

NOTES FROM: *You Can Just Do Things*, by Jay Yang

SUMMARY: I've known Jay ever since he was sixteen years old, which *wasn't* that long ago, by the way. The things he's been able to accomplish between then and now has been nothing less than astonishing, and it's mostly because of his life philosophy of taking "Permissionless Action."

The world won't wait for you to get ready, and life-changing opportunities don't tend to come looking for *you*. In Jay's case, years ago he sent a cold email to the founder of the newsletter platform Beehiiv and landed an internship before he was out of high school. He then went on to become the head of content for the extraordinary entrepreneur Noah Kagan, and *then* moved to Las Vegas after being hired as a social media strategist for Leila and Alex Hormozi. He chose *himself* for those roles - he didn't just stand around waiting to be picked. He took *Permissionless Action*.

Most people (and I don't often say "most people," but in this case it's justified) are following the exact same life-script: fall in line, wait to be told what to do, hold off until they're "qualified" to do what they've always dreamed of doing. Permissionless Action is different. It's all about going *unscripted*. It's about rejecting the default settings of your life, and going *all-in* on your grandest ambitions.

The "script" might be somewhat reassuring to the average person (and I mean this: there's *nothing* wrong with working a "regular" job, if that's truly what you want to do), but it rarely - if ever - leads to the life you want. For that, you have to make some *big* moves, take *drastic*, *Permissionless Action*, and go out dream-hunting.

Noah Kagan: "Jay's pitch hit me the same way. He wasn't some industry veteran with a decade of expertise. He didn't have a stacked resume or big credentials. What he had was effort. He put in the work before anyone asked him to. He showed me what he could do, made my life easier, and left me no choice but to say yes. This isn't just about landing a job. The lessons in this book apply to every corner of your life. Want to start a business? Instead of asking for funding, build something that works to validate the idea. Want to grow your network? Don't ask people how you can help them - figure it out and show them. Want to change your career? Start doing the work before anyone pays you to do it."

"I was inside the walls. And I had gotten there without a degree, without a resume, without anyone's permission. That one email - one shot in the dark - completely changed how I saw the world. It made me realize how many opportunities are just sitting there, waiting to be taken."

“I grew up in an Asian household where respect, discipline, and obedience were the foundation. My parents weren’t tiger parents, but they did set clear expectations: work hard, follow the rules, and stay on the well-marked path. For years, I stuck to that script. But the truth is, most traditional paths aren’t designed for speed. They promise stability but deliver stagnation. They ask you to wait your turn in a system built for slow, linear progress, while the most meaningful opportunities are taken by those willing to step outside the lines.”

“This book isn’t about being reckless. It’s about understanding when and how to break the rules strategically to create opportunities. Life isn’t a straight path with clear instructions. It’s a maze, and those who succeed aren’t the ones who wait for the main door to open. They’re the ones who find a side entrance, carve their own way forward, or knock the whole wall down.”

“If this book does anything, I hope it leaves you with fewer excuses and more questions: “What are you waiting for? Who are you waiting on? And why not you?”

“Kobe Bryant missed more shots than most players ever take.”

“Success starts long before the opportunity arrives.”

Nietzsche: “And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music.”

“Most people don’t lack motivation; they lack clarity.”

“The only thing worse than failing is climbing a mountain, only to realize it’s the wrong one.”

“Ignorance carries a price tag. Every skill you don’t learn, every opportunity you miss, every insight you overlook - these add up to a cost you pay over your lifetime. This is what serial entrepreneur and investor Alex Hormozi calls ‘Ignorance Debt.’ Imagine someone earning \$50,000 a year. They dream of making a million but don’t know how. Every year they remain at \$50,000, they’re paying \$950,000 in ignorance debt.”

“The greats know the truth: learning is theft. Someone smarter than you has spent years - sometimes decades - beating their head against the wall to solve the exact problem you’re facing. Why start from scratch when you can steal that hard-won knowledge and make it yours? That is power.”

“Dive through cracked doors.”

“Find someone who’s already achieved what you’re chasing. Study them obsessively. Watch their interviews. Read what they’ve written. Break down their routines, habits, and decisions. *What did they do that you’re not doing yet?* Then, take ONE action this week that moves you closer to their level.”

