



# NERD LIFE BALANCE

The Art of Open Sourcing Your Life

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## The Art of Open Sourcing Your Life

Nick Floyd

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*To my amazing wife Rebecca and my six excellent kiddos (Caden the programmer, Jonah the hardware blacksmith, Levi the builder, Dylan the adventurer, Ruthie the artist and Avajoy the mad scientist) who were all always so patient with me while I refactored our family for Nerd-life awesome!*

*And to those at New Relic who not only defined Nerd Life but embody it every day in the amazing software they write.*

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# Foreword

I've always felt that a really good book is a book that you're angry you didn't write. Nick's written that book and you're reading it now. I've struggled with an obsession with productivity while balancing work and family my whole adult life. We're told to work hard now so we can relax and spend time with our loved ones later. Make that money, then achieve those goals, then retire. Unfortunately, it doesn't always work out that way and we often burn out long before we reach the end of the rainbow.

More importantly, we're so busy that we often don't have time to just be. To reflect, and not just to be happy, but to have a moment to breath and even ask the question - am I happy? Are we happy? Is this family doing OK? As nerds we are wired to fix things, to measure things, to analyze things. This is our weakness and our great strength. Nick has put together his experiences and his measurements and his analysis and asked the hard questions for us. He's collected real world experiences from other people like us and synthesized this book as a way to start the right conversations.

With the spirit of Ready Player One and the sensibility of a nerdy Oprah (an Oprah who runs a regular WoW raiding party) Nick's created "Nerd Life Balance." It's a great way for you to start a journey to find balance, your way. Thanks Nick for sharing your experiences and for encouraging us to share ours!"

**Scott Hanselman**

Parent, Programmer, Professor, Phony

<http://hanselman.com><sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup><http://hanselman.com>

# Introduction

Over the past several years I've had the privilege of writing code for some seriously amazing companies. Usually, the unspoken mindset was that you were supposed to work until the task was done or that more hours meant more code (good or bad). The thought was by focusing on the tasks and the work, we would inevitably achieve our goals and everyone would be happy. I remember working some really long weeks hitting the work goal, but not feeling very happy. It would be a constant battle to find balance

But here's the challenge for all of those who can relate:

*Go for work-life awesome not work-life balance.*

This is the idea that you can actually have a job that you are genuinely passionate about and you can live out what you love to do in all aspects of your life.

The great deception is that work and life should be two separate and sterile boxes that need to be measured and weighed by unreachable time-lines and responsibility. This is deceiving because somehow we are convinced that we can't have a job that comes from what we do in life. The sad reality of attempting



to serve two separate masters will result in pulling us away from one or the other.

The fact is that our work skills and the rest of our lives are not hot and cold faucets. Instead of becoming frustrated at trying to compartmentalize, we should think about making our lives more congruent. Work skills and talents should not be one-dimensional, but can be thought of as two sides of Velcro that fit together snugly.

With a different mindset, your life can be hitting “work-life awesome.” People have attempted to establish balance by completely separating the two, but consider your talents, creativity and passions as a sum rather than a quotient of personal plus work happiness.

Here’s the secret: If you find something that you are genuinely excited about and you are fortunate enough to do it as a “job,” how awesome would it be to share that passion with your family and friends? It seems logical but we find ourselves returning to the act of trying to peel the two apart again.

I’ve been writing code for a long time, but it wasn’t until more recently, when I joined New Relic, I began to realize that my work is more than part of my life that should be turned off when I left a building. This revelation sprung from New Relic’s culture: a place of

doers who care tremendously about what they do; a place where every moment is deemed important, not just at work but everywhere; a place where really cool engineering stuff begins at the top and at the bottom; where they'd rather have you over the long run than burn you out early in exchange for some code; a place where family comes first.

Working at New Relic has been challenging and awesome all at the same time, but it has never been work for me. I previously accepted the belief that work always had to be work (which was often frustrating) and that life was the escape from being frustrated at work. But I had it backwards:

Life is awesome when this thing called  
“work” becomes another way of expressing  
the passions in your life.

