



## EARLY ACCESS SNEAK PREVIEW

### CHAPTER 6

© 2008, 2009 PJ EBY, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

# 6

---

## How To Get Powerful “Pull” Motivation, Instantly!

---

*Often people attempt to live their lives backward: They try to have more things, or more money, in order to do more of what they want, so that they will be happier. The way it actually works is the reverse. You must first be who you really are, then do what you need to do, in order to have what you want.*

– Shakti Gawain, Creative Visualization

## HOW TO HAVE MOUTH-WATERING GOALS

**D**o you have a favorite kind of food? Something you really, *really* love to eat?

For some people it might be chocolate, for others maybe cheesecake. Maybe chocolate cheesecake!

But whatever it is for you, it's something that's just so **tasty**, it makes your mouth water just thinking about it.

And what would it be like, if you had some of that food in front of you right now? If you were just about to take a big, juicy bite...

Is your mouth watering already? Is your stomach growling? Or did you maybe start thinking about how you could get your hands on some of it?

If so, then congratulations! You've just proved that you can use your **mind** to control your **emotions**.

Now, it might not seem like *much* of a proof: after all, isn't hunger

and the desire for food something that's already built-in?

But if you think about it a little, you'll realize that we have similar responses to almost *anything* we like. I mean, just think of the last time you saw a group of guys drooling over a picture of a centerfold or a sportscar. (Or, for some equal-opportunity stereotyping, how about a group of women drooling over a new purse or a pair of shoes?)

We even tend to describe *people* in food-like terms: cupcake, beef-cake, tasty, luscious, delectable, and so on! There's also a fair amount of experimental evidence to suggest that we use the same parts of our brain to think about **money**, as we use to think about food.

All of this strongly suggests that food is merely the **original** object of desire, and that all of our other desires simply evolved to make use of the same motivational circuits.

But whether that's true or not, it's definitely the case that a true positive desire for *any* result produces a physical response in the **body**. It could be drooling, or it could be just an appreciative "oh" or "ahhh" or "mmmmm" of pleasure – sounds we make because our breathing, posture, and muscle tension have all shifted... to prepare us for *action*.

These responses are the result of an *emotional* shift: chemicals being released into our system, preparing us to pursue, consume, woo, or otherwise **go after** the thing we *want*.

It is the emotion of *anticipation*, or desire. And it's one of the most pleasurable things that human beings – or any other animal, for that matter! – can enjoy for an extended period of time.

After all, that's why people can enjoy *playing* the lottery for many, **many** years... but rarely enjoy *winning* the lottery for more than six months!

And because it's one of the few positive – and motivating! – emotions that we can experience for an extended period, it's an **ideal** vehicle for going after our goals.

But since we can't simply **decide** to have this feeling, it's necessary to have a way – a dashboard indicator light, so to speak – to tell whether it's working *properly*.

And I call this indicator, "The Mmmm Test". Essentially, all you need to do is check whether you *physically* feel good when you think

about your goal: so good, in fact, that it makes you go “mmmm”, the way Homer Simpson goes “mmmmmm, donut...”

Okay, technically, it doesn’t have to be “mmm”. *Any* sound of pleasure is okay, as long as it’s occurring **naturally** and un-forced. Drooling or other physical signs of hunger, enjoyment, or even sexual arousal are also acceptable. The most important thing, though, is that it has to feel **good**, and include a sense of being *pulled* towards the thing you want, rather than feeling as if you have to *push* to go after it.

I use the Mmmm Test as a **troubleshooting tool**, to find out whether a goal is actually motivating me or my clients. If you have a clear, motivating goal, and no mental or emotional blocks about it, then thinking about it should make you feel *good*, and maybe even make your mouth water as well! (In some of my earliest workshops and lectures, like *The Procrastination Cure* and *Seven Days To Live Your Dreams*, I even used the term “mouth-watering goals”).)

But if *thinking* about your goal feels **bad**... or even if it just doesn’t produce a **physical** shift to pleasure-seeking, (the way thinking about donuts does it for Homer Simpson!), then there is something **wrong** with:

1. your goal itself,
2. the way you’re *thinking* about it, and/or
3. your beliefs (when-then rules)!

