FINDING

MOJOVATION

*How to create contentment
in your work and personal life*

NEIL STUDD

Finding Mojovation

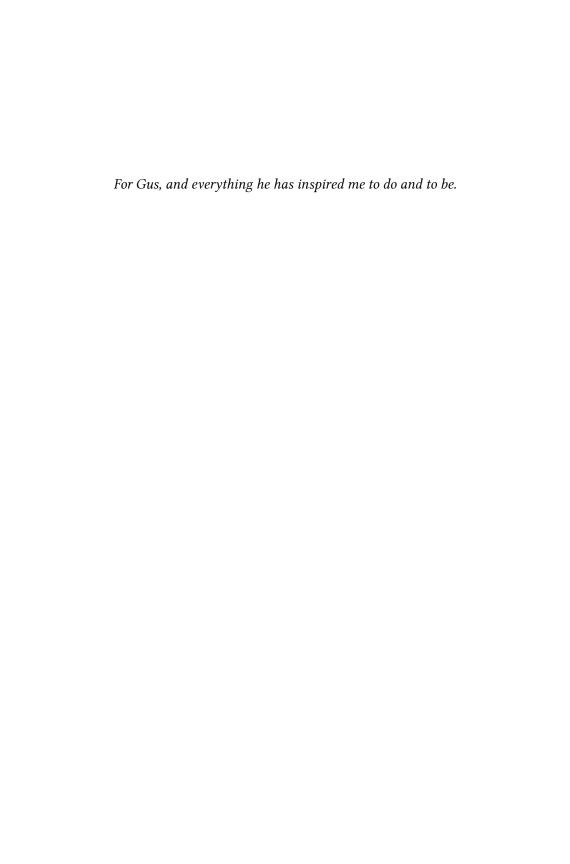## How to create contentment in your work and personal life

Neil Studd

This book is for sale at http://leanpub.com/mojovation

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For Gus, and everything he has inspired me to do and to be.

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About the Author

Neil Studd is an engineering coach with over 20 years' experience of working in agile software development teams, predominantly in the world of testing. He specialises in quality practices, agile coaching and quality management. Throughout this time, he has practised an empathetic and humanist approach to building and leading teams, working with executives and managers to ensure that the needs of individuals are being met. He is a Certified Scrum Master[1], a qualified Mental Health First Aider[2], and hosts several podcasts including Testers' Island Discs[3], Screen Testing[4] and Tech Team Weekly[5].

In his spare time, Neil is an avid Peloton[6] enthusiast, a curator of playlists and mixtapes, and a keen walker. He is the proud holder of a *Pointless*[7] trophy. He lives in the Peak District on the outskirts of Hadfield[8], most famous for being the fictional Royston Vasey in the TV series *The League of Gentlemen*[9].

Neil offers freelance agile coaching and career advice via his independent business, Mojovation Consulting[10].

Preface

> "My advice has no basis more reliable than my own meandering experience. I will dispense this advice now."
>
> —Mary Schmich[11]

I am sat comfortably at a well-lit desk in a private room, at a writers' retreat in the North Yorkshire village of Beal[12]. I've booked myself here for five days, in the company of fellow authors, partly for some rest and relaxation (it's fully catered, including daily cream teas) but also because I've had a longing to spend some dedicated time writing this book.

My out-of-office message is switched on, informing everybody that I'll be gone for a week, and I've signed out of my Slack workspace. My work laptop is at home. My son Gus is off on holiday visiting family with his mum. There's absolutely nothing to distract me from my writing. I'm feeling motivated, productive, and hopefully soon I'll be feeling accomplished too.

Why have I started this book on such a tangent? Because this scene highlights the crux of what I'm going to be covering within these pages. I've taken control of my work situation, and created an environment which allows me to thrive, in a way that is unique to me. This *je ne sais quoi* is what I term "mojovation": that spark that ignites a fire inside you, creating an infectious joy which can be as inspiring to others as it is to you.

In the first part of this book, **The World of Work**, we'll look at some of the day-to-day barriers which can prevent us from finding our mojovation. We'll look at the modern workplace, especially in the light of increased remote working and ever-tightening deadlines,

so that we can identify what we're up against. We'll look at a few ways in which we, as individuals, can help to fight back against challenges, even if we're not in a position of power, and what steps we might take if we're feeling disillusioned with our current plight.