This book is about finding and expressing what each of us were created to do. You will not find a 12 step approach or some gimmick to be the better you in 10 days. So what is the intent of this book?

**The intent of this book is to:**

- Help you find the refactoring or “reworking” mindset for your life

- Motivate you toward finding a place that fits your passions
- Help answer that question that has been a constant hum in the back of your mind... “So now what?”
- Start a discussion so that we can all get “better” (not perfect) at this whole work-life thing.

**Which means this book is:**

- Based on a collection of real world experience from many people
- Intentionally filled with satire and fun to help us all take ourselves a little less seriously
- Filled with Nerd and Geek culture references to illustrate our need for refactoring
- Designed to speak to anyone who is passionate about doing what they love but feel like they can't
- Filled with projects that you can do with your family and friends
- Intended to generate thinking and discussion over what this whole work-life thing is supposed to be.

**This book is NOT:**

- A self-help book
- Intended to be read but never shared
- Just for “computer” nerds but rather for all nerd-kind

Your time is precious. You’re taking time to read this work right now (of which I am grateful) instead of spending that time on other things like playing with the kids, “capturing the flag” in Halo, planting a garden or making your next exhibit for the [Maker Faire](http://makerfaire.com/)<sup>2</sup>. Whatever the case, you are here so **THANK YOU**. I have six amazing kids and a beautiful wife, so time and the optimization of getting things done (while having loads of fun) is paramount to me. My hope for you is that the words on the following pages will be valuable to you. Between the over-the-top jokes, histrionic illustrations, smattering of geek/nerd references and all of the stories my desire is that you’ll end up finding what I eventually did: **WORK-LIFE AWESOME**.

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<sup>2</sup><http://makerfaire.com/>

# A Bit On This Book

**Nerd / Geek References:** This book is filled to the brim with quotes, perspectives, references and anecdotes from the nerd / geek culture. I'd urge you to "research" any of the references that might seem interesting to you. Of course when I say "research" I mean watch the movie, play the game or interact with the piece of technology mentioned (unless it's a [Tardis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TARDIS)<sup>3</sup>, but if you do would you mind going to the future and letting me know if Half-life 3 ever gets created?).

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<sup>3</sup><http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TARDIS>



**Stories:** One of the best ways to illustrate a point is, well through an illustration. You will find illustrations in this book but there are also series of stories that highlight things or provide clarity for some of the more abstract topics covered.

**Parables:** What's that?! These are simple, short stories that help to teach a lesson. Throughout human history we have used parables whether verbal or written (like in the [bible<sup>4</sup>](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parables_of_Jesus)) to help teach thing in creative and clear ways. You're probably wondering why I call these out

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<sup>4</sup>[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parables\\_of\\_Jesus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parables_of_Jesus)

separately from the **story** content. I do this because when you get to the “parables” section of the book my hope is that you’ll find stories that you can not only relate to but learn from as well.

**Projects:** How can you have a Nerd-life book without nerd-life projects?! You’ll discover projects sprinkled throughout this book that are intended to be shared with others. Hopefully these projects will help get you hacking on things with your family and friends, so that you can express your passions and excitement with them in a low friction way. The projects are also in this book so that there is a lower chance that it will end up as part of a monitor stand and act more as a handbook that is used over and over. Please note that all the projects in this book appear in “comic book” form. This serves two purposes:

1. It looks super cool and fits the theme
2. It keeps the projects simple so that they are easy to approach. The idea is to produce motivation and a low friction way to get started.

There is much, much more packed in here but the above are highlights to explain that this is not a typical book. It is more than bits, ink or paper. It is an opportunity to finally [go where the dragons are](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Here_be_dragons)<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Here\\_be\\_dragons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Here_be_dragons)

in your life and see what looking through a Nerd-Life awesome lens is all about.



# The Beginning Is The End



In the beginning...

