

# HOW TO MAKE **2014** YOUR BEST YEAR EVER



**12 proven strategies to help you create more fun,  
success, happiness and enjoyment in your life**

With the compliments of  
**The Smile Company**  
Excellence in Dental Care.

[www.smileco.co.nz](http://www.smileco.co.nz)

# Introduction

We really appreciate all our valued clients and friends like you.

And we are always searching for helpful ideas we can pass along.

That's why we are delighted to share with you this short guide called '*How to make 2014 your best year ever*'

It's written by marketing expert Graham McGregor and contains 12 proven strategies that any person can use to create more fun, success, happiness and enjoyment in their life.

We love the ideas that Graham shares in this booklet because they are positive, simple and very easy to use.

We invite you to read through this booklet and try any of the strategies and ideas that appeal to you.

We know you will be pleasantly surprised at how effective these ideas are and the excellent results you will enjoy from using them.

Best wishes for the next 12 months.

And we trust that the year ahead turns out to be your best one ever!

Kind regards

*The Smile Company Team*

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*“We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different and yet the same”* Anne Frank

# Strategy 1:

## Celebrate two important things from the previous 12 months



One of the smartest ways to get great value from the next 12 months of your life is to make sure you celebrate some important things from the previous 12 months.

There are two wonderful things you should celebrate from every 12 month period. (And when you celebrate these two things; they will help you to achieve even better results in the future.)

**The first thing you should celebrate from the last 12 months is the many successes you will have enjoyed:**

By successes, I mean anything that you did or experienced in the last 12 months that made you *feel good* about yourself. These successes can be big and small. (Both are important to acknowledge.)

**A good way to celebrate these successes is to write them down:**

**Examples:**

In the last 12 months I have enjoyed a lot of successes.

Here are just a few of them...

- ✓ I have now written over 120 weekly marketing columns in the NZ Herald online. This is the largest newspaper in the country. And hundreds of people from all around the world have told me how they have read my articles and found them useful in their business. You can read many of these online marketing columns at this link... <http://bit.ly/nzheraldonline>
- ✓ I had a wonderful holiday riding the Otago Rail Trail with my wife and four friends. This had been on my bucket list for quite some time and it was amazing. We met some fascinating people, saw incredible scenery and enjoyed delicious food and wine everywhere we went. We used the services of Trail Journeys to organise our Otago Rail Trail adventure and they did a superb job of arranging everything. You can find out more about the Otago Rail Trail at [www.trailjourneys.co.nz](http://www.trailjourneys.co.nz)
- ✓ I helped to raise thousands of dollars for a great charity
- ✓ I ended the year a little bit fitter and healthier



As you can see, the successes you celebrate on your list *don't* have to be big things. They can just be things you did or experienced that made you feel good about yourself.

## The second thing you should celebrate from the last 12 months are the various 'Learning Lessons' you will have experienced:

Learning lessons are what I call the experiences that you didn't like or enjoy that much. I believe that it can be very helpful to look at some of these uncomfortable experiences and write down the valuable learning lessons you learned from them.

### Example:

In the last 12 months I made the mistake of taking on far too many marketing projects.

I decided to produce a series of brand new business success videos, create dozens of new marketing guides, and make a massive difference to the lives of thousands of people around the world.

At the same time I took on a number of new marketing clients in industries that I had not worked with before and tried a large number of new marketing strategies with these clients.

After six months of being super busy I took a step back and reviewed my results.

The reality was I was not doing my best possible work with many of the projects I was involved with. And I was not enjoying life as much as I wanted.

My learning lesson was that I had lost focus.

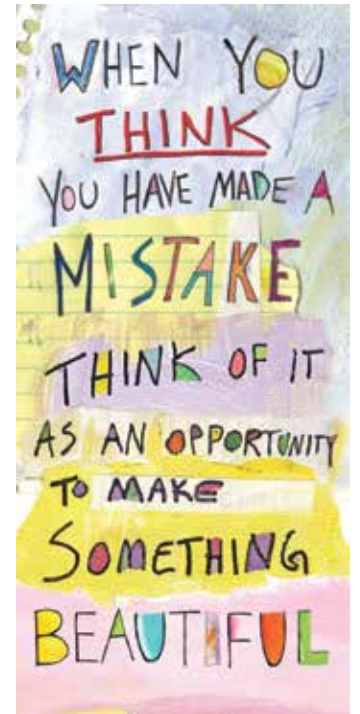
So over the next few months I cut back by 75% the number of projects I was involved with.

I realised I needed to concentrate on what I was brilliant at doing. Rather than stuff that I was average at doing. I also wanted to do things that were fun and enjoyable.

And most importantly that produced great results. (For both me and my clients.)

The result from doing less was interesting. In a 90 day period I doubled my results from the previous six months. With far less effort and a lot more fun and enjoyment.

We all have great successes and valuable learning lessons in any 12 month period. I encourage you to celebrate all these successes and learning lessons.



## TAKE ACTION

*Write down 20 or more successes, big and small, you've had in the last 12 months. (This is a great way to end the last 12 months on a high note.)  
Write down at least three learning lessons you've had from things in the last 12 months that did not go as well as you wanted them to. (This allows you to learn something positive and helpful from any 'less than desirable experiences' you've had during this time.)*

*You learn something every day  
if you pay attention* Ray LeBlond

# Strategy 2:

## Eliminate the mosquitoes in your life

In his Book “High Energy Habits” author Bill Ford talks about “Getting rid of the little things that annoy you.” I like to think of the little things that annoy you as being like mosquitoes. They are pesky, irritating and drain you of energy you could use far more productively on other things.