In the second part, **Reclaim Your Mojovation**, we'll look at ways in which you can experiment and discover what it is that allows you to thrive: the conditions under which you do your best work, as well as the ways in which you can create opportunities to relax, so that the mojovation continues to flow and you're not hit with a wave of burnout.

Who is this book for?

The majority of books on workplace dynamics are aimed at managers or executives, which can give a false impression that it's only leaders who are able to shape change. While I'm delighted if managers are reading this, I'm hoping it can be even more empowering for individual contributors, who can (to quote Mahatma Gandhi) "be the change that you wish to see in this world". You have a surprising amount of influence at your fingertips. It's tough to be critical of anybody who's taking positive actions with good intentions.

Many managers balk at the idea of a career coach, especially one from outside their organisation, because there's a fear that such a coach will hear their mentee's concerns and immediately advise them to leave their job[13]. This book won't be advising you to do that. You won't be asked to sell all of your possessions and curl up in a cave. We'll be looking at realistic and lasting change that you can seek to make in your current role. That said, there'll also be some advice about what you can do if you're stuck in a situation where you're being blocked from making change. If you're a manager who's fearful of this: please divert your projectiles away from

the messenger. Listen to the potential change-makers within your team!

Why are you writing about this?

For the longest time, I thought I'd cracked work, even though that's an inherent impossibility[14]. I definitely thought that I'd got a handle on remote work, having spent several years doing it before the entire planet was forced to do it. I even thought that I'd beaten the concept of work/life balance, if you believe that such a concept exists at all.

Then March 2020 happened, and within one crazy weekend I became a father for the first time, and an unprecedented national lockdown began.

I've been forced to challenge a lot of my previous strongly-held beliefs. I've come face to face with my own fallibility, and it's made me more comfortable with change and failure. I'm still far from being able to describe myself as a mystical guru[15] but I'm hoping that an acerbic taste of reality can help others to overcome their own struggles.

Why should I listen to you?

I'm far from the only person in the world who's writing about drive and motivation. There've been many incredible, well-researched books written on the subject already (and if you're new to this area, the Further Reading from the appendices should be a real eye-opener for you). So if you're asked to choose between my book and another which has been written by a prominent author, you certainly shouldn't let me stand in your way.

That said, my experiences (and findings) are my own, so I hope that you'll consider them to be a valuable alternate perspective, in ways which are immediately applicable to your day-to-day life. My anecdotes are primarily UK-centric, especially when it comes to the job market, though I've also spent a lot of time working with cross-site multinational organisations and remote-first roles, so even if you're not partial to a cup of tea, I'm hoping that you will find a lot to connect with.

> As you make your way through these pages, you'll occasionally encounter grey blocks such as this one. These are some of my personal career anecdotes, containing some of the highlights - and lowlights! - from my twenty years working in the software development industry. If you're skim-reading (and I'm not going to judge, as time is precious) then you can safely skip these sections.

Above all though, asking "Why should I listen to you?" is a really astute question. You shouldn't listen *only* to me. Listen to multiple, diverse perspectives. Experiment for yourself. And make changes which work for *you*, not changes which someone else assures you that you *need* to make. Do that, and you'll be a step closer to living a truly mojovated life.

Key takeaway
At the end of each chapter, you'll find a highlighted summary section like this which contains some of the most salient points which have been covered in that section. These are the tips which are likely to serve you best in your own search for mojovation, even if you forget everything else that I've written (which I really hope you won't).

Now it's your turn!
At the end of each chapter, I'll also include an idea or thought experiment which you might like to try for yourself. I've binged enough books in my time - I know it's very tempting to skip these sections. But this is where you'll get a chance to put some theories into practice, and maybe discover a breakthrough that changes the way that you think and live.

Introduction

"All words are made up."

—Thor (Chris Hemsworth), *Avengers: Infinity War*

For people who are fortunate enough to know what they want to do with their lives, and who have full control over how they spend their time, motivation is almost a given. They're driven to achieve a particular goal, and the path to success is a straight, open road with no barriers to prevent them achieving their dreams.

Those people can probably also hitch a lift along that road from the Easter Bunny and the tooth fairy.

