



## EARLY ACCESS SNEAK PREVIEW CHAPTER 2

# 2

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## Never Use Willpower Again!

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### THE WORST DAY OF MY LIFE

When you read a typical self-help or productivity book, it's easy to get the idea that changing your life is just a matter of making the right decisions and "just doing it".

After all, surely you just need to know what you're doing **wrong**, and what you should be doing *instead*! It should just be a simple matter of creating a few new habits and "making better decisions", and then you can live happily ever after!

It's inspiring.

It's encouraging!

And it's complete **rubbish**.

Because if all we *really* had to do to change our lives was make the right decisions and use a little willpower to carry them out, then by now we would all be skinny millionaires with perfect relationships. We would never waste time or procrastinate, because we'd always make decisions based on our most important goals and values, and we'd always *act accordingly*.

But even naturally successful people aren't **that** perfect!

So clearly, there's something *missing* from this picture.

Something that makes us avoid, put off, or just never "get around to" doing the things we **know** we need to do, to get what we want in life.

Something that stopped me a couple of decades ago, when I desperately needed to get myself to act... but couldn't.

I was near-broke and damn near homeless as well. My dream of becoming a writer was rapidly being replaced by the dream of having enough money to pay for ramen noodles and a pre-cooked hot dog to warm up in the sink of my cheap motel room.

At least I'd already paid for my college tuition and textbooks that semester, from the money my last job brought in. The job that I foolishly *quit*, because every self-help book I'd read to that point had said I should:

1. Boldly pursue my dreams, and
2. "Burn the ships", by not giving myself any way to back out.

Anyhow, as a way of getting out of this mess, I came up with a harebrained scheme to make a few bucks from my fellow students by giving a seminar on studying and test-taking techniques.

But there was a problem: my flyers on campus weren't selling any tickets. So I was going to have to go "pound the pavement", "press the flesh", "touch base", and all those other unpleasantly physical metaphors salespeople use to describe their jobs.

And in principle, I knew what to do. After all, I'd seen it done at my previous job, and I'd even had to participate in the process, sort of.

But that was by telephone.

Here, I was going to have to go up to strangers *in person*. Bigger, more popular strangers with large groups of friends. And then try to convince them to spend money on something (i.e., doing well in school) that quite a lot of them didn't care much about to start with.

### **And I was scared out of my mind!**

I remember this one particular day, when I was down to my last 14 cents or so. (Might have been a few cents more or less; I just remember it was less than the bus fare back to the vicinity of my cheap motel room.)

Anyway, I knew that if I didn't sell anything that day, I might not be going home, and I certainly wouldn't be eating.

And I couldn't sell anything, if I didn't approach anyone!

Now, having read all those self-help books about having a big enough “why” meaning you could achieve any “what”, I thought, “well, I guess this is where it finally kicks in.” I mean, for a couple days, I’d been sort of trying in a half-assed way to get over my anxiety and actually talk to someone, *anyone*, about my stupid seminar. Or even just walk in the direction of someone I might talk to!

But now, I thought, *this is it*. My ass is really on the line here. No way I can afford to fail. This has **got** to be a “big enough why”. So let’s do this thing!

But *my feet didn’t move*.

I was rooted to the spot, just like the last time I’d tried, only now it was **worse**!

My whole body felt like it was shaking with effort.

But nothing was happening.

*How pathetic*, I thought. How useless, spineless, and **weak-willed** I must be!

I must have died inside a thousand times that day. But no matter how much I tried to encourage myself with self-help slogans, or yelled at myself on the inside for being a coward, my feet **just stayed put**.

And that was my first hard lesson, in the school of evolutionary psychology.

Of course, at the time, there was no such thing as evolutionary psychology! (At least, not any that got mentioned in my freshman psych textbook.)

And so, not knowing any better, I blamed **myself** for what happened.

Now, some extroverts and naturally successful people don’t understand this story of mine: they simply don’t “get” how someone can freeze up so tightly over something as simple as talking to a stranger. And all I can say to them is, be glad, my friend, be *glad* you don’t understand.

But if you **do** understand my story, because you’ve felt what it’s like to have your whole body just “lock down” and refuse to carry out a simple request... be it starting work on your thesis, cleaning the house, doing your taxes... working on your album or novel or pet programming project... saying hello to that attractive person... asking for a raise...

whatever.

If you *know* what it's like to be unable to even **start** on something that you *desperately* want to finish, well then... be glad you found this book.