And it’s something that needs to get *fixed*.

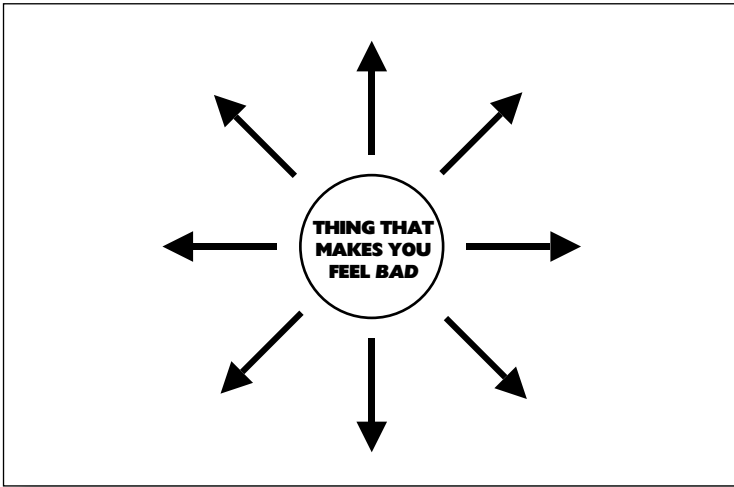
## HOW TO KNOW (AND GET!) WHAT YOU *REALLY* WANT IN LIFE

**S**o what if your current goals don’t pass the “mmm” test? Or what if you’re just not all that sure about what you want in the first place?

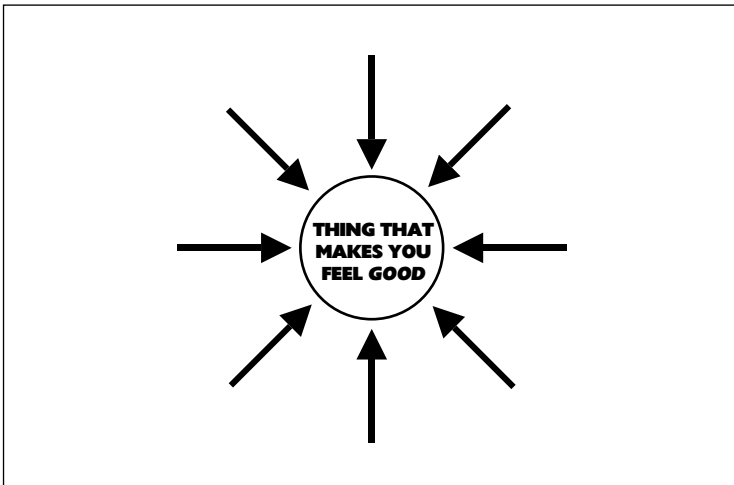
Well, as we talked about in chapter 2, this is a symptom of living in the “pain brain” mode – a common problem for naturally struggling people.

Because when your brain is trying to avoid something, it doesn’t really care what direction you go, as long as it’s **AWAY** from the thing

you're trying to avoid:



But, when you're in the "gain brain", and successfully using desire to motivate yourself, things look more like this:



That is, when you are positively desiring a *specific* thing, then your brain has a **direction** to go in. You might even say it has a **test**, which lets you get feedback on where you are in relation to your goal. Thus, no matter where you are now, it can always *find* a way to move towards

your goal, by noticing whether you’re getting closer to it, or further away from it.

However, if you’re moving *away* from something, then *any* direction is almost as good as any other, and you will tend to end up **drifting aimlessly**.

In fact, your life will begin to look as if you are *orbiting* the very thing you most want to avoid!

For example, let’s say you hate doing dishes. So you put it off as long as possible, but meanwhile, the stack of dishes is getting bigger and bigger. So you have **MORE** of what you hate: dishes to do!

And you keep feeling *bad* about it the whole time...

### **So your life *sucks*!**

Now, once enough pressure builds up, you feel bad enough to actually *do* the dishes. And for a **very** short time, life gets better... until the pressure starts building up again.

Of course, it’s not just the dishes. You could have dozens of things like this, all building up pressure until **you** explode... in a flurry of last-minute activity to solve the problem.

