

How to Get More From Life

by Scott H Young

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How to Get More From Life

Table of Contents

| | |
|------------|--|
| ~ | <u>Introduction</u> |
| Chapter 1: | <u>Life is a Work in Progress</u> |
| Chapter 2: | <u>Habits</u> |
| Chapter 3: | <u>Learning</u> |
| Chapter 4: | <u>Productivity</u> |
| Chapter 5: | <u>Social Success</u> |
| Chapter 6: | <u>Fitness</u> |
| Chapter 7: | <u>Entrepreneurship and Finding Your Passion</u> |
| Chapter 8: | <u>Motivation, Confidence and Happiness</u> |
| Chapter 9: | <u>The Meaning of Life</u> |
| ~ | <u>Conclusion</u> |

How to Get More From Life

Introduction

Introduction

Why I Wrote This Guide

I've written close to 800 articles at ScottHYoung.com. Even for the engaged reader, that's a lot of content to chew through (roughly 10 full-sized books worth). I made this guide to cohere many of those different ideas together in one, readable source.

The book is free, so I'm not making a lot of money. The book is geared at existing readers, so I'm not going to get a lot of traffic. Seeing as I don't expect to get a lot of direct benefit from writing this book, all I ask is this:

1. If you liked the book, I enjoy [getting thank-you emails](#).
2. And, if you really liked the book, please email it to your friends.

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How to Get More From Life

Introduction

Please share this book!

If you enjoy the book, email it to someone you know.

Heck, even if you **don't** enjoy the book, you can still email it to someone you know.

means you can share it, sell it or do whatever you want with it, so long as you don't change it and you let people know it was written by me. The biggest thanks I can get is to know someone liked the book enough to tell their friends about it.

What “Getting More From Life” Means

Yes, I know, it sounds a bit corny. It probably sounds exactly like all those cheesy platitudes I put great effort to distinguish my blog from. But, the tagline for this blog has remained consistent since I started it over 3 years ago. I'm a slave to branding.

Getting more from life, to me, isn't a specific action or a 12-step plan. It's a philosophy that is always geared towards improvement. It's about never being satisfied with the status quo, and having an insatiable hunger to improve the quality of your life and the quality of the things you achieve in it.

How to Get More From Life

Introduction

Getting more for life, for me, seems to be the only words that describe the **gut feeling** I get when I think about what I want to do on this earth.

No platitudes, no feel-good mantra. Getting more for life, for me, just seems to be the only words to describe that gut feeling I get when I think about what I want to do on this earth. And considering the roughly ten thousand readers following the blog, I don't think I'm the only person who shares this gut feeling.

This blog started as a 17-year old kid, bright-eyed with equal doses of enthusiasm and naivety wanting to share this gut feeling. Today, it's a 21-year old kid, with probably about the same amounts of enthusiasm and naivety.


No, I don't have all the answers.

No, I don't follow my life philosophy perfectly. I'm human and I make mistakes.

Yes, I'm 21. I'm not a guru. Just a person like you, often struggling to figure everything out.

How to Get More From Life

Introduction



This book covers the core ideas I've written about in the nearly 800 articles for ScottHYoung.com.

But it is by no means complete.

Occasionally, I'll add links to topics similar to the content of the book from articles in my archives:

Check out the archives [here](#).

I'd like to think that with what I lack in wisdom, I make up for in enthusiasm and prolificacy as a writer. I'm not here to hand you the wisdom of ages. I'm here to share that gut feeling, and the lessons I learn from pursuing it every day.

How to Get More From Life

Chapter One - Life is a Work in Progress

Life is a Work in Progress

My life philosophy is always a work in progress. Some people claim that the secret to life is finding a religion or philosophy and then disciplining yourself to stick to it. I disagree, I think the mere fact that you require so much discipline to adhere to your philosophy is that it is incomplete.

A complete strategy for life would not only include the values and principles you try to stick to, but also the tactics for sticking with them. That's why my strategy for life is constantly evolving.

I may believe, in bulk, the things I wrote about when I started the blog over three years ago. The difference is now my strategy is more nuanced. My ability to see the details and not just the big picture has greatly improved.