Unless you're in a hermetically sealed chamber[16], everyday life tends to have the final say in our plans. You might think that you're on top of the three most important tasks in your working day, until a fourth, more important task arrives. You might be on track to complete that report today, until you get a call saying that your child is being sent home sick from school. Even for those who are regimented planners, much of the day can be spent adapting our plan to meet the latest unexpected change.

Our ability to overcome these setbacks, then, is where motivation comes into play. Motivation is an emotional feeling, which leads us to take an action, especially one which requires significant effort. It can be aided by the voice in our head telling us "You can do this!". Or, depending on our mindset, maybe that same voice is telling us that something is too much, and we shouldn't even try.

In his book *Drive*, Daniel Pink breaks the concept of motivation down into smaller parts. We're often fixated on *extrinsic motivation*: pay workers more money, and they'll work harder. The problem with extrinsic motivation is that it fades over time: before

long, you want *more* money or *another* promotion. Longer lasting motivation comes from *intrinsic* factors, which Pink clusters into three key facets:

- **Autonomy**: Being able to choose your route towards achieving a goal, rather than being strictly guided on what to do. This allows us to utilise forms of creativity and self-expression; if this is missing, we feel like we're doing drudge work[17].
- **Mastery**: Challenging yourself to improve your skills, through the act of "deliberate practice" of those skills, with fast feedback on your progress. In essence, you feel that you're actually becoming accomplished at something.[18]
- **Purpose**: Understanding *why* you are doing what you're doing - who is going to benefit from your work? Are you bringing meaning to people's lives? Can you lie in bed after a hard day's work, and think "I made a difference"?[19]

Pink's revelations about motivation have been a game-changer for many, myself included. The challenge with motivation is that it's not always enough. Even if we're fully on-board with the *idea* of pursuing a goal, the environment around us might not allow us to do our best work. There are constant threats to our motivation, which can reveal themselves through tendencies such as procrastination.

> It took me eight months from announcing this book to first start writing it. I can make plenty of "valid" excuses, but to summarise, the strength of my motivation was outweighed by other factors, preventing me from undertaking the effort required to achieve my goal.

We all have different conditions under which we thrive. However subtle the differences might be, my best operating environment is different to yours. There have been plenty of attempts to codify these differences in our personality traits - for example, by labelling people as introverts or extroverts, or by assigning one of the 16 Myers-Briggs personality types[20] to an individual[21]. But you can't group all of humanity into just 16 distinct groups. No two people have the same driving force, even identical twins.

It's that intangible, personal spark - your mojo - which has led me to coin the term **mojovation**: the unique conditions under which we can live our happiest, most successful, most fulfilled lives. Being intangible, it's very difficult to measure.[22]

The uniqueness of our mojovation presents an even greater challenge when we consider teams in the workplace. Rather than allowing for individual needs to be met, we optimise for the "typical" or "average", often pleasing nobody in the process. Consider the rise in open-plan office layouts, which are great for collaboration but which can be draining or distracting for those who operate best in isolation. Sometimes it's not even an issue of personal preference - consider the challenges faced by neurodivergent workers who are expected to conform to an environment which is antithetical to how their brains are hardwired[23].

The first time that I used the word "mojovation" was while planning a period of recovery during a career break. I'd just left a job, without a new role lined up, due to being both physically and mentally strained by the demands of the world. In my Mojovation Plan, I gathered ideas for potential future work, but also a list of self-care activities that I planned to complete before plunging back into the workplace. This meant that not only did I achieve the dopamine fix of completing tasks, but frequently they were tasks that I actually *wanted* to be doing, and which would often be giving me more energy, rather than sapping the energy that I had left. (You'll see an example of my Mojovation Planner in the Get Organised chapter.)

This doesn't mean that everybody needs to go and create their own Trello boards. But it's valuable to take some time to think about what your unique conditions for success might look like.

That's the intent with *Finding Mojovation*: it's not a blueprint, it's more like a buffet of ideas where you can carefully select your "dream plate"[24].

You're not going to want to take every piece of advice in this book. There'll be techniques which won't work for you, and maybe even ideas which you disagree with. You may encounter suggestions which sound blissful, but which you feel that you lack the clout to implement[25]. However, my hope is that you'll find just enough small nudges to make a meaningful difference in your life.

