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Worksheet for Jocko Willink | Why Discipline Beats Motivation Every Time (Episode 15)

In Baghdad and Ramadi, Jocko Willink commanded SEAL Task Unit Bruiser -- the most highly decorated special operations unit of the Iraq War.

Retired from active duty, he and Leif Babin, his business partner and co-author of New York Times Best Seller [*Extreme Ownership: How U.S. Navy SEALs Lead and Win*](#), share their battle-tested strategies for effective leadership with civilians across all fields.

On [episode 15](#), Jocko joined us to discuss the difference between motivation and discipline, offer humility adjustments both for those who lack confidence and those

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whose egos need a little downsizing, share real tactics for bringing out the best in those around us by owning our responsibility to the big picture, and lots more.

Don't Want to Do It? Do It Anyway.

With a title like Jocko's second book, [*Discipline Equals Freedom*](#), could Jocko's kids be blamed for complaining, "But Dad, you're not normal!" during family discussions around habits and doing things we don't want to do?

Even Jocko admits there are plenty of times he doesn't want to do things. The difference: he chooses to lean in when he senses discomfort and does it anyway.

This is discipline.

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Take a moment and list the top three things you don't want to do in your life at the moment that are directly aligned with your long-term vision for yourself and your life. Then list out strategies you can use to lean into discomfort rather than making excuses to avoid it.

Small Wins Add Up

In this same line of thought, Jordan quotes from *Jocko's Field Manual*:

“Become who you want to be one step at a time.” By taking big goals and working

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backwards, creating small, daily, actionable wins, we build a snowball effect over time.

Go back to those three things you don't want to do. Can you break these goals down into smaller elements, attaching daily or weekly milestones (in tandem with your strategies to avoid avoidance) to make them more attainable? Write them down here.

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Make Waking up Your First Win of the Day

Jocko is known as the apostle of waking up early, and he often tweets out a picture of his watch when he wakes up, which is almost always at or around 4:30 a.m.

He makes the point in *Extreme Ownership* and in conversation with Jordan that it doesn't need to be that time for everyone (collective wipe of brows!) but once you've figured out how much sleep you need and arrange your schedule to get it, waking up is that very first decision of the day.

It's your chance to win your very first decision and always start your day positively.

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How much sleep do you personally need?

Are you willing to experiment with getting up early for at least one week to take up Jocko on his theory?

Why or why not?

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How Much Higher Can the Stakes Get?

In the same vein as Jocko's children's complaint about his "not being normal," readers of Jocko have written in pointing out that he has been to war and "of course he has that discipline." But that they are not at war, so how could they possibly match that? Jocko responds by simply asking, "How much higher can the stakes get? This is the only life you get."

Do you look for excuses as to why you don't have discipline in your life and your goals? Why or why not?

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Logic and Emotion: a Winning Combination

Jocko notes that you need both logic and emotion to reach your full potential. Emotion will help you dig deeper when logic tells you to give up, and logic can help you coldly push forward when your emotion breaks.

Go back to the three things we started this worksheet with. For each of them write down all the logical arguments and emotional motivations, both pro and con, that are part of the process of achieving them.

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Extra credit: Pick one of the three items and email jordan@jordanharbinger.com with an exact plan and timeline for what you are going to improve and how, and then set a calendar request to give us an update. If you achieve your commitment, you may just get a shoutout on a future [Feedback Friday!](#)

Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here.](#)

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About



Join Jordan Harbinger (critically acclaimed host, formerly of The Art of Charm) as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers -- from legendary musicians to intelligence operatives, iconoclastic writers to visionary change-makers.

We deconstruct the playbooks of the most successful people on earth -- and learn new strategies, perspectives, and insights you can't find anywhere else. Then, take these insights into your own life and live what you listen.

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