Because, in the next section, I'm going to share with you the seven "signposts" that I use to locate – and ultimately, *eliminate* – these "lock down" responses.

These seven signposts not only explain *why* and *how* you get stuck, but also what needs to happen for you to get **unstuck**.

What's more, they are the guidelines I personally use to notice when I'm stuck, and determine what I need to do about it.

In other words, they tell me not only *when* to use the techniques you'll find in Part 2 of the book, but also what I need to aim those techniques *at*.

Which is why I call them "signposts"... and why **you** should pay *very* close attention to them.

## THE SEVEN SIGNPOSTS OF SUCCESS WITHOUT STRUGGLE

**S**o why do we freeze? How do we get stuck? What makes us put off and procrastinate the things that we *know* we need to do, to get what we want to have in life? And even when we **do** manage to push past our resistance and get started, why is it so difficult to keep going?

Well, there's a really simple answer to all of these questions.

An answer so simple, in fact, that you probably already know it on some level.

When I was 18 and trying to sell tickets, I was afraid of being disliked or laughed at. I didn't want to "bother people", and so on.

So despite the fact that I desperately wanted the *result* of taking action, I also had what we call...

### Mixed feelings!

You see:

**Signpost #1:**  
**Effort is a *divided mind*.**

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You simply *cannot* experience effort or struggling, if there is truly only **one** thing on your mind.

Now, by effort, I don't mean physical exertion! You can exert yourself totally, joyfully in a game of tag or hide-and-seek, and yet not be putting any "effort" into it.

So the kind of effort I'm talking about, is really just a sense of difficulty, struggle, self-consciousness, or any kind of desire to **not** be doing whatever you're currently doing, or not be where you currently are.

Now, compare that with what happens when you're fully engaged in something that you **want** to be doing, or that at least completely absorbs your attention. (Being in love, playing a videogame, and the perfect trance of writing or programming are a few of the things that have always done it for me.)

At these times of "flow", you experience an undivided mind, and *time flies*.

But whenever you become aware of anything *besides* what's happening in the moment, time begins to **crawl**.

Now at this point, you might well ask what **use** this is. After all, how can we possibly **control** our mixed feelings? Don't we always have to give up something we want, in order to get something else we want? Isn't life and success all about working hard and paying for what you want?

Well, yes...

And no.

You see, it's true that we have to give to receive, and work to succeed. And we also have to choose a limited number of things to have, be, or do, out of all the things we could *possibly* have, be, or do.

But this is **not** where our mixed feelings come from. Because:

## Signpost #2: Choices can't divide the mind; only *fear* can.

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And fear is an *emotional attachment* to the **outcome** of our choices.

For example, let's say you're not sure which of your two favorite meals you should have today at your favorite restaurant.

If you can have either meal at any time again in the future, then there is very little riding on your decision. So you will probably give it little thought, and just go for whatever you'd like best today.

But what if the restaurant is closing forever **tomorrow**, and you will **never** have either of those two meals again? Now the stakes are higher, because you stand to *lose* something either way.

In the first scenario, you will probably feel free to make a choice based on whatever you like best. But in the second, you will feel like you need to be more careful to not make the "wrong" choice.

What's more, even after you *finish* agonizing over which meal to get, you still probably won't enjoy eating it. In your mind, the choice not taken still haunts you: Did you really make the right choice? Why can't you stop thinking about it? It's just a meal, for crying out loud!

Now, if we can get that indecisive and drama-infested about something as simple as what we want for *lunch*, imagine how bad it gets when something really **important** is on the line!

Oh wait, I don't have to *imagine* it!

And neither do you.

Of course, this two-meal thought experiment may not precisely match you or the people you know. A naturally struggling person might have trouble even in the first situation, and a naturally successful person might have no problem with either one!

But the example is helpful in illustrating how we can experience struggle and suffering over even the simplest things, if our mind is divided by the fear of **losing something important**. You see:

### Signpost #3:

**To a divided mind, *pain* is more important than *gain*.**

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Let's imagine a monkey getting chased by a tiger. The monkey climbs a tree, seeking shelter, while the tiger prowls around beneath.

Suddenly, the monkey notices a banana, just out of reach.

Answer me this: should the monkey actually try to get the banana then, or wait for the tiger to go away first?

Sure, you and I can answer that question by using our logical reasoning powers, but the monkey *can't*.