Key takeaway
There's no "one trick" to improve your motivation. It's different for everybody. In these pages, we use "mojovation" as a term to describe the unique conditions which help us to create our best lives. We're all different, therefore we need to steer clear of there being one perfect way of working which suits every person in every context.

Now it's your turn!
Make a list of 5-6 factors which might help you to do better work, and note which ones you're easily able to do at the moment. Make another list of 5-6 factors which prevent you from doing better work, and similarly note whether you're struggling with any of these in particular at the moment.

The World of Work

1. The Next Normal

"You're on mute."

—Everybody, 2020

It won't have escaped your attention that there was a major worldwide event in 2020 which resulted in the biggest ever global shift in working practices. The circumstances were clearly tragic, but one by-product of our adapting to COVID-19 was the revelation that alternative ways of working were available at our fingertips - and many of them had been there all along.

I accepted a new job role in 2017, partly because it allowed me to work with an ex-manager whom I respected, but mostly because of the novelty of it being a fully-remote role. This was a time when most people were still fortunate if their organisations offered the "perk" of working remotely once a week, and even this was seen by some as something of a luxury[26].

This was a revelation for me, as somebody who'd previously held positions where the days were bookended by commutes which would take an hour or more, even on a good day. Remote working directly contributed to my improved happiness and wellbeing, especially once I realised that remote working didn't need to mean "working from home". I became converted to the idea of being a digital nomad[27], working from whichever place in Europe that I felt like travelling to. It also enabled me to make one of the most meaningful changes in my life, as I was able to relocate to Manchester without having to change jobs. (We'll look more closely at the nature of remote working in the next chapter.)

Modernising through adversity

There were two major reasons why organisations had been reluctant to allow increased remote working. Firstly, there was a large infrastructure overhead: introducing teleconferencing tools and secure server access were expensive, time-consuming projects. Secondly, there was the aforementioned stigma of the remote worker: how can managers monitor the performance of people if they can't see the people who they're managing?

The first reason went away overnight, by necessity. The second one, however, undoubtedly persisted.

If the NHS and ambulance services were the first major heroes of the pandemic, then IT networking teams had a decent shout for a silver medal. Digital transformation projects which were previously deemed too complicated or low priority were suddenly the very thing which needed to be completed in order for a company to continue trading. VPNs[28] which previously struggled with a dozen users had to be reconfigured to support hundreds of simultaneous connections. And much of this had to be done remotely, by people who were still trying to process the pandemic for themselves.

For a while, there was an enjoyable novelty to it, but by the fourth or fifth weekly family Zoom quiz, the excitement had worn off for most of us. It turns out that enforced remote working is very different to a situation where you'd opted-in to it, as makeshift desks began springing up on kitchen tables and washing machines[29].

As with individuals, most organisations were operating in "survival mode" throughout 2020 and 2021. This was, as the buzzword stated, "the new normal". With no alternative available, this way of working persisted long past the point that it was still "new". Yet as COVID restrictions were eased, many companies opted for a de facto return to their old ways, with even the Conservative party

chairman Oliver Dowden reiterating the remote working stigma by stating that people needed to "get off their Pelotons and back to their desks"[30]. Some organisations have been slower to change their rhetoric, but even the likes of Amazon, Apple and Twitter began rescinding their previous remote working privileges[31] in 2023. Even Zoom - Zoom, of all companies! - mandated in 2023 that employees must work in person at least twice a week[32].

We'd solved the technological problems which were preventing us from having alternative working arrangements. Yet it seemed that the leadership trust issues were persisting.

Back to the old normal?

This drive to force workers to return to a working pattern which required them to resume a stressful daily commute - even if they were merely transporting their laptop to a city centre office - was a major contributing factor for the so-called Great Resignation[33], as many people (myself included) opted to seek a new role which allowed them to retain a lifestyle to which they had become accustomed. Had it not been for the pandemic, this increase in desire for remote working might never have happened, or at the very least might have taken a decade more to come about.

> In some cases, this switch to remote-friendly working patterns resulted in major changes in a company's previously-held stance. I had previously left one fully-remote role when the organisation in question decided that all projects would be run from an office which was hundreds of miles away from me. Funnily enough, when COVID struck, they were one of the organisations that was shouting the loudest on LinkedIn[34] about how they were built for remote working.