Meanwhile, all the others get neglected, and so the pressure keeps building behind your back. And you just get tossed from one problem to the other, with no real sense of direction, control, or satisfaction.

The fix, of course, is to switch from negative motivation, to **positive**. Instead of avoiding the things you don’t want, you move closer to the things you **do**. This isn’t just a difference of semantics, but a practical, emotional, and *chemical* distinction.

When you move towards the things you want most, you aren’t moving *away* from anything: metaphorically speaking, you just put all the stuff you want in one spot, and then **go there**.

And by the time you get to the end of this book, you’ll know *precisely* how to do all that.

But the very *first* thing you need to learn, is how to **test** a goal for positive or negative emotion.

The “mmm” test tells you if a goal is *definitely* positive. Because if

thinking about the goal makes you feel **good**, then you're all set for the "Desire" condition, and can move on to the other required conditions for that goal (like Belief, Commitment, Vision, and so on).

Conversely, if it makes you feel **bad**, then you're definitely in the "pain brain", and need to identify the and fix the specific problem. (As we'll discuss more in chapters 7 and 8.)

However, if you're not *sure* if you feel good, or whether it's something you really **want**, then it's time for the *second* test.

And I call this test, the "push test", because it will basically test whether you are using "push" ("away from") or pull ("towards") motivation.

And it's very simple to do: you just ask yourself (using RMI), "What happens if I **don't** get (or do, or achieve, or have) this?", and wait for an answer to come up in your mind.

And one of two things will happen: you'll either feel **bad**, or...

### **You'll feel *nothing*!**

Now remember: a person who's in the naturally successful state *can't stay focused on failure*, so if you feel *nothing*, then you're good to go!

However, if you feel **bad** about the idea of *not* doing or getting the thing you're after, then you're *definitely* using "push" motivation... with all the problems that entails.

Remember signpost #4 from chapter 2? "What pushes you forward, is holding you back." That is, the very thing you're afraid of *losing*, is the thing that keeps you from **winning**!

For example, if you're afraid that not finishing your thesis on time will mean you're a failure, then that very same fear will drain every ounce of motivation out of you to actually **do** anything about the thesis!

I know, this is a rather tough idea to swallow, especially if you were taught by parents and teachers (as most of us are) that negative motivation is the natural and *normal* way to get yourself (or anyone else) to do things.

But negative motivation is actually a **drug**. A dangerous and *addictive* drug. Because the more of it you *use*, the more of it you *need* to get

going in the future. And in the process, you’re burning up your body and its immune system with the stress load.

So it’s absolutely critical that you stop using it, *now*. (Remember my vow from chapter 2?)

But, because you’ve been using it for so long, for so many things, chances are good you don’t even **notice** you’re doing it any more!

And that’s what the “push test” is for, because it quickly reveals to you the **hidden negative motivation**, where you thought you were just uncertain about what you wanted.

Now, when I first discovered the problems with negative motivation, I thought the obvious thing to do would be to “reframe” or re-phrase all my goals so they were stated **positively**. Instead of “I have to do the dishes”, I would try to think “I want a clean kitchen.”

But this doesn’t work, because the *words* you use are not the key thing.

The key thing is how you **feel** about the goal...

### **Not what you *say* about the goal!**

And once again: what you **feel** is determined by what your robot brain *predicts* about the future, based on its when-then rules.

So, in chapter 7, we’ll be looking at how to *change* your brain’s when-then rules – and predictions – to fix this. But first, I want you to make a quick list of whatever comes to mind as things you want in life.

Then, after you’ve made the list, go back over it and ask yourself, one by one for each item on the list, “What happens if I **don’t** get this?” and write the answer down, along with whether you felt bad about it. Also, if you feel *good* thinking about the goal, check the “passes mmm test” box.

(By the way, if you’re using a journal, notebook, etc., feel free to just write your answers out free-form – no need to waste time duplicating the fancy table.)

Now, for any item where you *don’t* feel bad about not having it, and **do** feel *good* about having it, congratulations! You’ve cleared the “Desire” hurdle for that goal, and it doesn’t need any further trouble-shooting for this stage.



Desired Task, Goal, or Result	What happens if you <i>don't</i> get it?	Passes Mmm Test?