### Here are some of the common little things that annoy many people.

- A loose or missing button on an article of clothing
- Email backlog
- A dripping tap
- Mould around your bath or shower
- Light bulbs that need replacing
- Things that need to be returned to shops
- No room in filing cabinet
- Drawers that don't close properly
- House not finished
- Garden needing weeding
- Magazines waiting to be read
- And many more.

Often these 'mosquitoes' are some minor annoyance or irritant that that you are tolerating, but are not happy about. Usually you know what to do to fix it, but you have just not yet got around to doing it. Then before you know it, months and sometimes years have passed and the irritant is still there.

So you almost don't notice the dripping tap, the loose door handle, the light bulb that keeps shorting out and more. You just work around them.

When you start to notice these mosquitoes you will see there can be a lot of them.



Bill Ford suggests that you imagine that all of the little jobs around the house requiring attention have a Post-It note attached: the bills say 'pay me', the magazines say 'read me', the stain says 'clean me', and the papers say 'file me' and so on.

Now imagine that as you move through your home that each note has a naggy whiny voice saying 'me, me, me, me!' The voice are all different but all of them are grating on your nerves. And as you have a cup of coffee, read the paper, get ready for work, some part of you is engaged in saying 'later, later, later, not important enough, no time right now'.

We are so busy that these little things do not seem to justify a high priority. But it takes energy to ignore the mosquitoes and it also reduces our enjoyment of what ever else we are doing at the same time.



## The wasted five star hotel room

Imagine you have just paid a large amount of money to stay in a luxury five star hotel room. The room is magnificent and has every luxury you could possibly want.

You lie down to sleep in the superbly comfortable bed and suddenly you hear a mosquito start to buzz. You turn on the light and because the hotel ceiling is so high you can't get the mosquito. It buzzes in your ear all night and you just can't sleep.

The five star hotel room has been wasted and all because of one tiny mosquito. This experience happened to a friend of mine Des Moss and prompted him to write: *"If you don't think small things don't bother you, just try sleeping with a mosquito"*

This experience is exactly what life is like when it is full of these little annoyances.

### Here's the solution Bill gives:

1. Take 10 minutes and make a list of all the little things in your life that annoy you. You can even make two lists if you want to. One list can be for work and one list can be for your personal life. Add to each list over time. You will start to notice more and more things that are not quite the way you would like them to be.
2. Pick two easy 'mosquitoes' and deal with them today. By 'easy' I mean items where you know all you need to know in order to fix them and also won't take too long.

These could be things like clean your car, sew on a button, replace a light bulb and so on.

Notice how it feels when you have fixed each of these two little irritations. Then keep going and pick at least two more 'mosquitoes' for another day.

The momentum will build. Even if you don't get the thing that irritates you fixed make sure you at least write it down.

### Example:

I used this strategy myself and in ten minutes I came up with 15 little things that annoyed me around my home. I managed to eliminate three of these pesky irritations that same day. One was an overdue library book I needed to return. I put it in my car and dropped in into the library a few hours later. It was so simple to do, yet I had put it off for a week. I felt so much better after fixing these three annoying little things in my life.

So one way to create more happiness in your life is to get rid of some of the 'mosquitoes' in your life and see how good it feels.



## TAKE ACTION

*Make a list of 10-20 little things in your life that irritate you in some way.*

*Then take action on eliminating two of these 'mosquitos and notice how good this makes you feel.*

# Strategy 3:

## Use adventure to increase happiness

One of the ideas I enjoyed reading recently was this one:

*The person who experiences the most; wins.*

In other words; make sure you have numerous experiences that add to the colour, richness, depth and wisdom of your life. I like to think of these experiences as adventures.

So the question is “What kinds of adventures (or rich experiences) can you engage in throughout this year? Can you travel to exotic or novel places? Can you try new types of food or learn a new language? Can you learn to snowboard or scuba dive or fly? What experiences can you have that will add to the richness and colour of your life?”

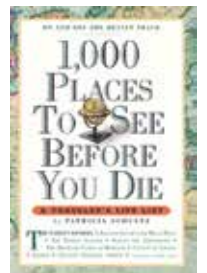
The way I see it; there are dozens of adventures (big and small) waiting for all of us to try; if we just open our eyes and look for them.

One simple way to add adventure to your life is to travel.

A great travel book to read is called “1,000 places to see before you die”.

The author of this book spent 7 years researching some of the most inspiring places to visit in the world.

(As the book says “The world is like a book; and those who don’t travel read only one page.”)



### **You can add micro-adventures to your life as well**

I was reading some interesting thoughts by Robin Sharma in the Sharma Leadership Report.

Robin noted; “When we were kids, much of our happiness came from the fact that we did so many of the things we loved to do. We would skip stones on a lake or make angels in the snow or simply playfully engage in the present moment.

Often, as we age, we stop doing the things that made us so happy in our youth.

We give up that musical instrument that made our soul sing.

Or we stopped playing hockey or going skiing or surfing.

Or we stopped spending quality time with the friends that used to make us laugh so hard we thought our bellies would burst.

By engaging in “micro adventures”- little adventures that you inject into your day - you will restore the passion that you may have lost.

### **For Instance**

- Taking an hour to go to your favourite bookstore and browse through your favourite section, might be a micro adventure you can engage in today.
- Or trying Vietnamese food (if you have never tasted it before) could be another micro adventure you try tonight.

- Or picking up the phone and having a conversation with someone you admire could be another micro adventure that you schedule into your day.”

### Example:

Some good friends invited my wife and me out for a drive. They picked us up early on a Saturday morning and we drove north. We stopped at an amazing pottery studio and admired some spectacular pots, ornaments and plates.



We then enjoyed a delicious breakfast in a delightful café that was in the middle of a palm nursery. We continued driving and sightseeing for the rest of the day.