And that means for animals to survive in a situation like this, they needed to have an **automatic** crisis-management system.

A system that would make them stop *seeking gain*, and start *minimizing pain* instead.

That way, instead of bouncing around after bananas (and maybe falling to its death), the monkey sits tight. It conserves energy, takes fewer risks, and generally "takes things down a notch". Rather than making choices based on what rewards it can reap, it makes choices that reduce its chances of becoming tiger food.

And the thing that activates this wonderful automatic crisis management system? The **expectation of imminent, unacceptable loss**. (Like becoming tiger food!)

There are three *critically important points* in that last paragraph, so let me go over them again. The "gain brain" shuts down, and the "pain brain" kicks in when:

1. You *expect*...
2. You may *lose* something...
3. That you *can't afford to lose*.

And that's what I mean by "imminent, unacceptable loss".

Now in humans, the **definitions** of these three terms ("expect",



“lose”, and “can’t afford”) is where all the action is... not to mention all the variation between individuals.

In fact, the per-person definition of these three things is quite literally what makes all the difference between a naturally successful person, and a naturally struggling one.

Quite simply, a struggling person is expecting to lose something he or she can’t afford to, and a successful person isn’t. (The successful person is too busy expecting to *gain* something **wonderful**!)

But this difference in expectations doesn’t have anything to do with the *circumstances* people are in. It is solely determined by the way your brain has **coded** the situation. In other words, for every possible situation, your brain has coding for:

1. What you *expect* to happen in a situation like that,
2. Whether that expectation should be considered a “loss”, and
3. Whether you can *handle* it – i.e., is it an “acceptable” loss.

And in later chapters, we’ll be covering how to **change** all three of these things.

But first, I need to give you a bit more bad news about your blocks.

Remember how my problem of freezing up got **worse** when I was scared of going broke, not better?

On the days before, when I wasn’t thinking as much about running out of money, I actually wasn’t as physically blocked. I could even walk in the direction of people... I just always veered off before they could tell I was going to try to talk to them.

Now, isn’t it strange that having a more important, more urgent reason to approach people, actually made me freeze up **more**?

In fact, it’s *damn* strange. It doesn’t match what we would logically think, or how we would go about designing a human being... or how we might imagine a compassionate god would design human beings.

But it **does** match what we’d expect from an accident of evolution, where an already-existing mechanism gets *reused* for another purpose, without any “intelligence” in the design process. Specifically:

## Signpost #4: What pushes you *forward*, is holding you back.

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That is, the thing you fear most about failing, is *precisely* what drains your motivation to succeed!

Because, what was I thinking about on that terrible day? Why, I was thinking about not selling anything, and being broke and hungry, that's what. And thinking I didn't know how I could possibly **handle** that!

Does that sound like an "imminent, unacceptable loss" to you?

It sure did to **me**! And more importantly, it did to my brain's crisis-management center. So it hit all my alarm buttons... like the one labeled, "Emergency Stop!"

I know, I know, it makes no sense. Clearly, what it *should* have been doing, is helping me *avoid* the crisis, instead of making it **worse**.

But evolution is one stupid, sorry-ass, and above all, **cheapskate** sonofabitch.

See, in the wild, animals never have this kind of crisis, where you need to *perform* some immediate action to *prevent* some kind of obscure, long-term crisis (like being broke). Animals' long-term goals are accomplished by spending most of their time following *gain*-based motivation: the pain-based motivation system is really only used as a short-term crisis-avoidance system.

That's why you never see a tiger beating itself up over not being able to catch its dinner. It's operating from the naturally successful mindset, where gain is more important than pain, and failure is only a minor setback on the road to inevitable success.

Unfortunately, humans can both imagine and create far more complex life scenarios for themselves, in which some urgent action is required **now**, to stave off some distant *future* problem. (Global warming, anyone?)

But the human brain's crisis management system was never upgraded to tell the difference between a global disaster in 50 years, and a tiger

cornering you up a tree **right now!**

*When lions approach, the zebra has an **acute stress response** as it prepares to run for its life: Its heart rate increases; its breathing deepens; and blood is directed to its muscles. **Any biological activity** that requires energy and is not necessary to escape the stalking lions – the immediate threat – **is shut down.***

– Philip Zimbardo & John Boyd, The Time Paradox

So this kind of “perform-to-prevent” scenario is not accounted for in our design; we just got stuck with the standard “tiger chase” style of risk management circuits. And those circuits simply don’t know how to handle thoughts like these:

- If I don’t finish my thesis, I’m going to be stuck in this dead-end job for the rest of my life
- If I don’t ask these people for money, I won’t be eating later
- If I don’t start exercising, I’ll be a big fat loser forever

Because thoughts like these are basically **linking** an *expected loss* (stuck in the job, going hungry, being ugly and lonely, etc.) to the thing we want to **do** (write the thesis, approach people, exercise, etc.)

