

THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

Worksheet for Ryan Holiday | Solving for What You Really Want from Life (Episode 45)

Most of us have dreams of wild success at some point in our lives. Some of us settle for a lesser version of what we once believed was in store for us, and many of us don't even come close. But every now and again we encounter someone who can seemingly point to any distant star of their choosing and reach it at light speed with targeted precision and minimal fuss. At first glance, you might mistake Ryan Holiday -- author of [*Conspiracy: Peter Thiel, Hulk Hogan, Gawker, and the Anatomy of Intrigue*](#) (and many others) -- for such a person.

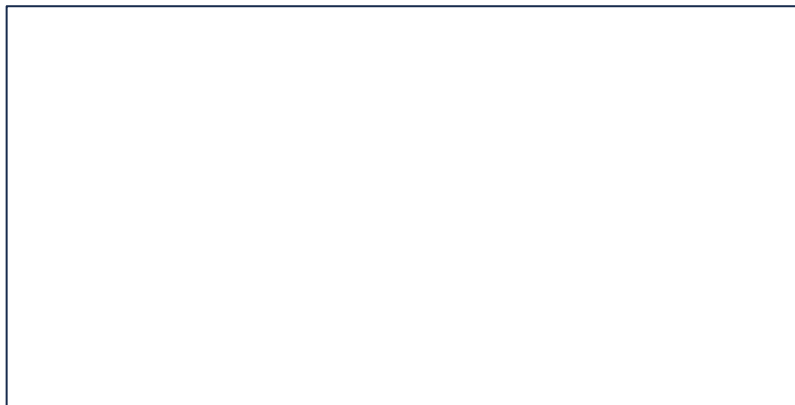
Ryan joins us for [episode 45](#) to explain that, while he had a good idea of what he wanted to do with his life from an early age, he never took it for granted that the strategies he employed to achieve his goals were a sure thing. And while an outside observer might see Ryan's many successes as evidence of his "magic" touch, he has a more interesting story to tell -- and much to teach us.

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Taking That First Step

Ryan dropped out of college at 19 to pursue writing by jumping into the industry doing research for Robert Greene, writing continuously in his own blog, and being ever intentional about moving in the right direction. Getting even a sub-entry level job in the field of your choice is the key to taking that first step.

Think about something you want to do in your life and examine the steps required to get there. Outline those steps. Have you taken that first step, or are you trying to start too far into the process? Do you have an understanding of where the bottom rung is? What is stopping you from getting started?

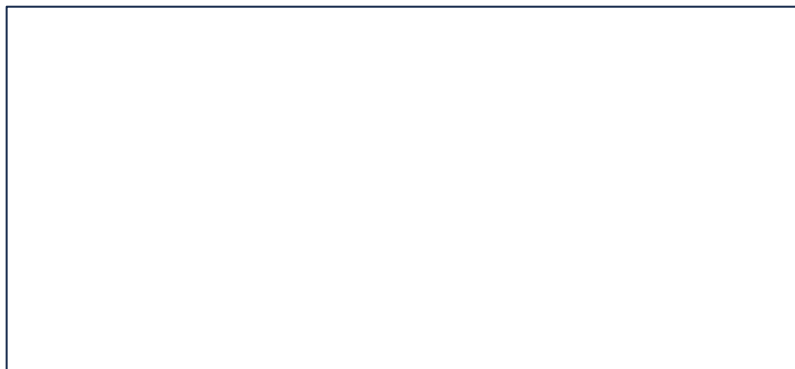
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Hindsight Bias

Hindsight bias is the inclination to perceive a past event as having been predictable -- despite little or no objective basis for such a prediction. This is also known as the knew-it-all-along effect or creeping determinism. Ryan explains how he knew what he wanted so early in life and how it evolved -- but not in the way the outside world may see it.

Are you comparing yourself to other people and assuming their journey toward achievement is somehow easier than your own? Spend time examining the methods of others who have accomplished the things you want to accomplish to understand what work they put into the mastery of their craft. Have you spent the time necessary to master your craft? What more can you do?

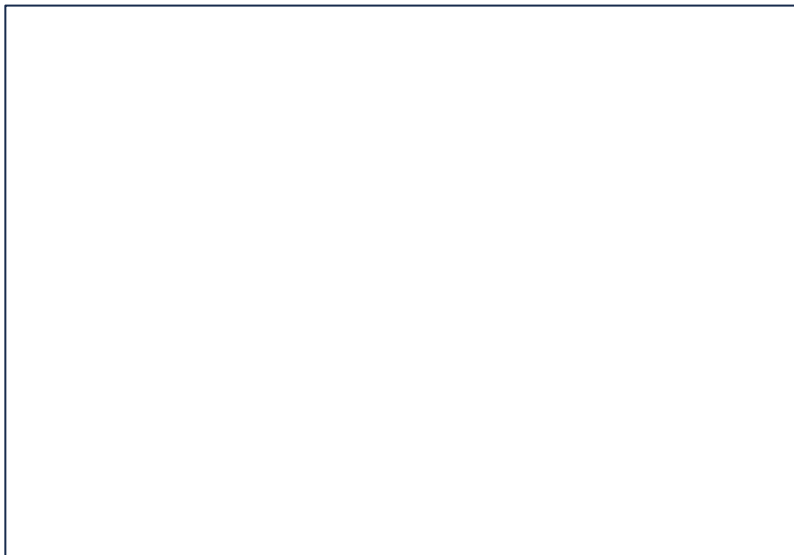


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Figuring out What You Want

Ryan says, “You will feel less pressure and less insecure if you just realize that everybody is winging it.” Guessing how people got to where they are is rarely helpful toward understanding their condition, but considering other people’s experience may help provide some guidance.