But for all the items where you **do** feel bad – either about trying to get the result, or about not getting it, you’ll need to save them for chapter 7, where we’ll look at how to *fix* those problems.

Finally, for the items where you don’t feel *bad*, but don’t feel **good**, either, read on! Because in the next section, you’re going to learn how to get this kind of “neutral” goal (starting with a very small one) to pass the “mmm” test...

To provide **powerful “pull” motivation...** *Instantly.*

## DESIRE, ON DEMAND!

So, I now want to draw your attention back to the little “favorite food” experiment we did at the start of this chapter.

First, I want you to notice just how **easy** it is to induce a state of desire and positive motivation. In particular, notice that you did *not* have to do any of the following things:

### Things That *Don't* Work To Motivate Yourself

- Working yourself up into a frenzy,
- Chanting affirmations about deserving it (or already having it)
- Thinking about how you “should” want it,
- Thinking about all the *steps* you would need to take before you could get it,
- Thinking about how *bad* it is that you don't **currently** have it, or
- Thinking about how *bad* it would be if you couldn't get it!

Because none of these things actually **work** to induce a *real* desire. (But strangely enough, these are often the very **first** steps we try when we want to motivate ourselves to do something!)

And yet, all you *really* needed to do to motivate yourself was:

1. Think of something you'd **like to have**,
2. Notice how **good** it would be if you actually had it (to the point of passing the “mmmm” test), and
3. Notice that you don't have it **yet**, but *could*.

And that is *all*. Once you did those three things, your brain *automatically* began preparing you to get what you wanted. (In fact, some people

probably already wandered off to the kitchen before reading the rest of this chapter!)

And, it will work for **any** goal, as long as you can think of it in a way that satisfies all three requirements.

In particular, it *must* pass the “mmmm” test: you must be able to feel **good** – *physically* – when you think about it being done or getting the result you want from it.

Now obviously, your favorite food passes the “mmmm” test (by definition)! But other things don’t. For example, if you *resent* having to do taxes or clean house, for example, then you will be feeling **bad** about the goal, and thus fail the “mmmm” test.

Of course, those bad feelings are *also* coming from your brain’s automatic prediction system! And in the next chapter, I’ll show you how to get *rid* of those types of feelings, using RMI to change your brain’s “when-then” rules – and thus its *predictions*.

But first, I want you to get acquainted with how it feels to create desire to do something **neutral**.

Something that’s not so big of a task that you feel overwhelmed or fearful or resentful about it, but at the same time, enough of a challenge that you don’t immediately go “mmmm” about it!

*Special Note: If you’ve already seen my “Irresistible Instant Motivation” video and done the exercise as I demonstrated in the video, then you don’t need to repeat it unless you want to get more practice.*

*But you should still read over the full instructions here, as well as the rest of this chapter, for many details and nuances that I couldn’t squeeze into a short YouTube video. For example, I provide a lot more troubleshooting information here than I did in that video*

*Meanwhile, if you haven’t seen it yet, head on over to <http://thinkingthingsdone.com/chapter6video> to have a look!*

So pick some **small** task about which you are emotionally **neutral**. I recommend something like cleaning off your desk, straightening a small drawer, tidying up a shelf, something like that. It should be something you could actually do in just a few minutes if you were *motivated* to, but which you wouldn't ordinarily feel motivated to do.

(There are *two* reasons to pick something small, by the way. First, you're less likely to think negatively about it, and second, when this exercise motivates you to **do** it, you won't spend all day on it and forget to finish the chapter!)

Finally, for practice purposes, the task should also be very **visual**: you should be able to clearly *see* the difference between it being **done**, and *not done*.

Now, none of these requirements are actually limitations of the overall approach. And by the time you get to the end of this book, you should be able to do the same thing to get started on even large complex projects that you have negative feelings about, and even ill-defined, non-visual goals.

But learning this process is a bit like learning to drive: it's best to start somewhere with less *traffic*, so you aren't distracted too much from the basics! So, let's run through the steps real quick:

---

### *Step One: See It Done*

Alright, so here's what you need to do. First, take a look at the desk or shelf or whatever it is.

Next, close your eyes, and ask yourself, “what would I like this to look like when it's **done**?”