So the very thoughts that we use to **push** ourselves forward, are *precisely* the thoughts that **hold us back**. Because, by thinking in this way, we are *literally* programming our brain to **freeze or run** whenever we so much as *think* about doing the thing we need to do!

Now, if you’re thinking about this from an evolutionary perspective, you’ve probably already thought of the **next** important question:

Why would your brain *care* if you’re stuck in a dead-end job or stay fat? Wouldn’t a job mean security, and fat mean that you have a surplus of food?

A very good question, indeed. So let's take a look at the answer:

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**Signpost #5:**  
**Our worst fears are based on what we believe**  
**our actions will *mean about us as a person.***

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And, unlike a legitimate fear of passing **physical** danger, these fears *never end by themselves!*

Consider monkeys, again. If a monkey is badly behaved enough, the rest of the troop will kick it out. Drive it away. "Vote it off the island", you might say.

And if that happens, what happens to that monkey's likelihood of passing on its genes?

First off, without the group's help watching for danger, it's far more likely to be surprised by a predator and finished off. But even more importantly, *it no longer has access to mates.*

What this means is, any genes that make a monkey (or a human) "too independent" (for some definition thereof) will **tend to become extinct**, as the gene's carriers get themselves voted off the island.

And the consequence of this, is that *every* animal that operates in groups must have a relatively-stable **pecking order**, that determines who gets the best resources (food and mates).

Why? Because without a pecking order, animals couldn't function as a group. They'd end up constantly fighting for food and mates. And, even if by some miracle they did evolve a way to co-operate *without* a pecking order, new genes would then spring up to take advantage of the situation by *fighting* the co-operative ones... thereby driving the co-operators to extinction.

So, the only way for a group of genetically-distinct animals to operate as a group, is by a pecking order based on "dominance".

In humans, however, this "dominance" concept doesn't *always* correspond to strength or fighting ability. (The way it does in most other animals.) Instead, humans have something you might call "status", or

“honor”.

Or to put it more bluntly: *what other people think of us*.

Because if too many people hold a low opinion of you, well... you might not get *killed*, but who’s going to mate with you?

So at some point in our evolutionary history, our social calibration mechanisms got hooked up to the crisis mechanism. And when we see other people getting laughed at, put down, or picked on – or when it happens to us – we learn to associate these things with **mortal danger**.

Think I’m exaggerating? Then why do so many people fear public speaking *more than their own death*?

I rest my case.

Now, there are several ways to get rid of these fears, and I will cover some of them in Part 2 of this book. But first, we need to look more closely at how **not** to get rid of them:

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### Signpost #6:

#### When you fight yourself, *both sides lose*.

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And that’s because you can’t get rid of effort, by exerting *more* effort!

In other words, if you try to overcome your fears with willpower, or to create new habits through constant vigilance, you only *increase your mind’s division*. So *you* have to change on the inside, before your actions will change on the outside.

Remember: what pushes you forward, holds you back. So if you look at these social fears as being *threats in themselves*, to be overcome by force, then you are only creating a **new kind of fear**.

Let’s take claustrophobia, for example. If you’re ever had a panic attack in an enclosed space, then the next time you’re in one, you might become afraid of having *another* panic attack... and thus bring on a panic attack!

Similarly, when I originally decided to write this book, I was afraid that I would freeze up halfway through and not know what to do. So guess what? I did!

So in general, whenever you “try harder”, or **force** yourself to do anything in opposition to your fears, you’re just pushing your own **panic** button.

Sure, I know, that’s not what the self-help books say. They say to “feel the fear and do it anyway”, “face what you fear and the death of fear is certain”, and all that sort of thing.

But what they **don’t** say, is that these rules *only* apply to naturally successful people!

When a person is in the naturally successful state, they may *fear* something going wrong... but they don’t **expect** it. And if something does go wrong, they expect they can **handle** it.