I awoke to the sound of muffled talking, sliding chairs and clicking keyboards. It was Friday morning and I was laying on a sumo chair in one of our pairing rooms. The rooms were no larger than an average meat locker where a butcher might hang the cuts from the previous day. We often used those rooms for storing tables and boxes and sleeping after late night deployments.

My half dead phone was what really woke me up. My wonderfully patient wife asking if she and the kids were going to see me today. Such were many days where I worked. Unpredictable deployments of

all types of software late at night easily carried our work into the AM hours. We would catch a few games of Team Fortress while the bits were being rolled out across the servers. It was a good way to pass the time. We laughed between sips of Mountain dew and headshots.

This is the life we chose for ourselves. Sure we felt pressure from management and product owners to get software out the door but at the end of the day this behavior of slowly killing ourselves with working long hours, eating poorly and stressing out about the confines of a fairly stoic approach Scrum was our choice. The only thing forcing this mindset on us was crumbling expectations and the drive to shoot at the ever-moving target.

I collected all the artifacts that fell out of my pockets during my lengthy nap between the hours of 5:00am and 7:00am and opened the door leading out to the dev pit. It was an open development space with tables, a few orange couches, a thirty foot magnetic scrum wall (we had big plans) and a brick wall. I remember trying to playoff that I was not disoriented from the couple of hours “sleep” and if I could at least make out the lines on the brick wall I’d be OK - ironic isn’t it, I’m sure there’s a metaphor in there somewhere.

Sometimes I’d slide back to my desk, began sipping

hot Mountain Dew and started to hit the keys again. Other days I'd just go home. Today I decided to head home. I gave a few head nods and courtesy grunts to assure my coworkers that I was in fact not a zombie and headed out the door.

I hopped in my car and began the twenty-four mile drive home. On the clear-minded side of things doing something that could get people hurt like driving while extremely tired is a royally stupid move. Unfortunately, in my mind, I was trained (through reinforcement learning) to do my job this way. I was willing to risk life for something so insignificant because that's what I was conditioned to do.

I didn't know it yet, but this day was going to be different. Today I was going to discover that I had built on something so terrible that it not only almost killed me but I was on my way to leaving something I loved doing - writing software.

Despite my best efforts of windows down, pinching cheeks, slapping my face doing "extreme eyes" with toothpicks, 2 miles from my house I fell asleep and began to head off the into a ditch between the road and train tracks near a parked train. Fortunately, there was another car passing by and he laid on the horn to wake me.

You know those moments when you know you've

drank too much coffee (as if such a thing was actually possible) and you can see your heart pounding out of your chest like a Tom and Jerry cartoon... Yeah, it was a lot like that.

**In that moment I decided I was done with software.**

It's funny how we often deal in absolutes, as if there is some nagging thirst that can only be quenched by our using the words **always** and **never**. I almost always never struggle with that. I feel that it is the logic boards we have built into us; forcing absolution out of us just as easily as pressing keys on our keyboards to create 1's and 0's.

We are more than that. More than what we do at work or at home. Have you ever had a burning thought that you could never shake; like trying to put down a can of Pringles but quickly returning to it uttering the "just one more" catch phrase of addiction?

When I said I was going to put down software that day it was a claim made in vain. I couldn't do it. The fact was that writing code made me smile, it was part of my inner nerd and it wasn't going away. I couldn't put down the software developer can of Pringles and I knew it, so I just decided that there was a better way to eat this thing called work-life balance.

If I was going to be the husband, the dad, the developer and the person I needed to be I was going to have to

start living in a new balance - a Nerd Life Balance.

I know what you're thinking, "wow, another smattering of words that is going to tell me how to be a better me!" or "a book that will help me understand balance better." No, I'm here to tell you that is not at all what this is about. It's about making a difference and making an impact.

I've done this software developer thing for about twenty years now. In that time I have been part of a few startups, a few really large companies and even started up a few companies of my own. Eighteen of those twenty years I have slept under desks, in closets, worked without seeing my family for some time, destroyed my health and my family. I wasn't alone in my destruction and even worse, I was often the one encouraging those behaviors.