We're using RMI here, so don't consciously **try** to visualize an answer, but just *allow* your mind to respond instead. Remember, we do things the *effortless* way here! (If you need a refresher on RMI, see the last section of chapter 3, “How To Get Inside Your Own Head”, and feel free to repeat the exercise there too.)

### *Step Two: Getting To “Mmmm”*

Once you get back some kind of idea, ask yourself, “What would it

feel like to have it done?”, and continue to question yourself until you find a feeling that passes the “mmm” test.

For example, if you are cleaning your desk, you might ask questions like, “How proud will I feel when people see how organized I am?”, or “How awesome is this going to look?” or, “How nice is it going to feel to have all this working space available?”

In other words, identify what it is that you *like* about the result, and focus on that. Not by straining or “concentrating”, but by simply **wondering** about it.

Remember, RMI is just a relaxed state of inquiry: we are asking your robot brain to give us answers, and in the process, we are gently *guiding* matters to its attention. Just like my questions at the start of this chapter guided your attention to food, so too must you gently guide your robot’s attention to the things that would be **good** about *having* your result.

If you are not getting to *physical* pleasure – feeling “mmm” or “ahh”, or “oh, that’d be nice” – then double-check to make sure you are not doing any **thinking** yourself. You should only be asking questions and noticing things, in a spirit of genuine *curiosity*, like, “hmm... I wonder what it would be like if this were already finished?”

Check also that you are not thinking extraneous, irrelevant thoughts, like how long it will take you to do or what you would need to do first, or how you never get enough time to keep things clean, or that you’re a slob... or **anything** except being in that state of...

### “Hmm... I wonder?”

I’ll cover more troubleshooting procedures in just a moment, but for now I’m going to assume you got to a feeling of pleasure, and are ready to proceed to the last step:

#### *Step Three: Contrast and Hold*

Keep the image of the clean desk (or other finished task) in your mind, as well as the good **feeling** you have about it. Open your eyes, and look at the unfinished task, while continuing to mentally see and feel it *done*.

Do not take any action, or try to **do** anything. Simply continue seeing and feeling in your mind the clean desk or finished task, almost

as if it were right there in front of you.

Within ten to thirty seconds, you will begin to notice some effects. First, you may find your brain suggesting ideas like, “Hmm... I could just put that pen in the pen holder there...”

Don’t act on them just yet. Continue to hold, and notice how, the longer you sit there, the greater your desire to **do** something becomes!

In less than a minute, you should find that you have to *physically restrain yourself*, to keep from cleaning the desk or starting whatever task you’ve chosen. At this point, feel free to give in and allow yourself to actually start on it.

And by “allow”, I still don’t mean to **do** anything; I just mean that you can stop holding yourself *back* from doing it!

You should notice at this point that you aren’t even consciously thinking about what to pick up or put away; it will be as if your hands are just *automatically* doing things... **without you**.

And all *you* have to do...

Is sit back in your mind...

**And watch!**

And you might be surprised by just how **much** your “robot brain” can do on autopilot this way. Indeed, many people who’ve watched my “Irresistible Instant Motivation” video on YouTube have reported going on to clean their entire home or office after trying this, so use this method with caution!

Of course, that sort of overkill can only happen if you **don’t** have a strong *need* to clean your house, right now.

Because “need” equals feeling *bad*, which equals the “pain brain”... which means no **desire**.

Likewise, if you **resent** needing to clean it, are afraid you’ll do a bad job, etc., the same thing applies. *Any* negative emotion, in fact, can be enough to short-circuit this technique, if you’re feeling that emotion in connection with the task or any of its intermediate steps.

## HOW THIS WORKS... AND WHAT TO DO IF IT DOESN'T

*Brains, like computers, are not “user-friendly.” They do exactly what they’re **told** to do, not what you want them to do. Then you get mad at them because they don’t do what you meant to tell them to do!*

– Richard Bandler, Using Your Brain For A Change

**B**y far the most common mistake people make when trying to do this technique is imagining *doing* the task, instead of seeing it already *done*. (As I said in my video, “It’s ‘thinking things done’, not ‘thinking things to do!’”)

If you imagine *doing* the task, then you are only going to be motivated if it’s something you **enjoy** doing... in which case, you probably would’ve *done* it already!

