

HOW TO CREATE A PATTERN OF SUCCESS

HOW TO STAY CALM WHEN YOUR
KIDS PUSH YOUR BUTTONS

HOW TO BE PRODUCTIVE

5 THINGS YOU CAN DO TODAY
TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS

SELF-HELP FOR DEALING WITH STRESS

DO YOU NEED MOTIVATION
TO ACHIEVE YOUR DREAM?



Stress! Managing stress can be...very stressful!



David Perdew
CEO, NAMS Inc.

When I was working at my first major metro newspaper in Rochester, NY in 1981, our management decided to bring in a consultant to reduce our stress levels. Of course, we thought it was crazy.

Work-life balance in the news business was a myth. It wasn't unusual to get phone calls in the middle of the night about car accidents, fires, murders, and all kinds of mayhem. My job was to roust some poor photojournalist who had probably just fallen into bed after a night of shooting pro basketball for the late edition. "Wake up! You got to go back out!" Always exhausted, some of us lived on cigarettes and bourbon - a lot of coffee.

Every day started with 64 or 96 blank newspaper pages that had to be filled with "news" by the nightly deadline. Like Sisyphus, we pushed that ball uphill until the deadline, only to realize at the top that the rock had nowhere to go except over the cliff.

It was Groundhog Day every day.

So, I was really surprised when the stress management consultant called all of the editors including me into the main conference room to reveal the scores of our written stress tests. We had taken them a few days earlier.

He told us that different life events were given different scores depending on the stress of the event. Death was high. Public speaking was high. Moving was high. Divorce (and marriage) were high. It seemed like everything was high to me.

I don't remember the normal stress level numbers he quoted; I think it was under 300 or so. But we were not surprised when the consultant told us he'd never seen an organization with such high-stress levels across the board. No one - not a soul in that room - had scored less than 900. He was alarmed and suggested that we had to figure out a way to do our jobs with much less stress.

Management scoffed and we never saw the consultant again.

In this issue of The NAMS Way of Thinking, you'll find a lot of discussion about stress and how to reduce it. Enjoy!

INTRODUCING

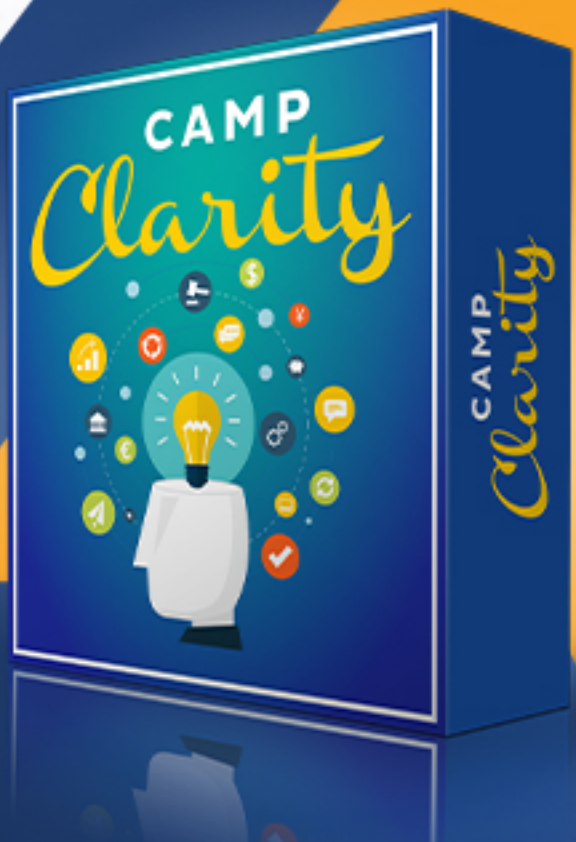
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HOW TO CREATE A PATTERN OF SUCCESS

Once you experience success you will be able to experience it again and again. You'll know how to set a goal and follow it through to the end. This is essentially what all successful people do. They figure it out once, then rinse and repeat to reach even more goals.

The following tips will help you create a pattern of success too.