Many of my fellow workers, the people I coded with and managed did the same. We all seemed to have one goal, ship software and destroy ourselves in the process. It was as if we were disposable copper top batteries, plugged into the matrix waiting to run out of useful energy. Only until recently (the last few years) do I feel like I have finally been doing this Nerd-life thing "right" and living life with genuine enthusiasm first and finding "balance" in that.

In an article posted by Emma Jacobs of the Financial

Times was quoted saying:

“Most efforts fail if we aim for work-life balance as it’s superficial unless you change how work is done.”

I love that. It states one simple and clear point of view... what we’ve been doing all these years, trading hours of our lives for sheets of paper or pixels on the screen; it’s not working.

Throughout my entire career there were only a few times that I was told that I need to stay late and get things done; not that there wasn’t “implied” pressure or expectations. There was a lot of that. The point is that at any time I could have made a choice, a choice to say “No” or I could have accepted the obvious fact that the work will be there tomorrow. So why didn’t I?

I love being a developer. I love that I can create something that will genuinely delight someone else. I love failing when I try something new and working to get better at it. I love that the work I do gives me challenging problems to solve. Most of all I love solving those problems and “winning.” I call this the “**Skinner effect**” and I believe that is why many of us struggle with spending long hours at this physical place called work.



My idea of the “Skinner effect” comes from the research B.F. Skinner did using his operant conditioning chamber (The “Skinner Box” - which, incidentally B.F. Skinner did not like his device being called a Skinner Box). The idea is simple, we are rewarded for “winning” and punished for “loosing.” Everything we do as developers tends to lead to behavioral reinforcement in some way, shape or form.

Game theory calls this reinforcement learning. It simply states that, “more successful behaviors tend to be held more tenaciously and will occur more frequently.”

Every time we build our software or run our tests we get feedback. We are constantly being rewarded in

small increments for getting it right or scolded by our test runners for getting it wrong. I won't get into all of the research done on our brains, dopamine and the anticipation of success but I do want to point out that this is both a psychological and physiological thing.

Just observe developers that are near a solution in the software they have written - you'll see them unable to leave the keyboard, as if they have been physically connected to it. Basic needs such as food and the bathroom breaks quickly become optional when we are on the edge of solving something.

Second only to this, in my opinion, is the idea that we are really poor estimators of time and effort. Ask any developer have they ever lost track of time when working on a hard problem? Developers can be considered the "eternal external optimists" - while on the inside we are burning with uncertainty and desire to solve the seemingly unsolvable problem.

As far as estimating, ask the same developers to estimate a problem that has never been solved and you'll get a ton of sheepish grins around the table. Our minds spin on the incalculable scenarios we might run into while solving the problem and we even begin to thread out solutions to the unknown. Developers are amazing creatures, we can be both confident and completely uncertain about a problem and how to



solve it simultaneously.

It's like playing one of the seemingly millions of mobile games. We find ourselves captivated by the brilliant yet simple design. It feels familiar somehow, like the smell of Halloween. We are mystified by the "amazing" game play and the perceived story. Here's the rub: it is just an excellent deception. Once you peel back the facade of crushable candy or sparkly gems sliding majestically across the screen you see something that is absolutely captivating to any psychologist. You see a Skinner box. A box whose walls are constructed of in-app purchases, amazing marketing and gamification. The reality is that there are some seriously smart people who are paid to come up with ways to keep you in the game. Next time you are "playing" (or more appropriately, being owned by) one of those games and it rattles off "AMAZING!" or prompts you with a "free" spin, consider this: **who is playing who?**

I know this sounds a bit harsh but we are addressing one of the Nerd world's greatest deceptions: the idea that we are in control because we have the keyboard. There are innumerable variables to the work-life equation which often cause the final calculation to be irrational. So then how does one stop the madness? How do you know if there is even any madness to begin with? We are, after all, problem solvers, over

achievers and hard workers. We are nerds and this prospect of defeat will not drag us down it will only make us stronger!