How to Get More From Life

Chapter One - Life is a Work in Progress

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The people who never contradict themselves later, probably weren't correct to begin with.

If your ideas aren't evolving, you aren't evolving.

My goal is to share the journey with readers, not the destination. I'm not coming from the mountaintop to explain the mysteries of life. I'm just another person stumbling in the dark, letting you know when I bump into something.

If your ideas aren't evolving, you aren't evolving. This guide will be out of date as soon as you finish reading it. That doesn't mean it is incorrect, or that it can't help anyone. Simply that I'll already be hunting for ways to improve the ideas I wrote about here, right after it has been written.

How to Get More From Life

Chapter Two - Habits

Habits

Why Habits Matter

Self-improvement takes a lot of work. Exercising, writing, being productive, managing your finances, improving your social life, all of these pursuits take a great deal of energy. It can be a little overwhelming.

It was too much for me to start. Even today, pursuing my perfect lifestyle is impossible. I always fall a bit short of how I'd like to ideally run my life.

However, the breakthrough idea that helped me get a lot closer to that ideal was habits. If you could habituate a particular behavior (say running your finances or exercising), then you wouldn't need Herculean discipline to do it every day.

How to Get More From Life

Chapter Two - Habits

This doesn't mean running a habit requires zero effort. Just that the burden is a lot less. It's far easier to rise to the summit of your ideal lifestyle, if the baggage you're carrying weighs only a tenth as much. Habits lighten the load.

How to Change a Habit

You can change a habit in three simple (but certainly not effortless) steps:

1. **Define the behavior change** you want to make in precise detail.
2. Commit to performing the new habit for **30 days**, without exception.
3. After, if you still feel unsure, **commit for another 90 days** to follow the habit, skipping no less than a day or two.

Habit changing is a topic I have a lot of interest in, as I've done a lot of research and a ton of experimentation. Here are some of the resources available on the website to get started with changing habits:

How to Get More From Life

Chapter Two - Habits

[How to Change a Habit](#) - My book on the subject. Includes a pdf report, detailing all of my methods and steps, and also an audio training guide that you can listen to.

[Habitual Mastery](#) - An initial, 5-part series looking into habits. It's less sophisticated than some of my later writing, but it is still a popular section of the website.

[One Month Isn't That Long...](#) - My argument that you should only pursue one change at a time.


[New to Exercise, Make Workouts Daily](#) - An article on the importance of consistency when changing habits.

Current Status on My Habits

Although it may seem like habits are a “set it and forget it” affair, I’m afraid that only works for infomercial rotisseries. Like everything in my life, my habits are constantly changing. I’ll add new ones as the situations arise and I’ll drop old ones that are getting too cumbersome.

How to Get More From Life

Chapter Two - Habits



If you want to know how I set up those habits, here are corresponding articles:

- [W/D Goals](#)
- [Budgeting](#)
- [Exercise](#)
- [Vegetarianism](#)
- [Television](#)
- [Internet](#)

Of course, the book [How to Change a Habit](#), details all of these habits and others in far more depth.

Here is a list of a few habits I have trained through 30-day trials that I'm currently using:

- Weekly/Daily Goals system
- Financial budgeting
- Exercise
- Vegetarianism
- No TV
- 2x per week writing schedule
- Checking internet once per day

Chances are, by the time you've read this, this list will have changed again. Here are a few habits that I'm not running at the moment, but are part of my toolkit I use depending on my current goals:

-**Early rising/morning ritual.** Fantastic for productivity, but harder to run with an active social life.

How to Get More From Life

Chapter Two - Habits

-Alcohol reduction/elimination. I often put a stricter limit on my alcohol intake when I have specific fitness goals I'm trying to reach. But I am a university student and being able to share a beer with friends is also important to me.

-Diet tracking. With tough fitness goals, I track my dietary intake.

-Brainstorming pad. Great when I'm doing more writing and need to capture every idea.

Often I'll receive emails from people congratulating me for waking up at 5:30am every day, even though I woke up at 9am that morning.