Other phrases have become a mainstream part of job packages, when they were previously fringe offerings. Tech companies sometimes, for example, offer new starters a budget to improve their home office setup. LinkedIn and other job portals now have the ability to filter vacancies by whether they are hybrid[35] or fully remote. On the surface, it would appear that everybody benefits.

However, with more services and job offerings moving fully online, the digital divide[36] - the differing quality of life between those who have full access to the internet and computers, and those who don't - has become more severe. A 2020 ONS survey[37] found that, while almost everyone under 50 used the internet daily, the figure dropped to 67% for those aged 65 and above. Even for those with internet access, their working experiences varied greatly, as access to a quiet working space is a privilege which isn't afforded to everybody.

So, where do we go from here? As with most things in life, there's compromise in the middle. Those who prefer in-office working will appreciate the flexibility of an organisation which has remote working options available. Those who prefer remote positions will still benefit from the occasional in-person collaboration or co-working session. Above all, companies need to be transparent about what they're offering, as factors which were previously considered "perks" are now at the front of many workers' minds[38]. Should we ever encounter another situation which leads to such a large shift in working patterns, companies can avoid another Great Resignation if they work with employees to support any change in working preferences.

What even is a "working week"?

Another by-product of working through a pandemic was the discovery that, for those of us who co-habit with people that we care about, spending more time in their company was generally

a positive thing. With my son being born as lockdown started, I effectively had 7 months of enforced paternity leave, albeit spending much of it doing my day job on my laptop (Gus was too small to know or care). It's therefore no surprise that, post-pandemic, many have been eager to hold on to some of that extra time with their loved ones, rather than destroying themselves Monday to Friday and constantly having to "live for the weekend".

Even the construct of a five-day working week is a relatively new one in human history. Prior to the 20th century, it was typical for people to work six days a week, with Sunday as their "day of rest". The growth of unions in the early 1900s led to the establishment of a five-day workweek with what we now call "weekends", with some pioneers also ensuring that employees weren't left worse off: in 1926, for instance, Henry Ford moved his organisation from a six-day to a five-day working week without reducing workers' salaries[39].

So it's perhaps unsurprising that, given a slow but gradual decline in working hours worldwide, combined with recent COVID experiences, there has been growing interest in the idea of a four-day working week. Some countries[40], including Iceland and Japan, were already running small-scale pilot programs prior to the pandemic, with the UK running its own pilot between June and December 2022. The results[41] were clear: 96% of employees who participated in the study wanted to continue with a four-day week after the study ended. When polled on their specific experiences, the majority reported less stress, better sleep, a better home life, and an *average* satisfaction with the working arrangements of 9.04 out of 10.

Perhaps more surprisingly, the employers - who, for the study, were asked to reduce all employees' working weeks to 32 hours (usually across four days) with no reduction in pay - seemed to echo the sentiment. 92% of participating companies planned to continue the experiment after the study concluded, with 30% already cementing a four-day working week into their company policies.

If the results were so glowing, then why have other companies been slow to adopt similar policies? Well, many companies have a responsibility to deliver work to their clients, and the reality is that if a large contract is on the line, it's not strategically sound to tell your client on a Thursday afternoon that "we won't be able to get your order delivered until Monday, because nobody works on a Friday here". Similarly, in organisations which operate 24/7 (including, for example, call centres) it's not possible to just eliminate a day of availability: you could experiment with staggered shifts, so that 20% of the workforce is off on any given day, but if your success is measured in terms of metrics such as call answering times and customer satisfaction, your customers are unlikely to be assuaged by a message saying "Sorry that our call times are higher than they used to be, but our staff are feeling a lot happier than they were before".

> When you have staggered or non-standard reduced hours arrangements (rather than everybody being off at the same time), there's also a danger that the time off doesn't feel like time off at all. Other people in the business are still working, and if they're not aware of your particular working patterns, they might be sending you urgent messages or trying to arrange meetings with you during your designated time off - even if you've set up your Out of Office and status notifications accordingly.
>
> I experienced this in one role, where I was one of only a handful of people who had negotiated themselves a four-day working week for varying reasons. Despite not working Tuesdays, the rest of the company was still operating on a five-day schedule (with a five-day workload), and consequently I'd arrive back on Wednesday morning to discover that a day's work had built up for me. In effect, rather than reducing my hours, I was actually trying to squeeze a 40-hour workload into 32 hours - an obvious path towards burnout.