Plus – and this may well be the most important factor of all – the naturally successful person isn’t **using one fear to fight another!**

See, when I was trying to “face my fear” of approaching people, I was at the same time trying to avoid a *different* fear: the fear of being broke and hungry and homeless. In other words, I was trying to use one fear (being broke) to fight another (approaching people). And this kind of “willpower” simply doesn’t work in the long run.

Because even if I’d succeeded in pushing through my resistance, what would have happened then?

I *still* would’ve lost.

Why? Because my mind would still have been *divided*. I would have been self-conscious, and continuously aware of how awkward and fearful I felt, even if I got the result that I was after. And that’s really **no way to live**.

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### Signpost #7:

**Success isn’t trying to be someone you’re *not*; it’s just being *you*... without all the baggage and fighting!**

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Suppose you’re overweight, and you’ve gotten so fed up with it that you’ve managed to start an exercise program. All the self-help books say you should be able to build a habit in 21 days, or 30 at the outside. So,

just to be safe, you figure on using willpower for six weeks, and by then it should be an automatic habit, right?

You put up a chart to motivate yourself, and you clear your schedule so you can exercise. You put up reminders and motivational posters, and you make an **absolute commitment** to exercise **every day** for the next six weeks. You even manage not to get discouraged when you miss a day!

But after the end of that six weeks, do you *keep* exercising? Do you *like* exercising now? Has it truly become a “habit”, i.e., “second nature”?

If so, congratulations. You clearly didn’t have any mixed feelings about exercise!

But if you **do** have mixed feelings about exercising, then you already know it’s *not* going to go down like that.

You may **force** yourself to go through the motions each day, but you still won’t *like* it. Not only that, but it’ll get *harder and harder* to motivate yourself, not easier! And at some point, it starts to just seem like more trouble than it’s even worth.

### And it never, *ever* changes!

Because on the inside, you’re still the *same person*. And your mixed feelings are still there.

During my decades as a naturally struggling person, I made **many** attempts at losing weight or becoming fit. But even when they were working well, I had trouble sticking with them, or starting new ones, because on the inside, I had nearly a **dozen** emotional conflicts about exercise going on. In fact, it wasn’t until just a few weeks ago that I nailed the last of them!

(Which reminds me... I’ve gotten so absorbed in my writing that I forgot to take a break and go do some chin-ups! Excuse me a moment, I’ll be right back! Ahhhh... that was *great*. It really feels good to exert myself fully, and see how my strength is improving from one day to the next. And since I got rid of that emotional baggage, I’ve also gotten rid of some *physical* baggage... like 27 pounds of blubber!)

So not too long ago, I looked on exercising as a **dull chore**, something that took up time I could more profitably spend on writing or thinking or *anything* else at all. But once I *eliminated* the various feelings, beliefs,

and judgments... that is, the “emotional baggage” that was the **source** of my inner conflicts, I started sounding like one of those fitness nuts myself.

You know... like a person who’s *naturally successful* at exercising!

But before I got rid of my conflicts, I was someone who always **struggled** to stay fit, or even to motivate myself to get started on it in the first place. And even when I achieved fitness goals in the past, it *never* felt as good as it feels now to just be **working** towards a goal!

So you see, the simple truth is this: so long as your mind is in conflict, “you” will always be locked in a struggle with “yourself”.

And thus, even if you actually *achieve* your goals that way, it can never make you **truly** happy. (And the rest of the time, it’s just a terrible way to live!)

Therefore, if you want to be successful, you must first *unlearn* how to struggle.

And learn to get rid of the “baggage” (programming) you *already have*.

## LOSE YOUR BAGGAGE, CHANGE YOUR LIFE

**I**magine a brand-new computer, with nothing installed except for what comes from the factory. At first, it’s easy to add new programs, because there aren’t any programs that can get in the way. This is like your brain when you’re a kid: you can’t do much yet, but you have boundless potential for learning and trying **new** things.

But over time, you can end up with “installation conflicts” - that is, programs that can’t be installed or won’t work correctly, because an existing program is already in charge of that function. For example, if you install two email programs, which one will end up actually receiving your email? Clearly, it’s a good idea to **uninstall** the program you won’t be using any more.

Now, on a computer, you might want to wait until you’re sure you like the new program better. But with your brain, you might not even be able to *install* something new until the old programs are gone!

