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Working Title:

The Accomplishment Project: A High Achiever's Exploratory Guide to Success, Productivity, and Getting Things Done

SECTION 1: WHY DO WE CARE ABOUT ACCOMPLISHMENT?

In this section, we will explore what “accomplishment” is, why it is important to us, and the factors impacting different definitions of “accomplishment” for different people.

Chapter 1. The Untold Importance of Accomplishment

Here is what [Miriam-Webster's Dictionary](#) has to say about accomplishment:

Accomplishment is the act of “accomplishing” something, which doesn't seem initially helpful. As we look at the synonyms, many words appear to serve the same purpose: completion, achievement, fulfillment, success, realization, implementation, and execution. As a contrast, the opposite of accomplishment includes words like failure, catastrophe, mess, disappointment, non-achievement, disappointment, disaster, loss, non-performance, defeat.

The act of accomplishing requires one to bring forth a result by exertion of effort. So, it seems, in order for someone to accomplish something, they must a) have an end result in mind, b) take

action toward that result, and c) see it through to completion. May seem relatively simple in plain English, but when we think about going through these steps, we are oftentimes met with challenges, such as physical, mental, societal, and financial.

Let's look again at the words synonymous with accomplishment: completion, success, realization, implementation. Now look at the antonyms: failure, disappointment, loss. Did you happen to notice a shift in energy the first time you read through these words? Success and victory are tied to very positive attitudes, while loss and defeat tend to exude negativity. These emotions are felt at multiple levels: it changes our mood, our body language, and our productivity.

As an example, I recall the penultimate swim meet of my son Justin's high school freshman season, where he was scheduled to swim in 2 freestyle events, and 2 relay events. The first event was a 50 yard freestyle, where he performed rather "poorly" relative to previous performances, about eight seconds slower than his best time. In that race, Justin recalls his goggles dislodging upon his entry into the water. Immediately, with the water pouring into his eyes and his goggles flapping in front of his face, his speed immediately diminished and he no longer could swim productively. Once he realized the issue, he decided to just swim as fast as he could, as his other option was to end his efforts and remove himself from the pool, which I was told "you don't do." Hoping he wouldn't hit the wall on his turnaround due to his absence of sight, he did what he could, swimming blindly until he returned to the starting blocks. He remembers not even wanting to look at his time and feeling annoyed. He took the goggles off from around his neck, and got out of the pool.

As I saw him get out of the pool, his body language had shifted from a place of confidence to seeing his shoulders hunched over, indicating a feeling of defeat as he slowly walked back to his team. He clearly looked bummed. His coach approached him and put her hand on his head, debriefing the event, and appearing to offer words of consolation and encouragement ("At least this didn't happen during the Conference meet!") and then gave him a pat on the back. He sat, and for a few more minutes with his head in his hands, shook off the loss in preparation for his next event.

He knew he was going to do it better, and he did

Relay

Placed first

How did it change his strategies - goggles

Straps were on the outside of the swim cap

Later that day, in his next race, he performed in a relay with his peers. Their team ended up placing first (or second?) in that event, and I immediately saw a shift in his body language. He did that arm hulk flex thing as he yelled out a "YO, I'M BACK!"

Ask Justin if he recalls that event, how did it make him feel - how did that change his strategies moving forward

Types of accomplisners: (and their detriments)

People who just get shit done

People who are prone to distraction

People who are prone to

Moral of the story: accomplishment

a) have an end result in mind, b) take action toward that result, and c) see it through to completion.

Completion is still an accomplishment, but the feeling can impact how we actually look at it.

Obviously we want to feel the positives, but we look at the negative accomplishments as failure

Explain a high achiever

Kundalini Yoga

- Why do we care about accomplishing things?
 - [Alternate synonyms for accomplishment to use as needed: achievement, attainment, success, triumph, fulfillment, implementation, actualization]
 - Actions lead to “completion” of a project or task. Completion gives us something to prove and show to others that we’ve taken action.
- People/environment/our bodies react to our completed items. If in approval, we feel good. If they don’t, we go back to the drawing board and start over, or pivot

and try again. [JW2] (Potentially use the example of a growing baby to illustrate this)

- As time progresses, we take more actions, which lead to more “completions.”

The more we do, the more “others” react. (We go through this as children and adolescents, working on our executive functioning.)

- The ability to complete multiple tasks on any given day makes us feel “productive.” (Becomes increasingly more important as adults.) Productivity increases our sense of accomplishment, which feels good and increases our self-confidence and contributes to our happiness.

- The things we choose to do and achieve are based on what we want and/or need, and may be defined by external factors (i.e., criteria for getting into college, certain careers/jobs, needing a certain amount of money, etc.)

- At some point, we must understand what makes us as individuals feel even more accomplished, because external approval can only take you so far. In fact, only seeking external approval can be quite problematic. “You can’t please everyone, so you’ve got to please yourself.” (from Rickly Nelson song “Garden Party”)

- So, it all comes back to what WE want. To be happy. For a high performer (goalies ;-), we quantify our happiness and success on what we do. But we must find MEANING in the accomplishments because. working on things that don’t matter or don’t bring us joy won’t make us feel more accomplished.

§ Example: The mundane unimportant things I was “doing” daily (playing games for too long, binge-watching television, not being organized,

having too many commitments that were no longer serving me); how being “busy” was holding me back from accomplishing my goals.

○ Awareness of the various types of external factors (i.e., physical, emotional, mental, social, environmental) that may support or hinder my progress, and simultaneously juggling goals across various areas of life (i.e. the 8 areas of the Wheel of Life).

§ Example[AS3] [JW4] : SAH parenting and business ownership
(Embracing multiple roles can be done, but may require a reset of expectations and who you compare yourself to (i.e., I personally cannot compare myself to an entrepreneur who doesn’t have the same responsibility of raising two children). Or maybe it’s better not to compare yourself to anyone at all!

[JW1]This is so important! In fact, it got me thinking that it might be helpful to come up with three (or so) categories of people who would have very different ideas of what “accomplishment” means.

What’s good about this is that readers can automatically see where they fit in, and you might even refer to these categories in the future when giving example and in the stories.

Off the top of my head (but you are much closer to this and will have better ideas – just giving you something to think about!):

1. Worriers: Accomplishments are difficult to nail down because they’re typically (and unnecessarily) worried about whether what they’re doing is “good enough.”
2. Goalies: Accomplishments are easier to see and focus on because they have material goals that easily be can be measured. Meaning either they did it or they didn’t.
3. Procrastinators: Accomplishments are often just out of reach simply because they keep putting off doing or taking the necessary preliminary steps to actually accomplish any given goal.

[JW2]I’m not sure what you mean here.

I don’t think we should speak in terms of having something to prove. Maybe I’m misunderstanding.

[AS3]This may be better suited in Chapter 2?

[JW4]I think it’s okay here if you can relate it to the Wheel of Life, which would then an explanation. If not, then save for when you do go into it more.