We walked down a surf beach where the surf was absolutely ‘huge’. We saw multimillion dollar homes in one of the most spectacular sea side subdivisions I had ever seen. We went down gravel roads that wound down the side of steep hills. We had drinks by the river in a friendly country pub.

## TAKE ACTION

*Write down at least 5-10 micro adventures that you could experience. Plan to do at least one of them this week.*

Our micro-adventure lasted for over 12 hours and was a complete break from our normal routine. We finished with a late dinner and a bottle of wine and watched the final of a grand slam tennis match on TV. All up it was a great day.

# Strategy 4:

## Laugh More



The average 4 year old laughs 300 times a day while the average adult laughs 15 times a day. Make the time to watch a funny movie or share a belly laugh with your child. Laughter relaxes you and ensures that you don’t take yourself too seriously.

Write down what you could do this week to add more

variety, laughter and fun in your life.

(I personally find that reading funny cartoons like the ones at [www.glasbergen.com](http://www.glasbergen.com) always brings a smile to my face.)

## TAKE ACTION

*Write down what you could do this week to add more variety, laughter and fun in your life.*



# Strategy 5:

## Use The 90/10 Rule for happiness

The 90/10 rule says that we really have no control over about 10% of what happens to us each day. We cannot stop the car from breaking down. A driver may cut us off in traffic. Someone may be rude to us. We have no control over this 10% of things that happen.

The other 90% is different. We determine the other 90%!

**How? By our reaction to what happened.**

I had a very interesting personal experience with the 90/10 rule:

It was 4.30pm on a Monday afternoon and I was driving my car on the outskirts of my city.

Suddenly a car pulled across the road right in front of me and I slammed into it.

My bonnet crumpled and I knew my car was now un-driveable. I was about to give the driver of the other car a real piece of my mind for being so stupid.

However I decided to solve my damaged car problem first. I used my cell phone and phoned my mechanic and explained my problem.

He phoned a towing company he used and also gave me the phone number of a reputable panel beater.

The panel beater said not to worry, he would sort out everything when my car was towed to his business.

The tow truck driver turned up within fifteen minutes. He told me that he had been to a lot of car crashes and any crash you walked away from was nothing to worry about.

I hadn't thought about that side of things at all. Because I had worn my seatbelt, I was not hurt at all, apart from a stiff neck for a few days.

The panel beater had a replacement car waiting for me when I arrived. In fact life was pretty much back to normal an hour after the crash. My wife was glad to hear I was fine.

I got my car back a few weeks later and the insurance company took care of everything.

I even had a particularly good month of sales!

The key was how I reacted to the situation.

The car pulling across in front of me was something I had no control over.

It was one of the 10% of things that happens. However I could control how I reacted.

And the whole car crash experience in hindsight was not that bad.



## Let's look at another example of the 90/10 rule:

You are having breakfast with your family and one of your daughters spills a cup of coffee over your work clothes just before you leave for work. You snap at your daughter and tell her off for being so clumsy. You get angry and upset because you will now be late for work. So you rush around and change your clothes. Breakfast is now very uncomfortable for the rest of your family because of your temper. You drive to work still angry, and have a generally miserable day where nothing seems to go well.

Let's look at this experience again using the 90/10 rule.

You had no control over the coffee being spilled over you. That's just part of the 10% of things that happen to you. However you can control how you reacted.



### Here is what you might have done:

Coffee splashes over you. Your daughter is about to cry. You gently say "It's OK, you just need to be more careful next time".

Grabbing a towel you rush upstairs. After grabbing a new shirt and your briefcase, you come back down to finish your breakfast.

You make a quick phone call to work and let them know you will be a few minutes late today.

You laugh and joke with your family at breakfast and leave for work. You arrive at work about ten minutes late and cheerfully greet your workmates.

Your day seems to go well.

Notice the difference. Both days started the same, but ended differently.

Why? Because of how you REACTED.

The one thing you and I do have control over is how we react.

And that's the key to this strategy.

Use the 90/10 Rule.

Choose how you will respond today when things happen that are outside your control.

## TAKE ACTION

*Remember the 90/10 rule.*

*Choose how you will react today to the 10% of things that you have no control over.*

*The one thing you can't take away from me is the way I choose to respond to what you do to me. The last of one's freedoms is to choose ones attitude in any given circumstance* Viktor Frankl

# Strategy 6:

## Ask 'Power Questions' to create happiness

In his book "Awaken the giant within" Anthony Robbins notes that our life experience is based on what we focus on.

And what we focus on is often determined by the questions we ask ourselves.

The best questions to ask yourself are what he calls Power Questions.

Power questions are designed to cause you to experience more happiness, excitement, pride, gratitude, joy, commitment, and love every day of your life.

Anthony suggests you come up with at least two to three answers to all of these questions.

If you have difficulty coming up with an answer just add the word "Could". EG What could I be most happy about in my life now?

### The Morning Power Questions:

1. What am I happy about in my life now?  
What about that makes me happy?  
How does that make me feel?
2. What am I excited about in my life now?  
What about that makes me feel excited?  
How does that make me feel?
3. What am I proud about in my life right now?  
What about that makes me feel proud?  
How does that make me feel?
4. What am I grateful about in my life right now?  
What about that makes me feel grateful?  
How does that make me feel?
5. What am I enjoying most in my life right now?  
What about that do I enjoy?  
How does that make me feel?
6. What am I committed to in my life right now?  
What about that makes me feel committed?  
How does that make me feel?
7. Who do I love?  
Who loves me?  
What about that makes me feel loving?  
How does that make me feel?



### The Evening Power Questions:

1. What have I given today?  
In what ways have I been a giver today?
2. What did I learn today?
3. How has today added to the quality of my life  
or how can I use today as an investment in my  
future?