Become a Goal Setting Expert

Learn all you can about crafting the best goals for yourself. Whether you set these goals yourself or get help from a coach, make sure they are SMART goals - specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

Schedule Everything

No matter how small or silly it might seem, fill your calendar with everything you need to accomplish each day - including the actions you need to take to reach your goals. If it's built into your schedule, it's more likely to get done.

Automate or Outsource the Mundane

If it doesn't need your personal attention, outsource it. If it can be automated, do it. There is no lack of technology to automate much of the activities that waste valuable time. If there's not a program or app for it, hire an assistant to cover those tasks.

Stop Reinventing the Wheel

In most cases, someone has done it before you. They have worked out the kinks and devised a plan of action that will work for you with a few tweaks. Follow those who are aiming for the same success, learn from their successes and failures so you can reach your goal faster.

Never Stop Learning

It is suggested that it takes ten thousand hours of reading about a topic to become an expert on it. Keep this in mind as you look toward your future and set your goals. If you want to be an expert, start reading today.

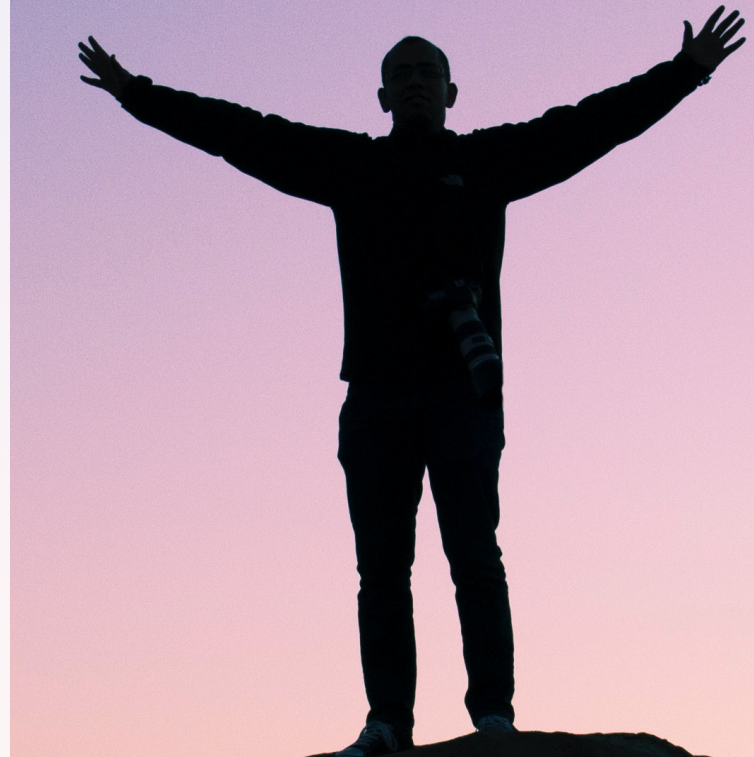
Know Your Core Values

Your success and your goals should align with your core values. Without this alignment, you may never achieve the goals, or you may achieve them only to realize you've wasted time because they weren't the right goals for you.

Track, Assess, Adjust and Repeat

To create a pattern of success you have to set your goals, track your progress, assess the results and adjust as needed. Only by doing all of these things each time, can you reach the level of success you are after.

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HOW TO STAY CALM WHEN YOUR KIDS PUSH YOUR BUTTONS

Children are skilled at knowing how to push your buttons. They know what to do when they are seeking a reaction from us. Here is what you can do to remain cool, calm and collected when your children push your buttons for a reaction.

Count to Ten

This is not for the sake of your child, nor is it a countdown to consequences for them. This is a countdown for you. It gives you time to refocus and put things into perspective. Stop, count to ten, and remember that your child is only acting this way because they are indeed a child.

Talk It Out

The best way to resolve a conflict between you and your child is not to explode in anger, but to talk it out with them. Sit down and discuss what is really going on. Talk to them calmly and aim to find out why they feel the need to push your buttons in this manner.

Do a Relationship Checklist

Often when a child is intentionally pushing your buttons, there is a reason he wants your attention. Is it possible that you have not been spending enough time together, and he is looking for a way to connect?

Could he feel that any attention is preferable over none? Does he seem stressed or sick? Look at the whole picture to see if there may be a reason for your child to be acting out.