An author from wikipedia defines Nerd as:

**Nerd**<sup>6</sup> is a descriptive term, often used pejoratively, indicating that a person is overly intellectual, obsessive, or socially impaired. They may spend inordinate amounts of time on unpopular, obscure, or non-mainstream activities, which are generally either highly technical or relating to topics of fiction or fantasy, to the exclusion of more mainstream activities.[1][2][3] Additionally, many nerds are described as being shy, quirky, and unattractive,[4] and may have difficulty participating in, or even following, sports. Though originally derogatory, “Nerd” is a stereotypical term, but as with other pejoratives, it has been reclaimed and redefined by some as a term of pride and group identity.

After reading that I’m sure some might think, “Wow,

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<sup>6</sup><http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nerd>

nope not me - I am not a nerd!" To which I will reply, "Reread the last part of that definition."

"Though originally derogatory, "Nerd" is a stereotypical term, but as with other pejoratives, it has been reclaimed and redefined by some as a term of pride and group identity."

Year	Spelling	Published	Context
1950	Nerd	If I Ran The Zoo	A small humanoid creature looking comically angry, like a thin, cross Chester A. Arthur.
1951	Nerd	Newsweek	Someone who once would be called a drip or a square (Detroit slang: extreme form of <i>scurve</i> )

Year	Spelling	Published	Context
1952	Nerd	St. Joseph, Michigan Herald-Press	Synonym for <i>scurve</i> , opposite of George. Also a drip.
1957	Nerd	Glasgow, Scotland Sunday Mail	“ABC for SQUARES”: “Nerda square, any explanation needed?”
1961	Millard Fillmore Nerd	Swarthmore College Hamburg Show	Name of a self-confessed square, who has not broken a single rule
1965	Nurd	RPI Bachelor	Used to refer to 61 students
1970	Nurd [sic]	Current Slang	Someone with objectionable habits or traits.... An uninteresting person, a ‘dud.’

Year	Spelling	Published	Context
1980	Nerd or Nurd	Slang	An over-studious person, esp a computer devotee
2000s	Nerd	Slang	Began being transposed with the term geek though the two terms have distinct meanings
2015	Nerd	Nerd Life Balance	An individual who is genuinely passionate about something and who wants to share it with everyone

Table derived from [reference.com](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/nerd)<sup>7</sup>

It is my opinion that this last section is really the only true meaning of what a nerd today is. The word no

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<sup>7</sup><http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/nerd>

longer follows the stereotype of its origin from the 1950's Dr. Seuss book, [If I ran the Zoo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/If_I_Ran_the_Zoo)<sup>8</sup>.

Let me see if I can give some perspective. Say, for instance, you love computers. Everything about them excites you; if there is a new processor that hit the market you're already working up when you're going to buy one (at least) and how you might over clock it because you love getting the most out of the experience of tweaking. You are constantly talking about it with anyone who will listen and challenge your ideas. Additionally you feel compelled to share this passion with anyone who might want to learn. One might say that you are indeed a "computer nerd."

Now let's say you were the type of person who loves gardening. (Word of caution: given that I know absolutely nothing about plants other than: 1. some smell and look nice and 2. some you can eat. Hopefully this example will help to "grow" the thought.)

Everything about plants excites you; if there is a new bulb ready for planting that you see at the local nursery you've already worked up how many you need to make you home garden experience perfect. You are constantly talking about it with anyone who will listen and challenge your ideas. Additionally you feel compelled to share this passion with anyone who

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<sup>8</sup>[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/If\\_I\\_Ran\\_the\\_Zoo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/If_I_Ran_the_Zoo)

might want to learn. One might say that you are indeed a “Garden nerd.”

So what’s the difference other than personal hygiene and number of cans of energy drinks consumed (sorry, I couldn’t help raising the sarcastic stereotype flag - believe it or not gardeners probably do have good hygiene)? Nothing really. There is one key aspect to this thinking: if you are passionate about something and you’re compelled to share it, then you just might be a nerd and if you are... read on.