## TAKE ACTION

*Use these Morning and Evening Power Questions for five days and notice how good you feel all day.*

# Strategy 7:

## Use the Worry Buster to eliminate most of your worries

An interesting survey was done a few years ago on what the average person worries about.

The survey found that forty percent of what people worry about never happens.

And thirty percent of what people worry about had already happened so you couldn't do anything about it.

Twelve percent of what the average person worries about is what others say about you, which most of the time is untrue.

Finally, according to this survey, ten percent of worry deals with your health and worrying will only make that worse!

That leaves about eight percent of the things that are considered to be real problems... and worry will not do any good with these either!

In other words, we worry about a lot of things that are not going to happen or have already happened.

In the wonderful book *"How to stop worrying and start living"* by Dale Carnegie there is an excellent technique to handle worry.

It's called the 'Worry Buster' and it has four simple steps

1. Define in writing exactly what you are worried about.

In medicine there is a saying that accurate diagnosis is 50% of the cure.

So write down exactly what you are worried about. For example "I am worried about my job." Or "I am worried about a business client I have who is slow paying their invoice."

2. Define in writing the Worst Possible Outcome (W.P.O.) of this worry.

If you have concerns about your job, the worst possible outcome is that you lose this job.

If you have concerns about a business client being slow to pay their invoice the worst possible outcome is that you never get paid.

3. Decide mentally to accept the worst possible outcome should it occur.

This will mentally relieve a lot of stress.

Ask yourself will this outcome kill me?

*Will losing your job kill you?*

*Will not getting paid kill you?*

In most cases the answer is no.

(Asking this simple question allows you to put your worry in perspective.)



4. Take action immediately to make sure the worst possible outcome doesn't occur.

Action is the antidote for worry.

If you are worried about your job, talk to someone in your organisation who can give you more accurate information about your concerns.

If you are worried about a client not paying you, perhaps you could make time to go and talk with them face to face and voice your concerns. Maybe you could offer them an installment plan to pay their invoice if they are in financial difficulty.

Another useful strategy to eliminate worry is the ten year question:

This is a great question to ask whenever you experience a major setback of any sort.

*"Ten years from now will this really matter?"*

This puts everything in perspective fast! If I were to ask you what you were worried and concerned about on this day 12 months ago most people wouldn't have a clue.

This goes to show that much of what we think is terrible today is usually not that important even a year later. Ten years is even longer.

Use the Worry Buster technique on any worry you have right now. It's an excellent tool to eliminate worry quickly. And the more worries you eliminate the happier you will feel.

## TAKE ACTION

*Use the Worry Buster technique on any worry you have right now. It's an excellent tool to eliminate worry quickly. And the more worries you eliminate the happier you will feel.*

*If a problem is fixable, if a situation is such that you can do something about it, then there is no need to worry. If it's not fixable, then there is no help in worrying. There is no benefit in worrying whatsoever*

His Holiness The Dalai Lama XIV



# Strategy 8:

## Regularly expose yourself to high quality ideas

When your goal is to get great results in any area of your life sometimes the missing step you are looking for can be one or more helpful ideas.

The good news is that high quality, helpful ideas are all around you and the trick is to find the ones that can help you to quickly improve your own results.

One of the easiest ways to get exposure to high quality ideas is to identify people who are already experts in the areas where you want to get great results.

These areas could be anything from selling, marketing, time management, money management, health, fitness, parenting, relationships and many others.

Once you've identified who some of these people are, then read any articles, books or e-zines they have written. Listen to some of their presentations and attend a few of the educational programmes they offer. You can sometimes even hire them for advice.

If you own or manage a business, an important key for long term business success is your ability to attract new customers and clients and convince them to spend money on the products and services you offer. In other words sales and marketing is a critical factor for your business success and is something you should devote time to getting good at.

### Helpful Resource:

If you own or manage a business and you would like to make it more successful, then I invite to check out my free, 396 page EBook called 'The Unfair Business Advantage Report.' This contains interviews with 32 top sales and marketing experts from 5 countries. Each expert shared their best strategy to boost profits, increase sales and create an 'unfair' business advantage.

You can download this report (with my compliments) by registering your name and email address at [www.TheUnfairBusinessAdvantage.com](http://www.TheUnfairBusinessAdvantage.com)

### The 1% learning rule:

When it comes to learning new ideas I came across a very helpful rule many years ago. This rule recommended that you invest at least 1% of your after tax income into learning new ideas that will help you to get better results in any area of your life that is important. So if your after tax income is \$65,000 a year then 1% of this is \$650. This amount of money could then be used and will allow you to buy some helpful books, attend a couple of courses and hire some expert advice.

## TAKE ACTION

*Write down three areas of your life that you want to get great improvement in during the next 12 months. Ask yourself what ideas you need to learn to get better results in these three areas. Then write down how you can expose yourself to these types of ideas. Are there books you can read, courses you can do or people you can talk to or hire?*

# Strategy 9:

## Get 'Success Insurance'



One of the most frustrating things in life is when you get all fired up and decide to do things differently. You really want to make some great improvements in your life.

So you set some goals to get in great physical shape, improve your business results, take more holidays and spend more time with your family.

You are motivated and keen and for a few days everything goes well. Then within a few weeks or months you notice yourself drifting back to exactly where you started from.

What you need to stop this happening is something I call 'Success Insurance'.

Success Insurance is helpful to keep you on track with your new goals and habits.

Here's the best way to get 'Success Insurance' I know.

### **Get a Support Group of like-minded people and meet with them regularly for both learning and inspiration**

This works well in any area you want to improve in.

#### **Success Insurance in public speaking:**

Many years ago I decided I wanted to learn to be able to speak well in front of a group of people. So I joined Toastmasters International. And over a six month period of weekly meetings I learned to speak surprisingly well in front of groups.