Marc Andreessen: “The world is a very malleable place. If you know what you want, and you go for it with maximum energy and drive and passion, the world will often reconfigure itself around you much more quickly and easily than you would think.”

Derek Sivers: “The system is designed so anyone can keep up. But if you’re more driven than most people, you can do way more than anyone expects. There’s no speed limit.”

“The system wasn’t designed for people who want more. If you know where you’re going, there’s no limit to how fast you can get there - so long as you’re willing to push, adapt, and keep going when it gets hard.”

“It doesn’t matter where you are in your career, there’s one thing everyone should obsess over: the compounding rate of your learning. The earlier you start, the more time you give your knowledge to grow and multiply.”

“If you want to succeed in your Permissionless journey, get comfortable setting your own pace. The faster you stop letting artificial speed limits hold you back, the faster you get to where you were truly meant to go.”

“If you want to accelerate your career, expand your influence, or build something meaningful, the key isn’t just working harder. It’s surrounding yourself with people who challenge you, sharpen your thinking, and open doors you never knew existed.”

“Who are you bringing to the table?”

“If you want the attention of people who are already operating at a high level, you have to make it impossible for them to ignore you.”

“When you do this kind of work, you’re sending a clear message: *I respect your time enough to come prepared.* It’s not about asking for an opportunity - it’s about showing you’re ready for one.”

“Creation is the act of turning potential into reality.”

Steven Pressfield: “Sometimes, when we’re terrified of embracing our true calling, we’ll pursue a shadow calling instead. That shadow career is a metaphor for our real career. Its shape is similar, its contours feel tantalizingly the same. But a shadow career entails no real risk. If we fail at a shadow career, the consequences are meaningless to us.”

“Bezos reframed humiliation as regret: *Will you look back and wish you’d taken the chance?* Musk saw it as urgency: *The revolution is happening now - don’t miss it.* Neither waited for the perfect moment, because they knew it didn’t exist.”

Unknown: “If you want to catch a wave, you have to be in the ocean.”

“Talent alone isn’t enough. You have to go where the opportunities are.”

“You can be the most talented person in the world, but if no one knows you exist, it doesn’t matter. You have to put yourself in the right place and fight for it.”

“Opportunity isn’t evenly distributed. Certain places, industries, and communities act as amplifiers. They concentrate talent, energy, and resources in ways that make success more possible. Think of: Silicon Valley for tech innovators. New York City for finance and fashion. Los Angeles for entertainment. Venice Beach for bodybuilding. Proximity doesn’t guarantee success. But it increases your chances of it. It puts you in the room with the right people, exposes you to opportunities you wouldn’t otherwise see, and forces you to level up. You can’t live big in a small environment. Stay in the wrong place too long, and you start to shrink.”

“If you feel stuck, look around. The problem isn’t always you - it’s where you’re standing.”

“Opportunity doesn’t come to those who wait. It comes to those who seek it out, position themselves where it matters, and refuse to be ignored. Go where the action is. Then make your move.”

Leonardo da Vinci: “It had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things.”

Steph Curry: “If you’re constantly moving, you’re a threat.”

“If you don’t ask, the answer is always no.”

“So much of getting what you want is answering the question: ‘How can I make this a no-brainer for the other person?’”

Sun Tzu: “Opportunities multiply as they are seized.”

Sam Parker: “At 211 degrees, water is hot. At 212 degrees, it boils. And with boiling water comes steam. And with steam, you can power a train.”

“While you’re waiting, someone else is hitting publish.”

“The world can’t help you if it doesn’t know what you’re doing.”

“Failure in the arena is infinitely better than regret on the sidelines.”

“Quality beats quantity, but the path to quality is paved with quantity.”

“When you train yourself to see opportunities, you realize they’re everywhere. That job you thought required certain credentials? Someone with no degree just walked in and proved they could do it. That business you thought needed funding? Someone launched it with zero dollars and a Twitter account. That person you thought was out of your league? Someone with half your confidence went up and said hello.”

“What if all that’s standing between you and the thing you want is the courage to test the handle? Because the truth is, you’ll never know unless you try. And when you do, you might just find that the door wasn’t locked after all.”