Much like Ford's bold move in the 1920s being one of the markers which eventually led to a standardised five-day week, the ripples from the four-day week trials may not be felt for a few years yet - but it's another way in which organisations can demonstrate their interest in employee wellbeing and perhaps allow themselves to stand out from the crowd during the recruitment process.

Working smarter, not harder

One thing which has stayed the same before, during and after the pandemic is how we optimise our working practices for maximum productivity. In engineering, we talk about the lean "build, measure, learn"[42] cycle as a way to iterate towards a product which better meets customer needs. When we turn that measurement lens inwards, we enter the minefield of project plans and estimations. Estimations are, by their nature, best guesses: we might have faith that a piece of work could take a week to complete, but if it takes even a few days longer than that, a project manager's Gantt chart[43] could collapse like a house of cards.

The problem with measuring is that when you measure something, you're often also seeking to control it. If you're quantifying success based solely on units of work completed, for instance, then you're conditioning your team to rush, or to accept lower-quality output. If quality matters to you too, then you'll either need to hire more people to increase your output (an expensive solution which won't happen overnight), or ask your current team to work harder or longer (which isn't sustainable when your team becomes burnt out).

Maybe instead of trying to optimise for productivity, we might consider optimising for happiness. When we create the conditions which allow our teams to do their best work, making it easier for them to lose themselves in a state which Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi defined as *"Flow"*[44], chances are that they'll be instantly more

productive than if you'd taken any measures specifically aimed at making the team more productive. (There's a whole chapter on the relationship between happiness and productivity in the second part of this book.)

That's not to say that we should be throwing project plans out of the window; more that we should be paying attention to the insight offered by the people who are actually *doing* the work. The role of a project manager then shifts more from somebody who's constantly pushing delivery dates onto a team, into a role where they are receptive of information from the team and amends the project plan (and handles difficult conversations with stakeholders) accordingly.

The phrase "work smarter, not harder" has never been more true than when applied to lasting growth and progress. As Jitesh Gosai wrote in a blog post about "Speed vs Quality"[45], the problem with "working harder" to quickly fix a problem is that if it's successful, the temptation is to *continue* working harder in an unsustainable fashion. But when you "work smarter" (by, for example, focusing on improving your capability to complete work, via upskilling or rethinking your processes) and you're successful, you'll create a virtuous cycle where you're more inclined to *continue* working smarter.

This is all helpful when we're thinking about big-picture challenges, but what of the different daily working patterns which The Next Normal have ushered in? In the next chapter, we'll look at the ways in which remote working has changed the way that we work, and how we can ensure that our physical and mental health are still being looked after.

Key takeaway
The Great Resignation occurred when a large percentage of the working population were forcibly presented with an alternate way of working, and then had that option taken away from them again. Pervasive issues regarding trust and productivity can threaten to erode workplace sentiment even further.

Now it's your turn!
Write a few paragraphs outlining your dream working day, in as much detail as possible. Focus more on the routine than the specifics of your job: When are you getting up? Where do you go to work? How long is your working day/week? What do you do for lunch? How much time do you spend in an office, versus at home? Once you've outlined this, read it back and highlight areas where your current working arrangements differ from your dream. What would it take in order to get closer to your dream?

2. Remote Working

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A different working day

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Reclaim Your Mojovation

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7. Know Your Career Path

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A bucket list, or a f*** it list?

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Visualise it

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9. Pushing Yourself Forwards

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Seek forgiveness, not permission

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Know what's yours, and take it

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The power of nudges

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Avoiding negative nudges

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10. Rest and Recovery

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Gimme a break

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Working 9 to 5

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The 7 types of rest

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11. When The World Is Against You

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Relationships

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Family

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In the workplace

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(Anti?-)Social media

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Taking control

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Everything matters, but nothing matters terribly

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12. Happiness

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Getting more done by saying no

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If it feels good, do it

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Measuring happiness

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Little victories

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What if?