Every week I went to a Toastmasters meeting and I had to speak for at least a minute in front of a group. I had a series of different talks I had to give. I also received coaching and recommendations after giving each talk.

I also observed dozens of other people giving talks and receiving coaching and recommendations in the same time period. One of the reasons that a support group like Toastmasters works so well is that all the members are committed to the same thing - learning how to speak well in front of a group.

The interesting thing about Toastmasters is that there is wide range of people who all have different experience in speaking. Some are world class speakers and they attend Toastmasters to help other people learn to speak better in front of a group.

While others are brand new and are so terrified of public speaking 'they couldn't lead silent prayer in a phone booth!'



Toastmaster's works well because the support group gives you courage and teaches you how to become a better public speaker. And it's all done in a very positive and friendly environment. You get a lot of practice and you also see other people improve as well.

**The same support group concept applies equally well in business:**

If you want to make dramatic improvements in your business results get a small group of successful business people together and arrange to meet with them on a regular basis. Share your business successes and challenges with this group and ask for input and ideas from them as well.

This is often called a 'Mastermind Group' and it's very powerful.

**Mastermind Groups can be remarkably effective:**

I have a very successful business colleague called Bob who has a small group of very experienced business owners that he has a conference call with once a month for about an hour and a half. In each conference call each group member talks about their business and some of the things they want to achieve. They each receive recommendations and comments from the other group members about what they are trying to do. Bob told me he has been doing this for over nine years and it is one of the most valuable and productive things he does. He can clearly point to millions of dollars of extra revenues he's generated as a result of input from this small group of like-minded business owners.

This success insurance plan of getting a support group of like-minded people is an excellent way to keep you focussed and on track toward your important goals. And it's a great strategy to help you make sure that the next 12 months is your best year ever.

**TAKE ACTION**

*What important goal would it be helpful for you to have a support group of positive people for? These are people who will encourage you and keep you going in the right direction. Who are some people that you can talk to or meet with on a regular basis that would help you with this goal? Which of these people will you contact this week and ask for help?*

*If everyone received the encouragement they need to grow, the genius in most everyone would blossom and the world would produce abundance beyond the wildest dreams. We would have more than one Einstein, Edison, Schweitzer, Mother Theresa, Dr. Salk and other great minds in a century*

Sidney Madwed

# Strategy 10:

## Look for an *easier* way



This is one of my favourite success strategies. It's based on the concept that there are two ways to achieve any important goal. There is a hard way that takes a lot of effort and time. And there is a much easier way that requires far less effort and time to get exactly the same result.

Now most of think that the only way to achieve any important goal in life is to work hard and struggle.

However that is often not true. Let me explain.

I read an interesting book recently called 'Living the 80-20 Way" by Richard Koch.

Richard is a successful consultant, entrepreneur and bestselling author. [www.richardkoch.net](http://www.richardkoch.net)

In his book Richard explains that there is a difficult way and an easy way to success.

The difficult way is to study hard and for a long time, work hard for 60 hours or more a week for several decades. Sacrifice a pleasant life now in the hope of a much more pleasant future life. Try to do extraordinary things, at extraordinary cost, to get extraordinary results.

The easy way is quite different and open to everyone. It requires you to make a great mental leap and forget the idea that reward comes from long hours. The easy way to success is to focus on the outcomes that you want and then find the easiest way to achieve them with the least effort, least sacrifice, and most pleasure.

Concentrate on what produces extraordinary results without extraordinary effort. Be efficient but relaxed. First, think results. Then get them with the least energy possible.

### **Richard Koch gives a good example of this in his book:**

Imagine you're a cavewoman in the town of Bedrock, home of The Flintstones. You need to get to the other side of town in a hurry. Your alternatives are to walk or run. Walking will take forever. Running is quicker, but requires a lot more effort.

To run would be to make the popular option of trying to secure a better result by working harder. The easy way is different. We look for a much better result with far less effort.

*How can we get across Bedrock much faster but without the slog of running?*



Like the waitress at the prehistoric diner, we could roller-skate with less energy than it would take to run, yet still arrive quicker.

Or we could go one step further and jump on the back of a friendly brontosaurus.

That's a much better result with less effort.

Now this easier way strategy can be used in any area of your life that you want to make important changes in. These could be money, health, relationships and many more.

**An easy way to make new sales:** A while ago I created several marketing programmes to help real estate sales people improve their sales results. My problem was that I knew very few real estate sales people yet I still wanted to make a lot of sales. So I looked for a way to get great sales results with very little effort. The solution was easy. I contacted a real estate trainer who already had a great database of existing real estate clients. I made this real estate trainer an attractive offer where we could sell my marketing programmes to his clients and we would split the revenues from sales. We sold tens of thousands of dollars of my marketing programmes by using some simple emails combined with easy to read sales pages on our websites. This was super easy to do and produced great results for both of us with very little effort.

### The Creative Book Publisher

Here's another example of using the easy way to success. A lady called Cindy Cashman saw an interesting idea a few years ago that took her fancy. The idea was for a book with the title "Everything men know about women." You can learn more about Cindy at [www.cindycashman.com](http://www.cindycashman.com)

The book was over 100 pages long and inside there was nothing but blank pages. Cindy liked the fun nature of the book but she didn't like the idea of having to work really hard to try and make a few sales. So she began looking for ways to sell huge amounts of her book with very little effort.

The outcome was interesting. Cindy ignored completely traditional book shops as she realised her book would be competing with tens of thousands of other books for sale.