# The Problem



So here's the part where I act like I have seen so much over the past several years and I have been able to come up with a logical conclusion to why humanity is, in general, addicted to work and why we have somehow reinvented success to be a hilltop without friends, family and moral absolutes.

While I hate to disappoint and tell you up front that there is not just one singular issue or broken behavior that leads to work leaching from life or vice versa I have messed it up long enough to be able run down many of the patterns that tend to destroy the balance. There is one underlying hum that I'd like I suggest could be the main glitch in the Matrix. I'm not so sure that this vibration in the ship's hull is the cause of all of the breaking points but I do think it's a good place to begin.



Trying to define the behaviors that tend to drive us to distraction is much like working on a bug in your code and realizing you've just awoken the never-ending hurt locker swarm. You know that just by simple logic there is an end to the ball of yarn you're unraveling but eventually it becomes a journey of faith, fire and fury.

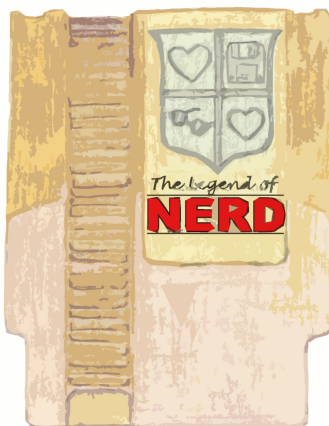
This leads us to the fundamental flaw of perceived perfection. Do you remember when you were a kid; a time where you were limited by bed times and cash flow? Ignorance is bliss, is it not - to paraphrase the eager to leave the "real life" Cypher. As kids we don't "know better" and we think anything is possible. I draw heavily from my kids unbounded passions when we are working on projects. They have that super power that rips right through the bureaucracy of adulthood and says "I've got a better idea."

It's like blowing into your Nintendo cartridges (you know you did it) knowing that they might work again and "power gloving" right through a problem that had no real answer. We didn't know so we didn't have anything to fear like failure or pretense.

What would happen if we all lived in a world where we replaced our "you can't" with "let's try." Our "I have an idea" with "git init, git commit and git push?" I'm not talking about the self-help crap of positive

thinking; I'm drawing on genuine faith that blowing in the cartridges just might work.

Consider Thomas Edison when he said, "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." The problem with the perfection syndrome is that if we are always beginning or pursuing perfect then how will we know we've arrived?



The image of the ideal rarely ever matches reality. This sticks us with a pile of garbage that is effectively ineffective. The pursuit of the perfect has destroyed empires, countries, relationships and really great soft drinks (Crystal Pepsi, need I say more?).

So how do you win at a job that never seems done, where the endgame is an illusion? We seem to be at an unimaginable impasse, an unfortunate fork in the tale. I believe there is an answer and that we can solve for "x" but we'll get to that later, let's finish defining the problem.

So atop perfection sits the unquenchable human trigger to win, beat the man, pull off the heist, provide shock and awe to our users and to be recognized and rewarded for it.

Now before we go too far I want to make sure that I am clear about the “recognized and rewarded” piece of this puzzle. I believe that much of the makers, developers and creators who are genuinely excited about what they do are not narcissistic. They talk about what they do because they want everyone else to be just as excited as they are about the “thing” and that’s the reward and recognition.

So far so good, doing really great and exciting things, check. Winning at those things, check. So where’s the problem?

### **It’s success.**

Over the years “success” has presented itself in many ways. From building things during the industrial revolution, idealized peace in the 60’s or money and cars (insert your favorite 80’s or 90’s rap cassette tape if you’ve forgotten capitalism at its peak).

The idea is not that “success” is bad; that’s like when people misquote the bible and say, “money is the root of all evil.” No, no it’s not. My large bills sporting Washington have never become a couple of kids that

were up to no good, who started making trouble in my neighborhood.

The problem is in how success is portrayed and defined. If you were able to escape thoughts of the “[Fresh Prince of Bel-Air](#)”<sup>9</sup> a few sentences back then you, my friend, have massive mental fortitude or you’ve never heard of the pauper made prince TV extravaganza.