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The happy planet

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Go Your Own Way

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13. Conclusion

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14. Acknowledgements

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15. Further Reading

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16. Mojovation Consulting

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Notes

1 https://www.scrumalliance.org/get-certified/scrum-master-track/certified-scrummaster

2 https://www.mhfaengland.org

3 https://www.testersislanddiscs.com

4 https://screentesting.libsyn.com

5 https://www.techteamweekly.com

6 https://www.onepeloton.co.uk

7 https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00rhg2r

8 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hadfield,_Derbyshire

9 https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006t8d1

10 https://www.mojovation.co.uk

11 You might recognise this quote from the narration within Baz Luhrmann's 1999 hit *"Everybody's Free (To Wear Sunscreen)"*, but the text originated from a 1997 Chicago Tribute piece by columnist Mary Schmich, offering her vision of a hypothetical commencement speech. https://www.chicagotribune.com/columns/chi-schmich-sunscreen-column-column.html

12 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beal,_North_Yorkshire

13 I'm sure it's a similar fear that somebody faces when their partner announces that they're speaking with a therapist. (It shouldn't be, though. From my experience, therapy is awesome.)

14 As Jay boasts in *The Inbetweeners*, "Championship Manager? Completed it, mate". https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TWYcQ8tAKg

15 I may not be a guru, but being in my early 40s, my hairline and waistline are both trying to reshape me physically into a Buddha-like figure.

16 The challenges of surviving within an oxygen-free environment have been deemed beyond the scope of this book.

17 I'm sure that data entry clerks, forced to repeat the same tasks ad infinitum, must suffer from this a lot.

18 Good news, data entry clerks - your keenly honed words-per-minute rates are a form of mastery.

19 I'll leave those data entry clerks alone now, but undoubtedly plenty of them are keying information which - for instance - ensures that families receive financial settlements which allow them to live better lives, imbuing them with a sense of purpose.

20 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myers%E2%80%93Briggs_Type_Indicator

21 For the longest time I was an INTJ ("The Intellectual"), but re-taking the survey reveals that I've shifted to ISFJ ("The Guardian"). Apparently I now value feeling over thinking, and sensing over intuition - perhaps a good sign for someone who's shifting from a technical career to a more people-focused one.

22 A tip for budding authors: Intangible concepts are also especially hard to write about!

23 https://www.vice.com/en/article/wjvd9q/offices-can-be-hell-for-people-whose-brains-work-differently

24 Possibly avoiding that seafood platter which looks delightful, but you know that it's been sitting out all day.

25 It's reasonable to note that a lot of my "why not just try this!" suggestions come with a confidence that you can sadly only get when you're coming from a place of middle-aged white male privilege.

26 In one company that I worked for, one of my colleagues would jokingly refer to their one day working remotely each week as their "doing the gardening day".

27 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_nomad

28 Virtual Private Networks, the sort of "special connection" that you might need to make in order to be permitted to connect to your office computer remotely. If you're subscribed to any podcasts or YouTube channels, then you're probably familiar with commercial offerings such as ExpressVPN or NordVPN, often utilised to bypass region restrictions to watch streaming content from other countries.

29 During the pandemic, in order to get the perfect camera angle for a YouTube video series which I was recording, I often had to balance my laptop on a well-placed microwave.

30 https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-58804607

31 https://www.businessinsider.com/fight-return-to-office-mandates-remote-work-amazon-apple-2023-3

32 https://eu.usatoday.com/story/tech/news/2023/08/08/zoom-remote-work-policy-changes/70549020007

33 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Resignation

34 https://www.linkedin.com

35 A combination of days spent in the office, and days spent working remotely.

36 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_divide

37 https://post.parliament.uk/covid-19-and-the-digital-divide

38 https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20230227-what-does-work-life-balance-mean-in-a-changed-work-world

39 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Workweek_and_weekend

40 https://www.4dayweek.io/countries

41 The full results of this pilot make for fascinating reading. You can access an archive copy of the 69-page PDF report at https://www.neilstudd.com/mojovation/4dayweek.pdf

42 https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/cloud-adoption-framework/innovate/considerations/adoption

43 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gantt_chart

44 https://www.positivepsychology.com/mihaly-csikszentmihalyi-father-of-flow

45 https://www.jitgo.uk/speed-vs-quality-can-you-have-both