Instead Cindy approached businesses like women's clothing shops and got them to display her book next to the cash register. Women shopping at these stores would pick up the book because of the catchy title, laugh when they saw it was totally blank inside and would then buy a whole bunch to give as gifts to people they knew. Cindy kept the price very affordable and sold over a million copies of her book over the next few years.

Cindy went on to become one of the most successful self publishers in the world. All by being creative and looking for an easier way to do things. In your own life always be on the lookout for things you can do that are low effort with high rewards.

It's corny, but the best things in life are free or nearly free, giving a fantastic return on effort. Saying thanks, showing appreciation, displaying affection, watching a sunrise or sunset, caring for a pet or a plant, smiling at a casual acquaintance or stranger, committing a random act of kindness, enjoying a walk in a beautiful place - these are all ways of getting great results with very little effort.

The reward from doing any of these things is out of all proportion to the effort.

## TAKE ACTION

*Write down ten things you could do this week that would create more success in your life with very little effort. Then spend five minutes each day doing some of these things.*

*There's a way to do it better - find it*

Thomas Edison



# Strategy 11:

## Use the '\$20 Challenge' to eliminate procrastination

This is one of the most interesting strategies I have ever come across for getting into action and doing things you know you should be doing.

It's based on the principle of making it painful to not do something.

### Here's how it works....

You and I often know what action steps we could do to help us reach our important goals.

### Examples:

If you have a fitness goal, one action step might be getting up a little bit earlier in the morning and doing 10 minutes of exercise.

If you have a goal to increase your work income, one action step might be to spend 30 minutes a day studying and learning more about your field.

If you have a goal to have more free time each day, one action step might be to spend 10 minutes with a 'to do' list the night before.

The problem we face is that we procrastinate on many of these action steps that we know would help us reach our goals. That's where the \$20 Challenge is so helpful.

### How to use the \$20 Challenge:

- 1: Write down one or more action steps that you could do in the next 7 days that would help you achieve one of your important goals.
- 2: Commit in writing to doing one or more of more these action steps in the next 7 days Give a copy of this written commitment to one other person along with a \$20 note.
- 3: Arrange to meet with this person 7 days from now and get them to physically cut up your \$20 note with a pair of scissors if you have not completed the action steps you committed in writing that you would do.

The \$20 challenge sounds simple and even childish. However it works on the principle that it is very painful psychologically to destroy money. Think about it. When was the last time you destroyed a perfectly good \$20 note? For most people the answer is 'never'.

### Here are some ways that people have used the \$20 Challenge...

#### The procrastinating banker:

I have an associate who is a very successful banker. One day I told him about the \$20 Challenge and how it works to eliminate procrastination. He called me a week later with his story. He explained that he had an important action step to take involving one of his key staff members. He told me that he had put this action step on his 'to do' list every day for a month and it still had not been done.

## So he decided to use the \$20 Challenge.

He told one of his friends that he was committed to doing this action step involving one of his staff within the next 7 days. He gave the friend a written copy of what he intended to do along with a \$20 note. Nothing happened for six days and my banker friend procrastinated like he normally did. However the thought of having his \$20 note cut up began to weigh on his mind. One hour before his 7 day deadline was up, my friend decided it was less painful to do his action step rather than have his money destroyed. So he got into action and within 45 minutes had completed it. He told me he was amazed how effective the \$20 challenge was for him.



### The happy bachelorette:

I have a good friend who had been single for several years. She told me that she badly wanted to have a great relationship with a wonderful man.

I asked her what action steps she could take to reach this goal and how to use the \$20 Challenge to help her do these action steps. My friend identified that one of the things she could do over the next 7 days was to ring up and answer 4 personal ads from the local newspaper.

We met in a week and she told me she had done well; however she had only replied to 3 personal ads not 4. Because she had not done what she had said she would do, I pulled out her \$20 note and cut it up into a hundred tiny pieces.

My friend was visibly shocked when I did this. However she agreed that she had not done what she said she was going to do.

I then asked her if she would like to complete the \$20 challenge for another 7 days. She agreed that she would and identified one action step she would take. It was to join an organization that arranged dinners and functions for people who wanted to get involved in relationships.

7 days later we met again and this time she had completed her action step. (So her \$20 was safe.) As a nice follow-up to this story, my friend met a delightful man at one of these functions a few months later. They have now both enjoyed a happy relationship for over 11 years.

I have used the \$20 Challenge myself many times and shared it with a number of people.

### The keys to using the \$20 Challenge seem to include:

Make the time frame to complete your action steps short. (7 days seems to work well.)

Make the action steps you pick simple to do, but not things you would usually do. (If you normally exercise 2 times a week for instance; there is not much point in you putting down that as your action steps for the next 7 days.)

Involve another person who will take it seriously and cut up your money if you don't complete the agreed action steps. This is very important.

**So that's the \$20 Challenge:** A simple (if slightly unusual) way to eliminate procrastination and achieve your goals faster.

**TAKE ACTION**

*Try this yourself!  
It is surprisingly effective.*

# Strategy 12:

## Use a Bucket List

What is a 'Bucket List'?

A 'Bucket list' is a detailed list of everything you would like to do and experience before you die.

(Or 'kick the bucket' as the expression goes.)

Your Bucket List is personal to you and you can start it at any age.

When you use a Bucket List right, it can transform your life.

### **The John Goddard Story:**

One of the most famous examples of a Bucket List is the story of John Goddard.

John is one of the world's famous adventurers and a world-class motivational speaker. Articles about him appear in Life, National Geographic Magazine, Reader's Digest, and the book Chicken Soup for the Soul.

When he was fifteen, John overheard his grandmother say to someone, "If only I had done that when I was young..."

Determined not to make that statement at the end of his own life, John sat down (at age fifteen) and wrote 127 goals for his life.