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Remember How It Felt to Be That Age

Sometimes pushing buttons is simply the normal actions of an immature child. Children do not have the life experience we do, and often struggle to find efficient ways to communicate with others.

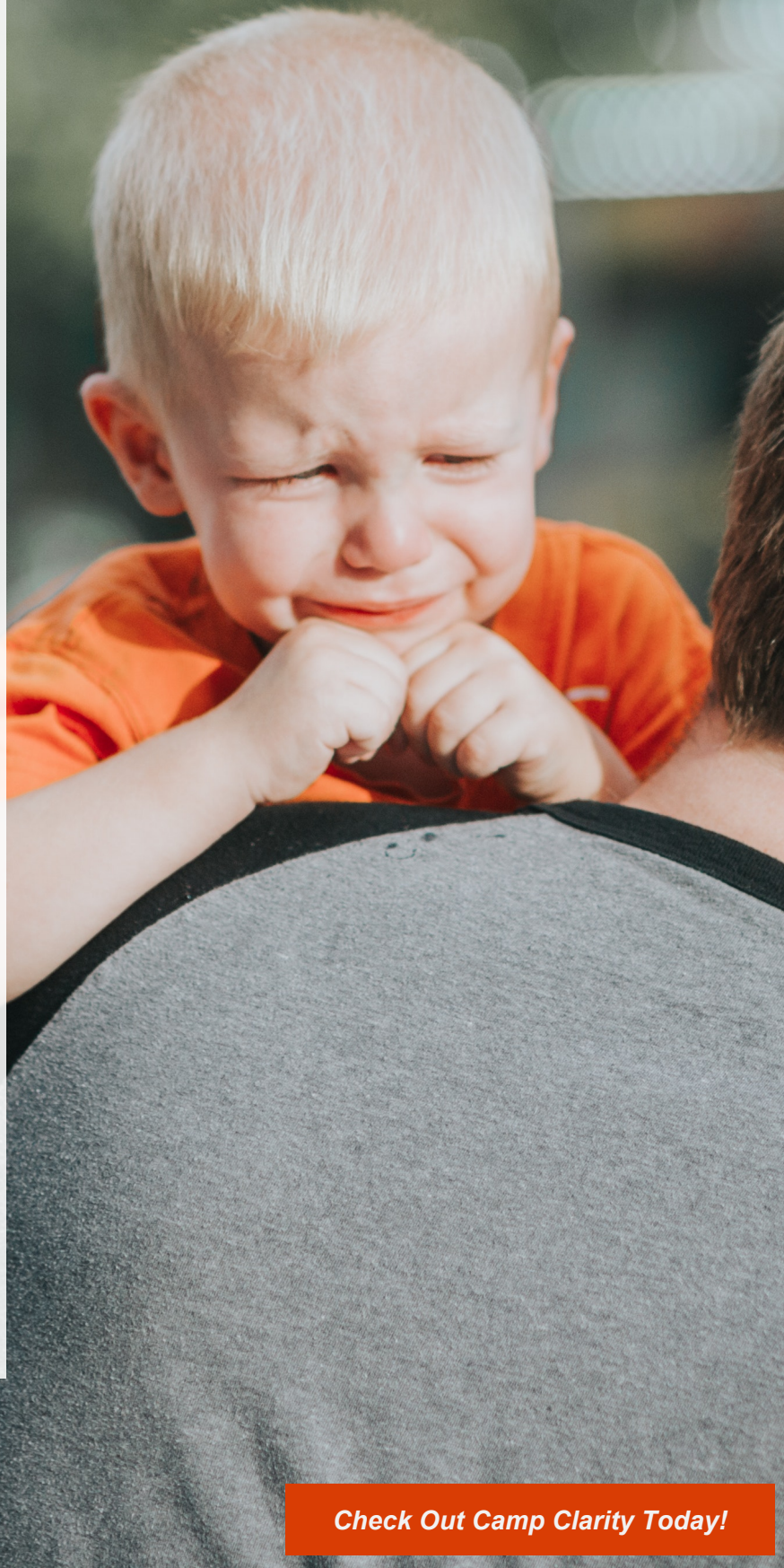
Take a moment and remember how it felt to be that age. What made you feel good? What made you feel sad? What made you feel connected to your parents, and disconnected? Remember what it was like to be a child, and this will surely lead you to a place of greater understanding and patience with your own.

