

Ten tips to become more fulfilled and effective

1. Know your outcomes. Be clear about what you want.

All too often we deploy effort into our lives for unclear reasons or unspecific goals and then are left questioning what we have achieved by way of outcomes.

2. Reflect. Take time, to reflect on what is wanted and needed.

Often our needs are really wants and can be adjusted, modified, exchanged or even deleted. Conversely are we really in touch with what we need?

3. Get uncomfortable.

No, we are not proposing subtle sado masochism here, it's about allowing you to be in some discomfort without either being disabled by it or removing oneself from it. When we experience aspects of our life as uncomfortable, it is a motivating force for change if we choose to listen. Modern society shuns this in favour of distractions and entertainments, sometimes you just have to go there. Often motivation follows action not the reverse.

4. Know your tendency to seek comfort zones.

We all enjoy a bit of peace and being able to relax. So many of our comfort zones are in reality avoidances and self sabotage.

We love comfort, its safe there. Anyone who has run up credit card debt using retail therapy as a comfort will attest.

5. Embrace reality. Step out of the 'cave'.

Remember reality is subjective but if you have a serious disease, avoiding the doctor will not make it go away. Early intervention is more likely to. If you have a habit accept that its repetition has a consequence. If you smoke, do not ignore the fact it takes around 16 years off a lifetime and makes you anti-social to others.

6. Communicate your needs clearly.

Take responsibility for the message received.

7. Take opportunity.

We are good at taking comfort options, we all like our feet up, a treat, 'the' holiday etc. But do we really take opportunities. How many men sit at the table while their female counterparts get up and dance, missing exercise, co-ordination practice and enhancing their relationships? How many times do we avoid that challenge because it's to high/too long/too demanding/we have no time. If we accept the above points we are in another reality, distracting ourselves from the inadequacy we feel about the challenge.

8. Stretch yourself.

Physically yes, with exercise, but mentally too. Physical exercise boosts mood and the mind body link enhances a feeling of wellness and resourcefulness. But you have to keep at it. Mental stretches can mean many things but basically provide a challenge. Are you unable to programme your Sat nav? Why not? Is the 'I can't', really a 'I have not done this before, and doubt I can do it situation'. Well one thing is for sure if you don't do a thing you can't do a thing, whatever your potential.

9. Bring the potential into the actual.

Let your thoughts translate to words and then to congruent deeds. There is no discovery without action. Many hesitate to do things because they take inexperience or challenges in a task or skill as failure and nothing short of 'world supremacy' as success. Pick up that guitar learn a few chords, you probably won't be another Mark Knopfler but you will have learned and experienced something that otherwise would have drifted by and been dismissed. This leads to the final point.

10. Develop gratitude for living and experiencing.

This is the attitude of gratitude so often referred to by those proponents of positive psychology. The days do not always deliver what we want. That does not mean each day fails to deliver experience and valuable learning opportunities in a lifetime if we can get out from under the disappointment and self recrimination for things not going

exactly as we wanted (assuming we were clear about point one anyway). If we learn to extract the gifts the day has given us, re-focus our experience on the joy of living and can offer new perspectives on some of life's 'let downs' we can see things differently. We can allow ourselves and others the compassion and wisdom of someone looking outward to life's richness, not inwards to the sense of failure our ego's can preoccupy us with.

All this can be summarised by ultimately one key position: Responsibility.

Take responsibility for making the things you want to happen actually happen. We can allow our fear or distraction to deter us, sabotage ourselves with excuses, poor mental discipline or even project our inability to achieve onto others. The reality is if it matters we can usually, within reason, make positive things manifest themselves in our lives every day.

Recognise that many people fail in their goals because they have no-one to reflect with, pace their progress with and ultimately evaluate what worked and what could be improved. This is where good solid coaching, mentoring and where necessary counselling is of real value. Gedanken can offer this face to face, by email, by telephone and by Skype link.