But if you *don’t* enjoy doing it, then you’re basically asking your robot brain, “what comes after this?” and it predicts, “well, I’m not going to enjoy that.”

Why? Because your robot brain is *stupid*, that’s why!

More precisely, it can’t *think things through*. Logically, it makes sense that if you clean your desk, you will have a clean desk and it will be nice. But your robot brain can only think **one step at a time**. So if you give it the first step of “cleaning” as an input, it predicts things about the *cleaning*, not about what will happen *after* the cleaning!

So you don’t get a feeling of desire, and it then seems like the technique “doesn’t work”.

But in fact, it works just **fine**. You just told your brain to do the wrong thing!

However, if you see the thing as *already* done, and get your robot to predict what things will be like *afterwards*, then it is going to say, “Ah, yes, that would be really **nice** to have it done”, and turn on the desire juices.

And once the “desire juices” are flowing, your robot brain’s **planning** system automatically kicks in as well, trying to think of ways to get you the thing you desire. Not all of its plans will be workable, of course, and

to start out with, they may be incomplete. But basically, it will sit there trying to find actions that would move things *closer* to your goal.

That’s why it’ll begin with little, easy, obvious subtasks, like putting away the things that have a predefined place to go. Later, you’ll begin to have ideas about what to do with the rest, but while your brain is getting warmed up, it’ll go for the easy stuff first.

Now, if you pass the “mmm” test, and have no emotional blocks that come up during the process, you should have absolutely no trouble with this exercise. And most of the time, if you get past the “mmm” test, the only way an emotional block can come up is if you get interrupted, notice some other project that needs attention, or discover that there’s an important step in your task that you didn’t anticipate and can’t automatically complete.

But if one of those things happens, *relax!* The goal for this exercise was just to get you to see how desire gets you to **start** a task. Staying focused and finishing are in later chapters! So, if you got as far as *starting*, you’ve learned to do this correctly.

(You can think of it as being like your first driving lesson: things like parallel parking and collision avoidance are just not on the agenda for this chapter!)

Because all we really care about for this chapter is getting past the “mmm” test, and seeing for yourself how motivated it gets you when you contrast your **positive vision** with the *current state* of the task.

And if you *didn’t* get to that point, let’s troubleshoot!

### *Troubleshooting Steps*

The first things to check are always the **basics**. As much as you might hate it when a tech-support person wants you to check that your printer is plugged in, sometimes the problem really *is* that simple!

In this case, the basics to check are the RMI basics. After “thinking things to-do”, the most common cause of failure in this exercise is trying to **do** things with your mind and micromanage. Check back in the last section of chapter 3, and re-read the section on RMI, paying close attention to all the DON’Ts, to make sure you’re not doing any of them.

Add to that list, the “Things That *Don’t* Work To Motivate Your-



self” earlier in this chapter, and make sure you’re not doing any of *those*, either!

Next, if you can’t seem to find anything **positive** about your task being *finished*, go back and apply the “push test”, to make sure it’s not something you’re **negatively** motivated about.

Ask yourself, “what happens if I don’t do this?” or “what happens if this doesn’t get done?” and check for bad feelings. If you feel bad, then it’s not a good candidate for learning: you’ll need to wait until you’ve learned (in chapter 7) to get rid of negative feelings before you can do this one. Feel free to pick something else.

And, make sure that you pick a small, *visual* task, that you aren’t experiencing any noticeable negative feelings about. (For that matter, if you’re feeling very bad about something unrelated, you may wish to try again when you’re more relaxed.)

Finally, remember that every technique in this book is an *effortless* technique: if you are struggling or experiencing effort, you are either **doing it wrong**, or have encountered a **mental or emotional block**. Or both!

In fact, it’s most commonly the case that people do this wrong precisely *because* of a mental block. (For example, if you believe on a deep level that success requires “hard work”, you may have trouble relaxing enough to do the exercise properly!)

So, if you have tried everything you can think of, and made sure to avoid all the mistakes I’ve listed, here’s what you need to do:

Write down a “when-then” rule for the problem you’re facing. For example, “WHEN I try to think of a clean desk, THEN my hands start shaking and I feel kind of queasy in my stomach.” If you have more than one, write them **all** down.