The story was simple, a kid growing up in a “rough” part of town gets into some trouble and his mom sends him to live with his “auntie” and “uncle” in BelAir. When he gets there he is enthralled by the glamor of it all but he quickly finds that it’s not all “perfect.”

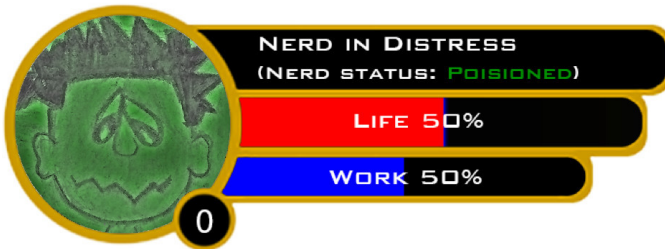
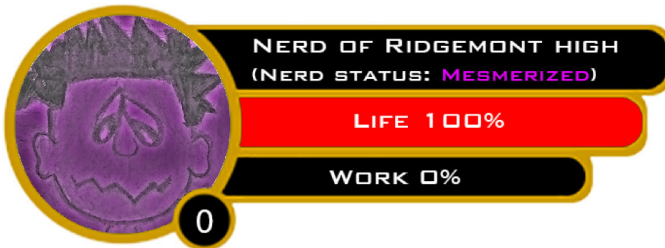
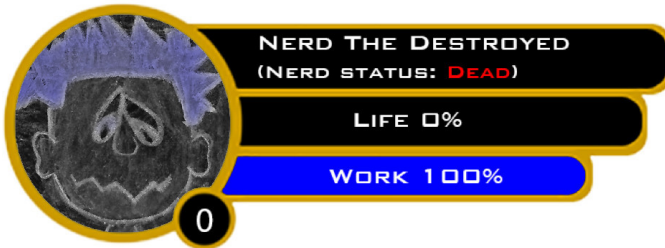
Expectations + circumstantially defined success = null

\* \* \*

Here’s a thought, what if success or winning with this whole work and life thing **did not** mean the following:

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<sup>9</sup>[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Fresh\\_Prince\\_of\\_Bel-Air](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Fresh_Prince_of_Bel-Air)



What if there was a fourth option? An option where instead of treating work and life like sand paper we treated it more like Velcro?

We burn so many cycles trying to keep our heads and our schedules in check so that we can give each

compartment what it's due. How frustrating! Talk about the [Rube Goldberg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rube_Goldberg_machine)<sup>10</sup> path of life - a never-ending complex set of paths and steps to do something so seemingly simple - live life to the full!

Try taking a stab at the following exercise. Given that I hate it when speakers or writers ask me to participate I'll give you the answer: the math does not work and time is not on your side.

\*       \*       \*

For those of you who really want to know, let's do the following: to the best of your ability fill in the sections below with a guess of how much time you spend in a week on each thing. Keep in mind, the sum of all time recorded cannot exceed 168 hours (one week).

Take this as an opportunity to laugh at the ridiculous nature of our schedules and possibly go share it with friends and family to see how they rank. Hopefully together we can all gain something from openly thinking about these things in new ways and encourage each other with shared solutions and ideas.

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<sup>10</sup>[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rube\\_Goldberg\\_machine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rube_Goldberg_machine)

Act	Time spent
Average time spent sleeping	__ hr(s)
Average time spent eating	__ hr(s)
Average time spent on the potty	__ hr(s)
Average time spent getting dressed / showering	__ hr(s)
Average time spent with family	__ hr(s)
Average time spent with friends	__ hr(s)
Average time spent working	__ hr(s)
Average time spent driving	__ hr(s)
Average time spent hacking / making / creating	__ hr(s)
Average time spent playing video games	__ hr(s)
Average time spent staring at the wall	__ hr(s)
Average time spent on [_____]	__ hr(s)
Average time spent on [_____]	__ hr(s)
Average time spent on [_____]	__ hr(s)
TOTAL	__ hr(s)