It's not because I don't believe waking up at 5:30am can have powerful productivity benefits, or that I'm too lazy. Simply that my habits are always adjusting, so any article I write is necessarily out of date.

How to Get More From Life

Chapter Two - Habits



Habits shouldn't make you a robot. Most of my life is unscheduled. Habits are just one tool to help in specific areas of your life.

Where Habits Don't Work

Habits are just one tool in the getting more from life toolbox. They work well, particularly for highly individual, vertical-growth oriented goals. But they're really lousy at helping you find new experiences, be spontaneous or grow laterally.

I really like using them, but that doesn't mean I'm a robot and run everything to a schedule. Most of my life is unstructured, and I am constantly adjusting the balance depending on whether I'm extremely busy and need to do a lot of work, or working less and trying to relax.

How to Get More From Life

Chapter Three - Learning

Learning

School ≠ Learning

Too many of my readers equate university (or high school, college, etc.) with learning. Somehow just showing up within the hallowed ivy halls of a prestigious institution is going to foster enlightenment.

It doesn't, and I'm highly suspicious of anyone who claims they're an expert because of a particular degree they have.

School is something you undertake, not only to learn, but for a whole host of non-learning related reasons:

- Accreditation
- To improve your resume
- To network with peers

How to Get More From Life

Chapter Three - Learning

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One professor ranting to students about a topic for two hours interrupted is probably one of the worst ways to learn.

- As a signal of status
- To party
- etc.

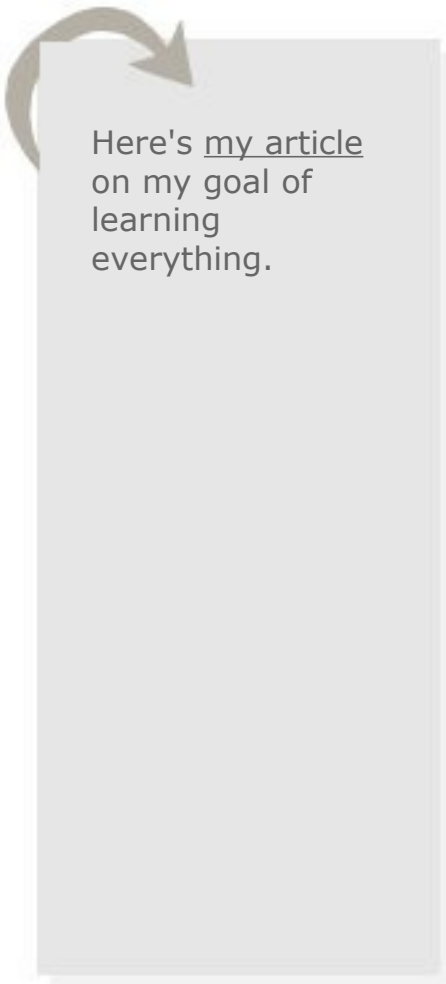
I'd argue that for most people, their top three reasons for going to school don't include genuine learning. Instead, they are there because they need it for their profession, they want to boost their resume, network or even have a good time.

Most people don't pursue school for learning directly, probably because schools aren't great at it. Typical academic institutions are aging behemoths, focused more on continuing the status-quo than offering the best tools for educating their students.

The standard lecture format where one professor (usually picked for his research, not his teaching, ability) rants to students about a topic for two hours uninterrupted is probably one of the worst ways to learn.

How to Get More From Life

Chapter Three - Learning



Here's [my article](#) on my goal of learning everything.

That being said, this isn't an indictment of universities or pursuing education. Those things are great, often for the very reasons I described before (accreditation, networking, fun, etc.). And, if those are the reasons you're pursuing higher education, great for you.

School Isn't Enough

Self-education and the learning process need to go beyond where the textbooks leave off, and they need to continue far after you complete your degree. Unfortunately, because the equation between school and learning runs so deep, many people forget this.

My stated goal is **knowing everything**. Audacious and impossible? Definitely. But, it's the direction that matters, not the destination.

Having an insatiable lust for integrating new knowledge is one of the best ways to improve yourself. No, not just by reading self-help books and blogs. But by reading books on science, politics, history, classics, business and learning new skills.

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