What is the thing you can’t stop doing or that you would do for free? Now, look at the professions that correlate with that thing and make a list of those professions. Do any of them stand out to you? Are any of those professions viable for you?

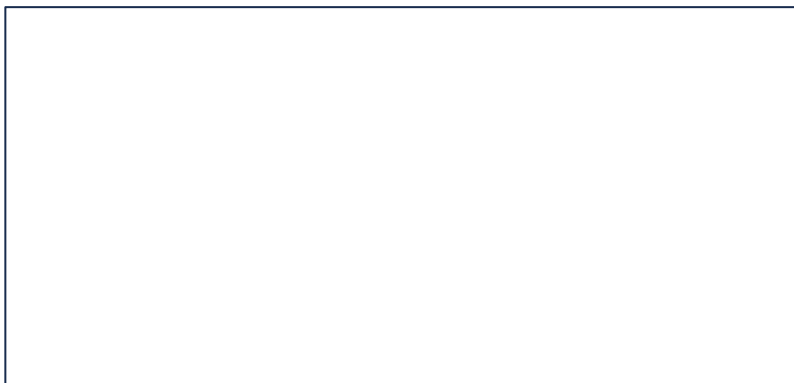
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Working Yourself into Position

Understanding the industry in which you are interested, soup to nuts, allows you to work yourself into a position to be ready when a door opens. When Ryan was ready to write his first book, he understood the entire business of publishing because he had jumped into the arena at the ground level by researching for Robert Greene. While such skills might be learned from school, on-the-job experience is usually much more expedient.

Do you understand the whole business of the profession in which you are interested? Are you an ambitious hobbyist or a professional? What skills do you need to learn if you are still in the hobbyist stage? Have you put in the time to learn them?

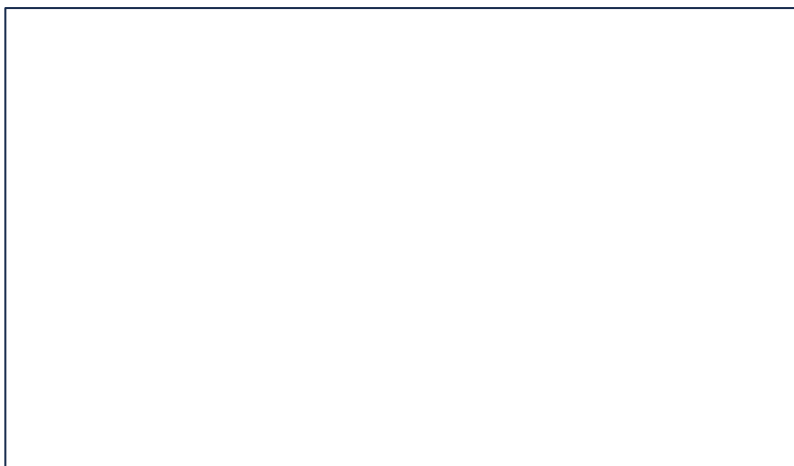


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Attitude of Easy

If you begin the pursuit of a desired profession, career, or job believing the journey is going to be easy, you're likely to give up long before reaching your destination. But finding motivation to pursue your calling regardless of ease will help ensure success.

Examine your motivation for pursuing the thing you are pursuing. Are you self-motivated because this is truly something that calls to you, or are you doing it because it is easy or a “short” road to money? Can you define your motivations?

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Decision Tree

A decision tree is a decision support tool that uses a tree-like graph or model of decisions and their possible consequences, including chance event outcomes, resource costs, and utility.

Ask yourself how, what, and why when confronting any big decisions. Do you consider the possible outcomes? Are you taking the easy way out? Do you see a somewhat clear path ahead?

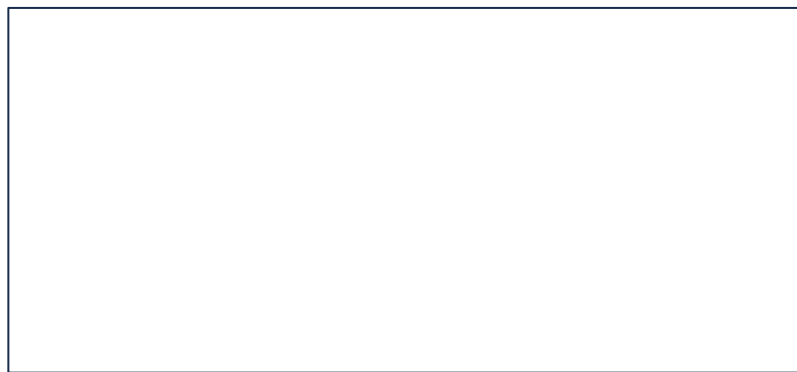
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Staying Focused

Avoid the “grass is greener” trap by staying focused on the final goal. Ryan admits that he struggles with turning down opportunities that arise day to day, but betraying the skill that you worked very hard to obtain by overloading your life is not a good answer.

Recognizing opportunities worth taking is an important skill, but learning to say no is just as important. How are you at saying no? Do you recognize opportunities that need to be taken? Why or why not? Do you take every opportunity? Why or why not? What are your natural skills? What skills have you worked hard to learn?



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

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About



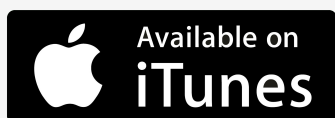
Join Jordan Harbinger (critically acclaimed host, formerly of The Art of Charm) as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers -- from legendary musicians to intelligence operatives, iconoclastic writers to visionary change-makers.

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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