Then, in the next chapter, I will show you how to use your when-then’s as **troubleshooting tests**, to identify the limiting belief *behind* the pattern... and eliminate it. Then, you can come back and try the exercise again.

In the meantime, however, just write down your when-then’s, and pick something *else* to work on for this exercise. Because it would be best if you successfully use it to get started on some task, before you continue

to the next chapter.

However, if you try it on three things without success, make sure you keep the list of when-then’s you found for all of them, and then go ahead with the next chapter anyway. (You’ll just have a bigger list of blocks to troubleshoot at first!)

### *Yes, You CAN...*

Now, most people fall into one of two categories around this exercise: either:

1. They don’t successfully complete the exercise, and think this all sounds “too good to be true”, OR..
2. They do it successfully... and don’t understand how something that feels so good can actually *work*!

But the truth is, this process is something your brain does **all** the time, virtually all day long. You just aren’t paying *attention*, because it’s stuff you **normally** do.

Like, let’s say you get a sudden craving for some orange juice. Your brain’s planning system automatically routes you to the fridge, then if that doesn’t work, perhaps you walk to the store or get in your car. The actual *steps* – in the literal sense of walking to the fridge and car, not to mention figurative steps like driving to the store and back – are all generated **automatically** by your robot brain and carried out without you paying much attention, if any, to the process.

The only difference between the exercises in this chapter and what you do all the time, is that here, you’re actually **paying attention** to what’s going on! In your everyday life, you would typically be thinking about something *else*, while your robot brain handles all the details for you.

In fact, you can have the same sort of spooky “my-body-is-a-robot” experience as this exercise produces, just by *paying attention* when you do routine things like walking or driving. Don’t take over the *process* of walking or driving, though: that’ll lead to a fall or an accident! Just pay *attention*, and you’ll soon notice you’re *not* the one making all the decisions.

You’re just the one who takes **credit** for them!

So, this process is the 100% normal, all-natural way you get motivated and plan things **all day long**... for the things you're "naturally successful" at.

Which means that, short of physical brain damage (at a level that would likely leave you institutionalized!), your brain has the equipment to do this **built-in**, and you are *already* using it.

So, if you're not successful at using it "on purpose", then you have a "software" problem, not a "hardware" one.

And that means you can either *learn* to do it right, or, if there's a "software conflict" blocking you from learning or doing it right, then you can learn how to **delete** the block.

So remember to keep the "life mechanic"'s attitude: if it doesn't work, there must be a *cause*. And if there is a cause, you can *find* it through systematic testing.

And when you find it, you can **fix** it.

Sometimes, though, the thing that keeps people from learning or doing this...

Is a belief that it's *wrong* to feel good!

## FEELING GOOD IS THE BEST KIND OF GOOD

*The strangest and most fantastic fact about negative emotions is that people actually worship them.*

*I think that, for an ordinary mechanical Man, the most difficult thing to realize is that his own and other people's negative emotions have no value whatever and do **not** contain anything noble, anything beautiful, or anything strong...*

*The only thing good about them is that, being quite useless and artificially created by imagination and identification, they can be destroyed without any loss. And this is the only chance of escape that Man has.*

– P.D. Ouspensky, *The Psychology Of Man's Possible Evolution*

**N**ow, even *I* used to think that feeling *good* about your goals was

unrealistic, immature, and maybe even **immoral**... to name just a few of my objections!

After all, I learned as a child – and who doesn’t? – that “toughness” is a virtue, that the world is a hard place full of adult responsibilities, and that you “can’t just go around feeling **good** all the time!”

And even after I realized *intellectually* that these beliefs were wrong and meaningless, it didn’t change them on the **emotional** level.

My robot brain had learned rules like “WHEN you seek pleasure, THEN you are bad and should be ashamed”, and would carry them out automatically... even if I intellectually realized there was **nothing to feel bad about**.

And as a result of these kinds of rules, it can be very difficult for some people to get used to the idea of using the “gain brain” (i.e., being pleasure-seeking), as a **way of life**.

Even if you understand intellectually that there’s nothing wrong with it, and intellectually believe selfishness is a virtue!