Think about Life in 20 Years

When all other methods fail to help you feel calm, think about the future. Picture you and your child 20 years from now. What will you fondly remember about these days? What will make you wince with regret? This can be an effective way to quickly put things back into perspective.

Times passes so quickly, and we only live each day once. Think about how special these days are as a family, and you are certain to emerge as a more caring parent who is slow to react in a negative manner.

Children can surely push our buttons, but our time as parents of non-adult children is relatively short. If you can keep this in mind and compile a list of distraction strategies for your own benefit, it will help you get through the moments that you feel you are close to losing your cool. When your child is saying and doing everything to get a reaction out of you, maintain your composure and stay cool, calm and collected.



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SELF-HELP FOR DEALING WITH STRESS

Stress invades people's lives all the time, even daily for some. Life gets hard and it's difficult to juggle all the things life throws at us. It's important that we get our stress levels under control because frequent elevated levels of stress are toxic to the human body and can cause heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity, and diabetes. It's easier than you may think to help yourself decrease your stress levels. Just follow these simple steps.

1. Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine. Caffeine and nicotine are stimulants and do not decrease your levels of stress; they increase them. Alcohol is a depressant in large amounts and a stimulant in small amounts, making it bad for you to take as a way of relieving stress. Instead of reaching towards the alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine, grab some water or herbal tea. These are hydrating and provide you with stress relief.

2. Try taking part in physical activity. Stress releases hormones in your body known as adrenaline and cortisol. Releasing some of these hormones can help your stress levels to go down.

3. Get more sleep. Not getting enough sleep is a direct correlation to high stress levels. However, stress sometimes prevents us from relaxing enough to fall asleep.

If you are having this issue, try taking a warm bath or reading before bedtime. Another good tip is going to bed at roughly the same time every night. This creates a routine for you to follow, naturally decreasing your stress.



4. Try relaxation techniques. Every day try a different stress-reducing technique. You can try self-hypnosis as this is very simple and easy to do anywhere. You could also attempt saying one word repeatedly to yourself that holds meaning for you. Don't worry if these relaxation tips don't work right off the bat. Relaxation is a skill that takes time to master.

5. Talk to someone you trust and who can help. Letting someone know how you feel is a great way to reduce your stress

Many people have said that it's like a weight being lifted off their shoulders. Stress can cloud our mind and prevent us from thinking clearly. Talking through your situation with someone can help you figure out a solution to what you're stressing about.

6. Keep a stress diary. Keeping a diary and writing down your thoughts and emotions will help you become more aware of what you're feeling. Write down the date and place the stressful event occurred. Also include what you were doing and how you felt, both emotionally and physically. Writing everything down will enable you to avoid another stressful situation and you'll discover some new coping mechanisms.

7. Manage your time. Many people experience stress when they run out of time to do important things. With a schedule to follow you can ensure that you get all of your important tasks done in a timely manner. Having all your work done on time will help to decrease some stress.

8. Learn to say "No". It's easy to believe that you have all the time in the world and can juggle one more thing in your life. But sometimes you need to remember that you have so many other important things that needs to be juggled. There's only a certain number of hours in a day, making it hard to get multiple things done.

Take care of yourself. Stress invades everyone's lives but dealing with stress is manageable. Know that everything will get better and the thing that's causing you so much stress won't be a worry to you down the road.

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REDUCING CLUTTER AS A TEAM

Don't you hate not knowing where something is because you have too much stuff? Everyone in the house expects mom to know where everything is, too. Maybe it's time to reduce the clutter in your home and have a place for everything. You need to get the whole family involved, though. Follow these simple steps to reducing clutter as a family.

Take stock of your space. Look at the flow of your home and see where everything lands. Have a recycling bin for junk mail near where the mail gets dropped. Make a command center where coats, purses, backpacks, and important papers are all stored. Give everyone their own color/bin to store their things.

Create clutter-busting routines. Let everyone know what you expect from them. When they come home, coats and bags are to be hung on their designated hook. Shoes should be placed neatly in their cubby. Make sure everyone does it as they enter the home, no matter what. Make it easily accessible for even your youngest clutter buster.