- He spent six hours writing his list.
- He named ten rivers he wanted to explore and seventeen mountains he wanted to climb.
- He set goals of becoming an Eagle Scout, a world traveller and a pilot.
- Also in his list were to ride a horse in the Rose Bowl Parade, dive in a submarine, retrace the travels of Marco Polo, read the Bible from cover to cover, and read the entire Encyclopaedia Britannica.
- He also planned to read the entire works of Shakespeare, Plato, Dickens, Socrates, Aristotle, and several other classic authors.
- He wanted to learn to play the flute and violin, marry and have children (he had six), pursue a medical career, and serve as a missionary for his church.

Sounds impossible?

By the age of forty-seven, John Goddard accomplished 103 out of his 127 original goals!

If you would like to see a copy of John Goddard's original 'Bucket List then visit his website at <http://www.johngoddard.info>

John's amazing accomplishment's all started with his Bucket List:

Over the years, Goddard, has added new goals, building his list to more than 600 items.

So far he has checked off over 515 goals -- and he's still not finished.



## Here are just a few of John Goddard's accomplishments:

- Climbed the Matterhorn during a blizzard that was so bad, not even the professional climbers would go along.
- Retraced the complete route of Marco Polo.
- First man to explore the whole length of the world's longest river, the Nile. Two other men went with him on this 4,200-mile, 10-month trek (John says he had yet one more travelling companion -- he contracted a tape worm that he named Rodney). What kind of boat do you suppose they used for the trip? Each man paddled his own little kayak! Also boated down the Amazon, Congo & others.
- Been attacked by hippos, crocodiles, a furious wart hog, and bloodsucking leeches in the Congo.
- John has survived plane crashes, earthquakes, three rounds with quicksand, almost drowned twice, and had an appendicitis attack 200 miles from the nearest health care facility. He has faced death 38 times.
- Lived with 260 different tribal groups. He says these tribes range "from the head hunters of New Guinea, to the pygmies of Central Africa"
- Climbed Ararat, Kilimanjaro, Fuji, Rainier, the Matterhorn, and the Grand Tetons.
- Been to 120 countries, learned to fly a plane, explored underwater the reefs of Florida, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, the Red Sea, and more.
- Flown 47 different types of aircraft, and set several civilian air-speed records including one at 1,500 miles an hour.
- Became the youngest ever person admitted to the Adventurers' Club of Los Angeles, and is a member of the Royal Geographic Society of England, the French Explorers' Club (only American), the Mach II Club, and others.
- You can read about John's amazing adventures in his two books 'The Survivor' and 'Kayak's down the Nile.'



*What can you learn from John Goddard's Bucket List example to make your own life exciting, memorable and a heck of a lot of fun?*

Firstly, all the items on his Bucket List were extremely important to him. They were all things that he really wanted to do, experience and achieve for himself.

Secondly, he had a lot of items on his list and he continually added new ones on a regular basis. This meant he always had a lot of exciting things he could start doing at any one time.

Thirdly, John set priorities and regularly took action on some of the things on his list.

When you have a big Bucket List you can't do everything on it at once. You need to start somewhere. The trick is getting started.

### **The First step: Grab a pen**

As John Goddard says "I tell people that if they're sincere about really wanting to do things above and beyond the ordinary, the first thing they have to do is write it down."

Pour a cup of coffee, plop in a comfy chair and relax. Now think about your interests and what you'd like to achieve in your life.



## Write on a piece of paper "Before I Die' I want to..."

Now write down at least 10 items.

I invite you to take at least two minutes right now and complete this exercise.

(There is space right here in this guide for you to do this.)

Before I Die I want to:

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

## Set yourself the target of writing down at least 101 items on your Bucket list within the next 30 days

When you first start writing a Bucket List it can be difficult to come up with a lot of things to put on it.

All this means is that your mind is a little bit rusty at the moment, and it needs stimulating.

The more you write, the easier it will be to come up with things that really inspire you.

Don't worry about how realistic some of these things are right now. What we want to do with this step is to get your mind active.

101 items sounds a lot, yet you could do it in a week by writing 15 items each day.

*Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all* Helen Keller



## Here are several headings you may like to use for the items on your Bucket List:

- Places I want to visit:
- Things I want to learn:
- Contributions I want to make:
- Achievements I want to accomplish:
- People I want to meet:
- Books I want to read:
- Things I want to see:
- Experiences I want to enjoy:
- Events I want to participate in:
- What I would like to create:



These headings are a starting point only to get you thinking. The more items you write for your Bucket List, the easier it will be to come up with the right headings for you.

### Make your Bucket List Special:

Get something really nice to write it in:

A very good way to make your Bucket List special is to write it in a high quality blank Journal.

Most large bookshops today have an excellent selection of lovely blank Journals.

Some have leather covers, others have inspiring pictures or sayings on the cover and even all the way through them.

My recommendation is to spend a few minutes in a large bookshop and ask to see their selection of journals. Then find one that you really like and use it for your Bucket List. I have found from personal experience, that the nicer the book you write your Bucket List in, the more valuable it becomes to you. My recommendation here is don't be cheap. Make writing in your Bucket List an experience that feels good every time you do it.



Another way to make your Bucket List special is to add pictures and inspiring information to your list.

### Example:

If one of the items on your Bucket List is to visit the Taj Mahal, then cut out an attractive picture of the Taj Mahal and put this in your book.

One of the main reasons for having a Bucket List is to inspire you to have an exciting life.

Pictures are a wonderful way to do this for many of the items on your Bucket list

One of the benefits of having an extensive Bucket List is that it's exciting just to read it, add to it and imagine what it would be like to complete some of the items in it.

The second benefit is that it gives you an interesting framework so you have an exciting and inspiring life.

