yesterday between a friend and I that was solved like this.

We were writing and recording a demo, there was one point where I was overthinking how to record it. We didn't get anywhere for a good ten minutes, till we said fuck it and we recorded it raw, & it turned out great. Just fire the shot, fuck how it ends up - just fire.

vulgar_display_ • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 04:15 PM

Sucks that such great advice like this that can benefit so many men and people in general is quarantined and tossed away from the rest of the community

mette13 • 2 points • 24 July, 2019 06:21 PM

Believe there is a phenomenon called analysis-paralysis, where one analyzes for too long and ends up not making a choice. This sounds similar.

sthlmtrdr • 2 points • 25 July, 2019 01:10 PM

I use the method of divide-and-conquer

That mean I do break the larger task/goal into smaller parts, then I go ahead to methodically achieve each part. I may also break a part down further into even smaller sub-parts if needed.

KingOfAllWomen • 1 point • 24 July, 2019 02:15 PM

Execute faster than your brain can give you anxiety.

Good advice for almost everything except electrical work.

I've gotten a lot of respect and promotion in my career because of this advice. I try to tell the kids but nobody gets it. The manager is going to look much more fondly on my project that is *completed* and maybe 90% correct than your pile of google research and flawless planning.

bjcm5891 • 1 point • 26 July, 2019 05:43 AM

TL, DR:

Strike first. Strike hard. No mercy.

FaggoDeluxe • 1 point • 27 July, 2019 02:20 AM

I've noticed this with myself that the more extensively I plan out my day and the more I get hyped about all of the shit that I will do, the less likely it is that I will actually do any of it.

Unlike lifting weights in a gym or sprinting, mental challenges require relaxation and concentration. An empty

mind is ideal for mental work. This is why it's so easy to do tasks in the morning when your brain isn't filled with thoughts and emotions that you develop throughout the day.

I recommend meditation and mindfulness practice to anyone looking to develop this skill beyond the basics outlined in this post.

ExDota2Player • 1 point • 27 July, 2019 09:02 PM

i needed to see this thread

Fraitā • 1 point • 31 July, 2019 03:26 AM

There is a method called "5 seconds" (even a book is named that, that's where the principle comes from) when you start counting down from 5, 4, 3 ... for whatever could cause some anxiety and just do it. Even during the countdown you've already started making that approach, open up the study books, start doing XYZ and when you hit 0, you are already there and will do the task that you challenged yourself to do.

You only focus on the countdown, don't think about anything else.

Valenx_Ackerman • 0 points • 24 July, 2019 08:40 AM

Not sure about someone who just started the gym after his entire life without exercising and wants to lift 300lb on bench press...

I mean, you dont want to be physically injured