When you buy a new pot or dish, remove an old one from the mix. Get the kids in the habit of doing this with their toys as well. One in one out.

Rent instead of buy everything. You don't need to steam clean the carpet every day. This is something you do a few times a year. Renting a steam cleaner instead of buying one will save you money and space. If you don't need to use something frequently, then consider hiring out for it or just renting the item when you need it.

Learn to let go. Set a number of how many items of something you need. How many sweaters do you need? How many coffee mugs could you possibly need? Figure out why you're hanging on to some of these items. Do you think you'll fit into that blouse again? Did your Great Aunt Sally give you that teapot? Is it really worth it to hang on to it?



When we clear the physical clutter, we make way for inspiration and good, orderly direction to enter.

- Julia Cameron



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When you do purge stuff, make your decisions quickly. Do you love it; do you use it every day/frequently; can you live without it? Then put it in a toss, donate, or keep pile and move on.

Make it fun. Figure out what motivates everyone in the family. If you do a good job as a family of getting rid of clutter, then plan something fun - a special family outing or dinner, perhaps. You need to get everyone to change their habits for the decluttering to work. Don't expect to just buy some cute storage bins and have it all fall into place.

You might need to have chore charts and calendars as reminders. Make a family chore jar. Every night all toys and shoes and backpacks are put away, a quarter gets put in the jar. Once the jar is full, plan to do a special family event with the money.

If you still find yourself picking up after everyone, then make a ransom box. Everyone can get their items back, but only after they do a special chore. It might be something as simple as giving mom a hug or as difficult as washing the car. No one knows what they are going to get, but the chore must be completed before they can retrieve their items out of the ransom box. This should help everyone to change their habits. Do it right the first time and you don't have to do these added chores.

Follow these tips and you slowly will get the clutter out of your home. But remember, the clutter didn't show up overnight, and chances are you won't get rid of it overnight. Take it one day at a time. Your family will eventually see the benefits - especially when they can get out of the house with both gloves instead of just one because they know right where they put their gloves.

HOW TO BE PRODUCTIVE

Most individuals wake up in the morning tired before they even begin their day. It is difficult enough to get everyone out of the house and ready for the day sometimes. There are times when getting ready for the day is almost as much work as the day itself.

In addition, then to have to think about being productive after the morning rush is another scenario all together.

However, there are ways to incorporate a little bit more productivity into your day. All it takes is a little planning and a little practice.

Be a Pre-Planner

A little pre-planning and you are off and running for the day. Although you may feel tired at the end of a long day to even think about planning for the next day, pre-planning is an excellent idea.

If you take five minutes to make a container of leftovers for lunch the next day, you will have saved valuable morning crunch time. Picking out your clothes the night before is also another excellent way to create more time for your day.

An excellent tip for being more productive throughout the day is to check the weather the night before and you will be surprised at how finding your rain boots and umbrella the night before adds up to precious minutes.



Eat Right and Sleep Tight

In order to have a more productive day, you need to have a restful night. Eating light and healthy meals close to bedtime, practicing some relaxation rituals, and getting a good night's sleep are all integral components of being more productive throughout your day.

When you are well rested, you have more energy and your memory is better, as well. When you remember more, you work easier and faster.

Take a Break

It is essential to take a break in the workplace once in a while. Sometimes time away from your desk or your office is time well spent. Going outside for a breath of fresh air, a cup of tea, or even just some sunshine breaks up the monotony of the day and gives you a fresh perspective on the rest of the day ahead.

Rely on Technology

Of course, you have to rely on technology, as well. There is an app for just about anything you need to know and remember. Use your cell phone to file away important documents, set reminders, and add meetings to your calendar.

Stay in touch with family members, as well since things can change with family throughout the day. A quick text about picking up the kids from soccer practice can really save the day. Being organized is never easier than it is with today's technology.



RECOGNIZE AND BE GRATEFUL FOR THE POSITIVES IN LIFE

With news outlets focusing on the negative and life challenges we have to face it's no wonder people are grumpy.