A large Bucket List gives you dozens of interesting things you can take action on every month if you want to

## To use a Bucket List you will need to set priorities and take action:

Decide on which things you will do this year, and which ones you will do later.

I recommend that you write down at least 10 action steps you could take toward one of the items on your Bucket List. Then pick one of these action steps and do it.

### Example:



Let's say one of the items on your Bucket List is to go Hot Air Ballooning:

What are some action steps you could take for this item on your list?

You could go to the internet and search for Hot Air Balloon Companies in your area

You could then get some information on when flights are available and how much it costs.

Another step might be to book an actual balloon flight.

You can't do everything right now; however there is always something you can start on

For every item on your Bucket List there is always some action step you can take to get a little bit closer to achieving it.

And there is always time every week to do a few action step toward some of the items on your Bucket List.

## Do one thing every day that brings you closer to your important goals

On any day that you take positive action toward your important goals (like items on your bucket list) you will feel great. You will have a feeling of success, achievement and accomplishment.

Now each action step you take doesn't have to be big. It could be as simple as making a phone call, setting your alarm clock for five minutes earlier, checking a book out of the library, asking someone for some advice and so on.

The key is to take daily action steps that move you a bit closer to your goals. It's the consistent action steps each day that will produce the results you want.

## You can have success at any age:

I used to present seminars on goal setting. I noticed that only one thing ever worked if people wanted to achieve consistent results. And that one thing was taking action every day toward the goals that were important to them. What didn't work was anything else.

In my goal setting seminars, I observed that a person might write down ten goals they wanted to achieve in a year. Provided they took daily action on these goals, it was very common for a person to achieve 6-8 of these goals. If they didn't take daily action, they might only get 1 or 2 of these goals. Daily action was the key to great results.

In one goal setting seminar I asked all the people to write down at least 20 exciting goals they would like to achieve for themselves in the next 12 months. I then encouraged them to pick one goal that really inspired them and write a list of 10 action steps they could use to get closer to achieving that one goal. I asked everyone to pick one of these action steps and take action on it within the next 24 hours.

One of the people in this goal setting seminar was my 75 year old grandmother. (She had paid good money to come to this seminar and I noticed she was writing furiously and taking lots of notes.)





I asked her at the end of the seminar what was the one goal she had picked.

She told me that it had always been her dream to drive a car.

For her whole life she had always been driven everywhere by other people as she had never learnt how to drive.

I was a bit surprised by this and asked her what her next action step was going to be. She winked at me and told me I would find out tomorrow.

The next day, she went down to a car dealer and paid cash for a brand new car. (Remember she had never driven a car in her entire life.)

My Grandmother then took 18 months of driving lessons (with some very patient driving instructors) and finally received her driving license.

For the next 12 years she had the time of her life driving her car around the busy city.

My grandmother taught me many valuable lessons before she passed away at age 89.

The most important lesson was that if there is something you want you must take action.

You can use a Bucket List to inspire yourself forever.

You can use it to make every year, exciting, memorable and a heck of a lot of fun.

I highly recommend you try a bucket list in your own life as well. (And if you haven't already seen it, make sure you watch the inspirational movie 'The Bucket List' with Jack Nicolson and Morgan Freeman.)

## TAKE ACTION

*Take ten minutes and make a list of at least 10 things you would like to do, have or be over the next 12 months. Look over your list and select one goal you would like to get started on. Next, write down 10 action steps you could take to get closer to achieving this goal.*

*Finally do one of these action steps each day.*

*“It is only when we truly know and understand that we have a limited time on earth, and that we have no way of knowing when our time is up, that we will begin to live each day to the fullest, as if it were the only one we had”*

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

# Bonus Strategy:

## Read 'How full is Your Bucket?'

There's a wonderful little book on happiness called "How full is your bucket?"

Here's what the book has to say:

Each of us has an invisible bucket. It is constantly emptied or filled, depending on what others say or do to us.

When our bucket is full, we feel great.

When it's empty, we feel awful.

Each of us also has an invisible dipper.

When we use that dipper to fill other people's buckets - by saying or doing things to increase their positive emotions - we also fill our own bucket.

But when we use that dipper to dip from others' buckets - by saying or doing things that decrease their positive emotions - we diminish ourselves.

Like the cup that runneth over, a full bucket gives us a positive outlook and renewed energy. Every drop in that bucket makes us stronger and more optimistic.

But an empty bucket poisons our outlook, saps our energy, and undermines our will. That's why every time someone dips from our bucket, it hurts us.

So we face a choice every moment of every day: We can fill one another's buckets, or we can dip from them. It's an important choice -- one that profoundly influences our relationships, productivity, health, and happiness.

**Some Fast Facts** from "How Full Is Your Bucket?"

- The number-one reason people leave their jobs: They don't feel appreciated.
- 65% of people received no recognition in the workplace last year.
- 9 out of 10 people say they are more productive when they're around positive people.
- The magic ratio: 5 positive interactions for every 1 negative interaction.
- Extending longevity: Increasing positive emotions could lengthen life span by 10 years



**TAKE ACTION**

*Get a copy of this book and read what it has to say. It is very good!*

# A final thought

The clock is ticking. Before you know it, your life will be over.

And most people, when they are on their deathbeds, have the same regrets: that they did not take enough risks, that they did not realize their highest personal potential, and that they did not give more love.

So take some time each day to do things that create more success, happiness, fun and joy in your life. I know you'll be delighted with the results from doing this.

That's all we have space for in this special report.

I've shared 12 proven strategies to help you make the next 12 months your best year ever.

I hope you found something of value. I'd love to hear your comments and thoughts on anything in this booklet. You can email me on [graham@twomac.co.nz](mailto:graham@twomac.co.nz).

*Life is trying things to see if they work*

Ray Bradbury