So, I’m not going to use up much space here on intellectual arguments, though I will summarize a few key points. Mainly, what I want to do is just list some of the major categories of emotional beliefs and objections that your robot brain might have learned in childhood (either explicitly or implicitly), so that you can see if you *recognize* any of them:

---

***Belief #1: “If I only do what I like, I won’t get anything done”***

Fact: When you procrastinate, do you really *enjoy* the TV-watching or internet-browsing that you’re doing? What you’re really doing is not pleasure-seeking, but **pain avoidance**. You don’t choose your procrastination activities based on what will give you the most pleasure, but what will provide the most immediate form of *pain relief*.

***Belief #2: “Pleasure-seeking is a disease that leads to excess and addiction”***

Fact: Excess and addiction are also pain-avoidance, not pleasure-seeking. When you’re *really* seeking pleasure, you don’t overindulge, because it *stops feeling good*. You eat till you’re full, not stuffed, and drink till you’re buzzed, not puking drunk.

For every area where you compulsively **over**-indulge, there exists some kind of **pain** you're self-medicating for. (And I'll have a lot more to say about this in a future book, tentatively titled, "The Holes In Your Soul".)

*Belief #3: "It's wrong to seek pleasure when so many people are suffering"*

Fact: Do you treat people better when you're feeling *good*, or when you're feeling *bad*? When you're finding what you can enjoy about their company, or when you're feeling **obligated** to be there? When you're there out of *love*, or there out of *fear*?

As the Dutch saying goes, "Happy people don't steal." Being happy doesn't take anything away from anybody else, and it also means you don't need to go around trying to get **them** to make *you* happy!

*Belief #4: "It's immature and unrealistic to be so irresponsible"*

Fact: There's nothing irresponsible about pleasure-seeking, because when you're in the "gain brain", you care about *tomorrow* as well as today. And being responsible for your **dreams** actually makes you feel *good*, not burdened!

The truth is that our parents' and teachers' "responsibility" speeches are directed at guilting us into doing what **they** *want us to want*, not what we *actually* want. But unless you're still living at home, the life your parents wanted you to live isn't *relevant*. It's **your** life, not theirs... even if your emotional brain still thinks otherwise!

*Belief #5: "In the real world, we all have to do things we hate"*

Fact: *Everything* we want in life has a price, but if all we ever did was gripe about **prices**, we'd never buy anything, and we'd slowly starve to death. Certainly there are things we don't *like* doing, but that doesn't mean we can't **enjoy** them, anyway!

Just because a (US) football player hates getting tackled to the ground by a bunch of other football players, it doesn't mean he doesn't still *love the game*. He's just willing to pay the *price*, and pays it gladly. (Something we'll be talking about more in chapter 8.)

And oddly enough, when you're focused on what you *want*, the price never seems as bad in the **moment** of paying, as it does when you think

about it beforehand! It may be true that “no pain” makes “no gain”, but it’s also true that “more gain” makes “less pain”. Conversely, *anticipating* pain makes it **worse**, by adding emotional *suffering* and *effort* to whatever **real** work is required!

---

Did any of these beliefs ring true for you, or make you *feel* something? If so, you probably have some related when-then rules embedded in your emotional robot brain.

And ironically enough, the way we **learn** a lot of these attitudes is actually based on the same pleasure-seeking mechanism these attitudes put down!

You see, we copy our parents’ attitudes and beliefs, because it makes us feel *grown up* – something that, to a child, is a feeling of **pleasure**.

But, once we master these attitudes and beliefs, they become a **semi-permanent** feature of our robot brains. They get refined into precise “when-then” rules, that tell you how to *feel* about certain ideas – which then causes your logical brain to provide supporting arguments on demand.

And even when you later “grow out of” an idea by *intellectually* disagreeing with it, it doesn’t stop you from still *feeling* – and **acting!** – as if these beliefs were **true**.

But whether it’s one of the above five beliefs, or any of the many dozens of other possible “when-then” blocks or triggers you’ve encountered and written down during the last few exercises, there *is* a way to get **rid** of them.

A way that’s quick... painless.... and permanent.

(Effortless, in other words!)

And as you’ll discover in the next chapter... You’ve actually **done** it before.

You just need to know **how**...

To do it *on purpose*.