Being bombarded day in and day out could make anyone sad and depressed. But just because we're being hit with negatives, doesn't mean we have to become negative.

Every person has the choice of how they view life. We can wallow in self-pity allowing life's challenges and other people's words and actions get us down or we can choose to find the positives and live life to the fullest.

There are two components of being a happier more fulfilled person. One is awareness and the other is gratitude.

Awareness

Every day you are surrounded by positive things. It's impossible not find one if you just look. The fact that you woke up this morning is a positive. Knowing you have great vision is a positive. Feeling the warm sun on your face is a positive.

The laughter of children playing outside. A warm spring breeze or even a hearty thunderstorm are things to be grateful for.



Have you ever noticed a butterfly quickly float by? How about a bee buzzing the flowers? Or what about a bird that lands on a branch for a brief moment?

These are the little things that mean so much, but that we often overlook.

That bird, butterfly and bee are all contributing to a better life for everyone. They are positive elements in our busy world. While we are doing our thing, working, education, family, they are busy doing their thing, as well.

It is so easy to look at the flat tire or the traffic jam and not recognize that you are right where you are supposed to be in that moment.

There may be an accident up ahead that you would have been part of if you hadn't been running a little late.

Gratitude

Once you train your brain to recognize all that you have and how blessed you are, you will feel more gratitude. When you focus on things you are grateful for, you will begin to see more things for which to be grateful for in your life.

As this compounds, you will start to view the world from a different perspective. You'll feel lighter, more appreciative, happier and more fulfilled.

If someone told you to be grateful and more will be bestowed upon you, wouldn't you at least give it a try for a couple of months?

Gratitude is a powerful tool of the mind. The more you are grateful and appreciative, the more you will have for which to be grateful.



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5 THINGS YOU CAN DO TODAY TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS

You may wonder why some people are great at achieving their goals while others struggle. There are many reasons why some win and some fail, but if you follow the five suggestions below, you'll be a lot closer to achieving your goals.

1. Create Clear, Specific, Realistic Goals

For any goal to be achievable it must be clear and very specific. It also must be realistic. You want to challenge yourself, but don't set the bar so high, it's impossible to reach. For example, losing 50 pounds in 60 days is unrealistic. But losing it in 30 weeks is doable.

2. Set Actionable Tasks

In addition to knowing what the goal is, you also need to know why you want to achieve the goal and how you are going to achieve it.

Using the weight loss example above, you'll need to determine how many calories you are allowed to consume and how much exercise you need to do each day to ensure you lose 2 pounds a week. From there, you would plan out your meals and add time into your schedule for daily exercise.

3. Schedule Everything

Do not leave anything to chance. Add the work necessary to reach your goals into a real calendar. Writing a list isn't good enough - you need to schedule in everything so that you don't miss a single day.



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You'll need time to eat healthier, which requires more prep work and cooking.

You need time to fit in the exercise, which if you need 20 minutes of exercise, you should plan for 40 to account for prep and recovery time.

You need to be realistic about how long each thing will take and schedule them into your day accordingly.

4. Take Action

No goal will ever be achieved if action isn't taken each day. Each morning look at your calendar to see what the day holds. Follow through with the plans you've made and the criteria you've set for yourself.

Remember, you only need to do the minimum necessary each day to reach your goal. You are welcome to do more, if you want, but you must do the minimum. At the end of each day, if you've followed your schedule and did the minimum amount of work necessary, you are a success. You have achieved your daily goal. Each successful day gets you that much closer to your goal.

5. Take the Next Step

The last step is to simply take the next step in the process you've set out for yourself. This may be an exact repeat of the day before. It may be that you've reached a milestone and are ready to move to the next level of your plan.

Creating clear, specific goals and outlining the steps necessary to achieve it will allow you to reach your goals with minimum effort and stress but with maximum results.

It's just like taking a hike. You choose your destination, map out how you're going to get there and take it one step at a time.



DO YOU NEED

The successful painter paints every single day and if they hate marketing, they hire someone to do that for them. The successful writer writes; the successful doctor - doctors. If you want to be successful at something, do it. They live it each and every day and that's why they succeed.

