



# JIM HARSHAW JR

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## *Revealing Failure as the Path to Success*

### Success Through Failure Podcast

Action Plan Episode #124

Bill Burnett

Today I bring you Bill Burnett. After years of drawing cars and airplanes under his grandmother's sewing machine, Bill went off to the Stanford and discovered that there were people in the world who did this kind of thing everyday (without the sewing machine) and they were called designers.

Bill is the Executive Director of the Design Program at Stanford. He got his BS and MS in Product Design at Stanford and has worked professionally on a wide variety of projects ranging from the award-winning Apple PowerBooks to the original Star Wars action figures. He holds a number of mechanical and design patents, and design awards for a variety of products including the first "slate" computer.

In addition to his duties at Stanford, advises several Internet start-up companies.

### Quotes

I don't know exactly what I want to do next. I might have two or three ideas or no ideas. But how do I discover what the future of me is going to be?"

"Get out in the world and talk to people who aren't like you, put together your own design advisory team of folks you can check in with and make sure they're all coming from a different perspective."

"When your greatest passion meets the world's really felt need, then you have a match."

"About 40% to 70% of U.S. workers are disengaged at their jobs. They're stuck, numb."

"The true midlife crisis is to wake up at 40 – 45 and realize 'This is not my beautiful life, this is not my beautiful house. My God, what have I done?'"

### **About Prototyping**

There's lots of ways to prototype but two really powerful ones are prototype conversations or prototype experiences. Prototype conversation or people might call it 'information interview,' is what we call a little piece of time travel. If you say, 'I want to really do this blogging and have a show on YouTube and do Ted Talks, who do I know in my network that's already living that life?' Instead of asking them to give you a job or to work on their show, you just go talk to people and get their stories. Prototype experience, neuroscience has said that a lot of what we know is because of feelings in our body, not so much thoughts in our head. And it's actually true that we have what is called the wisdom of connection. So try stuff. Go sit in a classroom and see how that works. Go shadow somebody who's doing what you want to do for a day. Go propose somebody, 'I bet you could use some help. Would you like someone to be ghostwriter for you for a couple of weeks? Because I always wondered what it's like to write on a deadline.'

### **About What Brings Happiness**

The famous 85-year longest longitudinal study of human happiness and development started with the Harvard class in 1938. It turns out that status in life and money didn't make them happy. There was no correlation between that and health or social position in terms of feeling like your life was purposeful. The number one correlation was relationships. If you had strong relationships, like with your spouse, strong relationships in your community, if you were doing something in your community that was bigger than yourself – if you're in service to the community, you're in service to something bigger than yourself – you experience your life as happy and meaningful.

### **About the Productive Pause**

To support a healthy life design, you've got to have some practices. Maybe it's journaling. Maybe it's meditation. We don't push that necessarily other than to say, 'Do something that allows you to step away from the daily flow and think a little bit. Here's some structured ways to think about the question of how's it going?' Every wisdom tradition for 5,000 years of recorded history has something in it that says, 'Hey, we get so wrapped up in our day-to-day thing and it's good to have what you call a purposeful pause.'"

### **About Failure**

When you're experimenting, you're not really failing even when the experience doesn't get the result you were looking for because what happens in that case is

that you had the wrong assumption. You thought something was connected and it's not. Although it's a failure, it's about learning, resilience, coming back and trying again with a new hypothesis or a new point of view.

### **Action Plan**

Curiosity is one of the mindset of the designer. You've got to be curious about the world. You have to be curious about, 'Why does this work this way? How can I make it better?' Find something you're curious about. Within the next 24 hours, your prototype challenge is find somebody who knows something about that. Sit down and have a cup of coffee with them, or over steak. From that encounter, try something out, based on what you want to do.

### **Link to Harvard Grant Study**

TEDx Talk:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/robert\\_waldinger\\_what\\_makes\\_a\\_good\\_life\\_lessons\\_from\\_the\\_longest\\_study\\_on\\_happiness#t-754995](https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_waldinger_what_makes_a_good_life_lessons_from_the_longest_study_on_happiness#t-754995)

Wiki: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grant\\_Study](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grant_Study)

Study:

<https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=hdl:1902.1/00290>

### **Link to Goal Setting Compass**

<http://jimharshawjr.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Goal-Compass.png>

### **Website and Social**

Website: <http://www.billburnett.net/>

<https://designingyour.life/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/wburnett?lang=en>

TEDx Talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SemHh0n19LA>

Book: <https://www.facebook.com/DesigningYourLifeTheBook/>