**TOTAL SHOULD BE < 168 (unless you are The Doctor and have a [Tardis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TARDIS)<sup>11</sup>).**

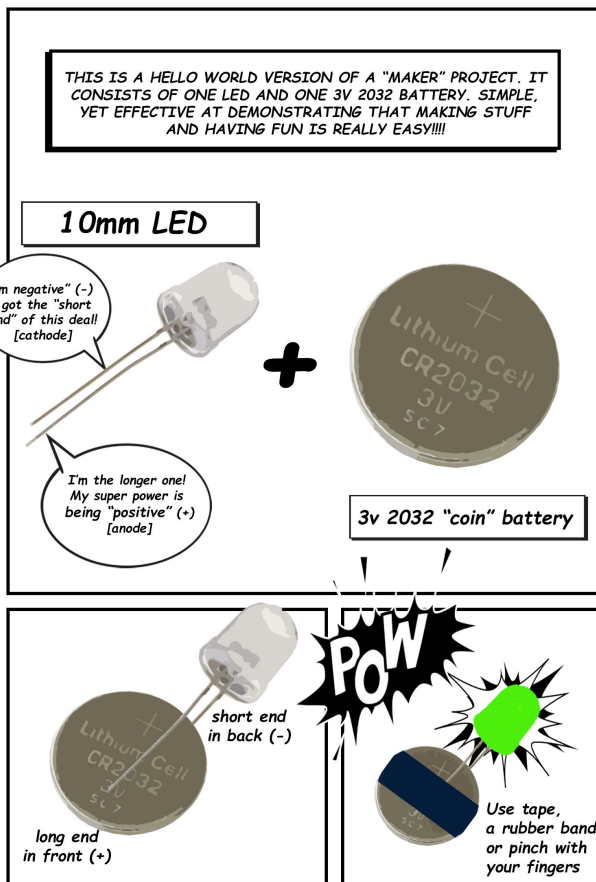
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<sup>11</sup><http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TARDIS>





# Project: Hello World



## **Materials**

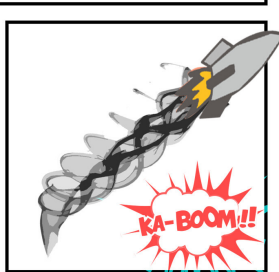
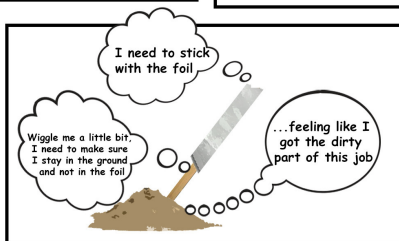
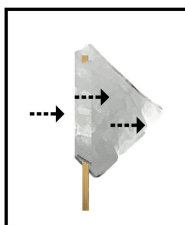
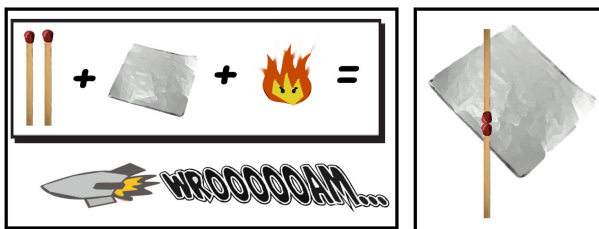
- 10m LED (really any size would work)
- CR2032 3V battery
- Fingers or tape



# Project: Playing with matches

THIS PROJECT IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF TAKING EVERYDAY THINGS AND MAKE SOMETHING SUPER FUN! ALL YOU REALLY NEED IS A COUPLE WOODEN MATCHES, ALUMINUM FOIL & A LIGHTER.

**NOTE: THIS IS LITERALLY PLAYING WITH MATCHES, PLEASE BE SAFE OR GET ANOTHER ADULT THAT WILL BE!**



## **Materials**

- 2 matches (strike anywhere matches generally work well)
- Aluminum foil (3in x 3in)
- Dirt (or some place to firmly plant the “rocket”)