Follow a Schedule

It can't be stated enough. Doers do. Successful people do. A "to do" list isn't going to cut it; you're going to need to make a schedule and stick to it. If you want to write a 10,000 word eBook to sell to your target audience, you need to start at the end point, then work your way back to today making a schedule that is realistic and that you really can follow to get the work done when you said you wanted it done. Then let nothing stop you.

Experience Success

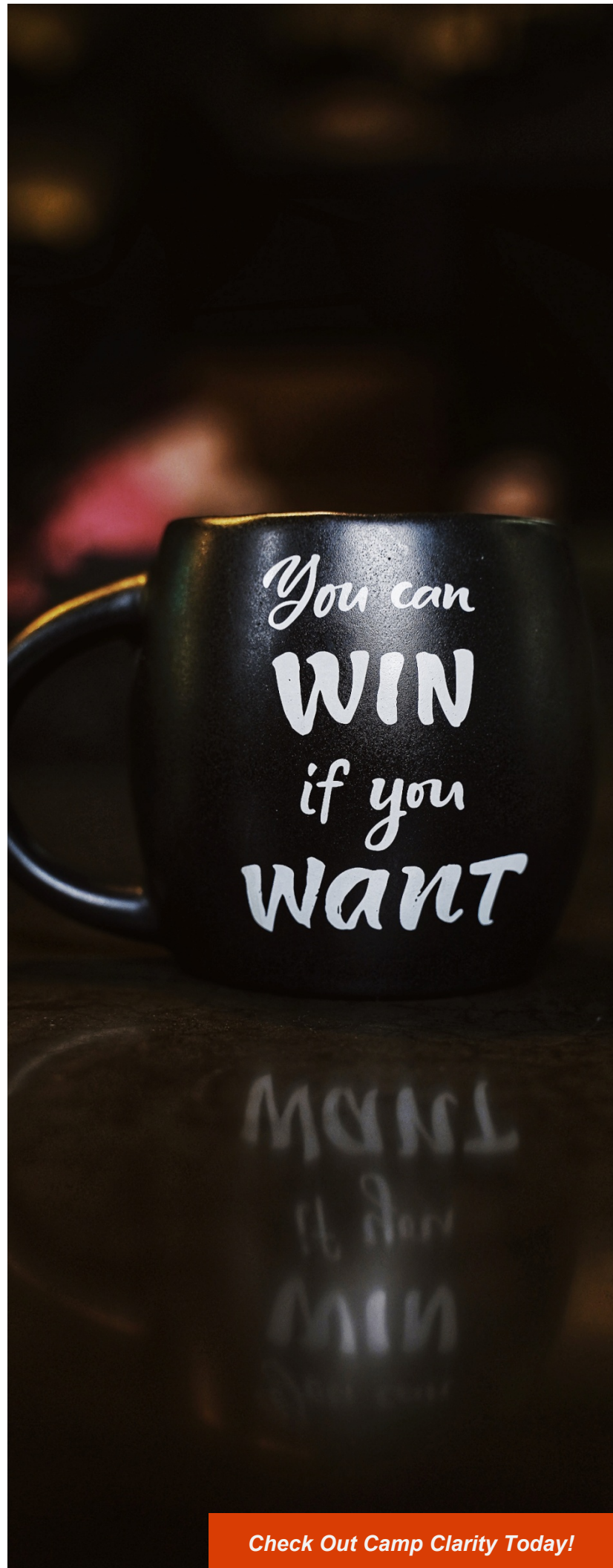
Set some smaller goals so that you can feel what success is like. If you've never once stuck to anything, you can't know what success feels like and you have nothing to push you forward. People who experience success like to experience it again, and the more success you experience, the more you're going to realize that you can. It's self-fulfilling.

Repeat Everything

Finally, keep doing it over and over again. With anything you want to achieve, set the goal, track your success and do something every single day toward achieving that goal. Again, and again. It's really that simple.

Some say motivation is a figment of the imagination, and not something that most people have. Whether or not this is true, motivation isn't a necessary component to achieve your dreams. Action is.

Most people start their mornings by hitting the snooze button a few times. They do not feel especially happy about doing certain tasks, be it work related or otherwise. But what keeps them going, what they feel happy about is the end result, the deliverable. Place your focus there and you will not need any motivation because you will be successful.



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