And this is the *real* reason that people end up thinking that change is hard: they sit and struggle with affirmations and visualization for days



and weeks on end, trying to install a new program on top of one or more **old** ones. And it just doesn't work.

But in my experience, it often takes only *minutes* to install a new mental program, as long as the old ones have been deactivated **first**!

In fact, I've often found that the new mental program someone wanted was, in fact, *already* installed... but just couldn't **run** because of the old, conflicting programs!

And what this means in practice is that if you're a naturally struggling person, learning how to *delete* existing mental programs is by far the **most important skill** you can learn. Because, once you start removing the programs that cause fear, procrastination, perfectionism, self-doubt, distraction, and despair, you will experience **rapid** changes.

You'll still be "you", of course... but **you without the baggage**. And you'll be that much closer to being the organized, productive, and confident person you'd like to be.

For one thing, you'll begin to notice that you already have many talents and abilities that you're not aware of.... and you'll begin surprising yourself when they start surfacing!

Some may be things you **used** to be able to do, before you installed a "conflicting program". Others may be **new** abilities, that your brain has learned through observation or knowledge, but which you've never applied due to another, overriding program being present.

So, in the first part of this book, we're going to talk about both kinds of mental programs: abilities and blocks. My goal is that by the time you get to part 2, you'll not only have a good grasp of what you need to **do** in order to unlock your full abilities and talents, but you'll *also* have some idea of just how powerful your brain really is "under the hood"...

And what you'll be able to **do** with it, once you learn *how*.

But in order to do that, you're first going to need to know a bit more about how your brain actually *works*.

Now, I promise not to get too technical. You won't need to know any neuroscience, cognitive and evolutionary psychology, or computer programming in order to understand and use this book... even though it's heavily based on **all** of these fields.

But I need you to promise *me* something, too.

A little more than a year ago, I noticed that even though I'd discovered so many wonderful methods of "hacking into my brain" and changing things, my life really wasn't going as well as I would have liked.

And I realized that it was mainly because I wasn't actually **using** my methods as much as I should've been!

In other words, it was taking me far too long to *notice* that I was using willpower on some project or fighting myself in some area of life, instead of using one of my favorite techniques to **get rid of the struggle**.

So, at that moment, I vowed to do something *different*.

I made a promise to myself that I would never **force** myself to do anything, ever again. Instead, I would always seek first to *understand* where my mixed feelings were coming from, or what kind of emotional baggage was blocking me, before taking **any** other action.

And, although I'd made a lot of improvements to my life before that moment, that was the moment when things really started **taking off**. Indeed, I made more positive improvements to myself and my life in the next three months than I had in the entire preceding year.

Now, I cannot say that I have been 100% successful in keeping this vow. Sometimes, it still takes me a while to realize that I'm making things harder than they need to be. After all, I've spent so much of my life having nearly *everything* seem difficult!

And for a while at first, I had a few situations that seemed like enough of an "emergency" that it merited pushing myself through "just this once." However, even in those cases, I still strove to understand why I had resisted doing that thing, so that it wouldn't be a problem again.

So, the reason I've put this chapter on willpower so early in the book, is because I want you to be able to learn this lesson more quickly than I did:

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### **If It Feels Bad, You're Doing It Wrong!**

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And it's really that simple.

Now, I don't mean that if something feels *good*, you're doing it **right**, or that the right way to do something always involves less time or physical exertion than the wrong way!

All I'm saying is, if you're struggling – i.e., your mind is divided – then something is **wrong**.

And you need to **fix** that something.

Now, I can't tell you that you *should* make the same promise. Because then, then you might **push** yourself to do it.

And when you push yourself forward, you hold yourself back!

So instead, just promise me you'll *consider* it.

That you'll give a little thought to all the places where you currently push and force yourself to do things, and contemplate:

What would happen if you *stopped* doing all that...

...and started trying to *understand* yourself, instead?

Now, by “understand”, I don't mean armchair-psychoanalyzing your self, your motives, or your childhood. That kind of thing rarely accomplishes anything, because there's no way to tell which of your many ideas and theories are actually **correct**, and which ones are just stupid excuses and stories. And even *knowing* you've figured it out correctly, won't necessarily *change* anything.

No, I'm talking about a completely *different* kind of understanding. The only kind of understanding, in fact, that will actually help you **change** yourself. I'm talking about:

1. Observing...
2. What your mind is *doing*...
3. Behind your back!

And as you'll see in the next chapter, all three of these pieces are **required**.