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Revealing Failure as the Path to Success

Success Through Failure Podcast

Action Plan Episode #273

How to Create Laser Focus So That You Can “Project Warp Speed” Your Life

Do you find yourself easily distracted? Do you feel that if you could just get focused—and STAY focused—that you would be able to achieve more?

You are definitely not alone in this. We all have those days! And it doesn't really help that this new normal—where we are stuck at home, with our communication being limited to screen-to-screen interaction—is taking a toll on our productivity and focus.

But our drive doesn't have to stop there. There's an exciting road ahead of us and no pandemic or distraction should get in the way of reaching your desired destination.

With discipline and determination—and a little help from this episode—you can snap out of this roadblock and continue to carry out successful goals!

In this episode, I talk about tactics and tools (that my clients swear by!) on how to get and stay focused so you could do great things and deliver high-quality performance. Tune in now!

Top Quotes From This Episode

“Email is the root of all evil.”

“Create your plans. Stick to your plans. Evaluate those new, shiny opportunities, those shiny things that are in the corner of your eye, but stick to your plan.”

“When your brain is functioning on a full reserve of water, you will be able to think faster, be more focused, and experience greater clarity and creativity.” [Your Brain on H2O](#) (2015, December)

"Regular exercise releases brain chemicals key for memory, concentration, and mental sharpness." [Regular exercise releases brain chemicals key for memory, concentration, and mental sharpness](#) (2013, May)

Show Notes

3 Strategies You Could Use to Help You Get and Stay Focused:

1. Making changes to your environment

- **Turn off notifications (5:30):** Disable the notifications on all your social media and email accounts—both on your computer and mobile phones—to avoid getting the urge to constantly scroll on the endless pit that is the internet
- **Close your office door (6:56):** Closing your office door could help you momentarily block the possible distractions that might barge into your workspace. Doing this will aid in conditioning you to do deep work.
- **"Email is the root of all evil" (7:36):** Sometimes, checking emails becomes a habit. So to avoid spending too much of your time solely for checking emails, allot at least 30 minutes just for checking your messages. Once that's through, accomplish the other tasks you have planned out for the day. Steer clear from constantly glancing at your inbox.
- **Set Goals (10:09):** Create things in your environment that will remind you of your plans and goals. It may be in a form of a post-it note, cut-out image, or anything that will visually refresh you of your goals.

Get in-depth about goal setting in this blog: [Why Goal Setting Is Important and How to Do It: The Definitive Guide for Setting and Achieving Meaningful Goals](#)

- **Play some music (12:09):** Research has shown that classical music helps you stay focused and productive. If you're up for something more contemporary, try playing Lo-Fi music. Check out this [playlist](#).

2. Physiological: All about your mind and body!

- **Sleep! (13:06):** Sleeping is our body's way of recharging, so not getting enough rest and sleep would greatly affect your focus.
- **No drinking after 8 pm (14:07):** To avoid getting your sleep interrupted by a full bladder, try not to drink any liquid after 8 pm or hours before you hit the sack.
- **Diet (15:07):** Manage the food that you consume. "Be aware of the fuel that you put into your body." Ask yourself, "Would this meal give me sustained

energy throughout the day, or will it only make me less focused and productive?"

- **Stay hydrated (16:32):** *"When your brain is functioning on a full reserve of water, you will be able to think faster, be more focused, and experience greater clarity and creativity."* [Your Brain on H2O](#) (2015, December)
- **Exercise is a "miracle drug" (18:28):** Our body releases chemicals that impact our mental focus every time we exercise.

"Regular exercise releases brain chemicals key for memory, concentration, and mental sharpness." [Regular exercise releases brain chemicals key for memory, concentration, and mental sharpness](#) (2013, May)
- **Make a routine (19:43):** Create a morning routine that is tailor-fit to your personal needs. Know what would make your days productive and pick what works best for you.
- **"Manage your energy not just your time" (22:25):** Do the most mentally taxing work when you have the most energy, depth, and focus. AND always remember to take a rest!

3. Tools to help you focus

- **[Pomodoro Technique](#) (23:42):** Set a timer for 25 minutes and work UNDISTRACTED during that time. Once the time's up, take a 5-minute break. For every 4 Pomodoros, you may opt for a longer break—20 to 30 minutes is advised. (Try [TomatoTimer](#))
- **Nicotra Technique (25:23):** Named after my late brother-in-law, Steve Nicotra, Nicotra Technique instructs you to find any platform to dump your to-do list (try project management software like [Asana](#) or [Trello](#)) and identify the tasks you want to get done that day. Then, arrange each task chronologically in the order that you want them to get done.

The goal is to build momentum, so it is suggested to start working on 2-3 easy tasks; eventually conjuring the feeling of being productive and focused after crossing out items on your list.

- **Harshaw Technique (28:57):** Set a recurring timer that beeps every 15 minutes. This will serve as your reminder to get you back on focus and on track (Try [Online-Stopwatch](#))
- **4:30 PM Rule/Planning Tomorrow, Today (29:44):** Come 4:30 PM, you'll most probably get a hunch on what tasks you won't be able to finish within the day. So do a pre-planning today for the duties that you have to work/continue working on tomorrow.
- **Accountability (30:56):** Create accountability into your life. One way to do this is to apply for executive and life coaching. Schedule a [free one-time](#)

[clarity coaching call](#) with yours truly. Set a meeting now and welcome accountability!

List of Resources Mentioned in the Episode

[Why Goal Setting Is Important and How to Do It: The Definitive Guide for Setting and Achieving Meaningful Goals](#)

[Your Brain on H2O](#)

Want to talk to a personal performance coach?

Want to consider executive life coaching? Claim a spot on Jim's calendar for your free one-time clarity call: JimHarshawJr.com/APPLY

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How to Leave a Rating and Review for STF on iTunes

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Other Episodes Referenced

[#271 How to Simplify Your Life: Time Saving Tech Hacks to Get More Done in Less Time Even If You're Not Non-Tech-Savvy](#)

[#268 Deep Work, Digital Minimalism, and Doing Your Highest Value Work with Cal Newport](#)

[#269 Why Goal Setting Is Important and How to Do It: The Definitive Guide for How to Set and Achieve Meaningful Goals](#)

[#246 Interview with Tim Ferriss: Secret \(or Not-So-Secret\) Routines, Experiments, and Absurd Questions from a World-Class Performer \(Part 1\)](#)

[#247 Interview with Tim Ferriss \(Part 2\): Asymmetric Bets, Fear Setting, and Choosing the Right Targets](#)