



What's the Opposite of Success? It's Not Failure!

Three Month Vacation Podcast

Sean: Hi. This is Sean D'Souza from Psychotactics.com and you are listening to the three-month vacation podcast. This podcast isn't some magic trick about working less. Instead, it's about how to really enjoy your work and enjoy your vacation time.

What is 15,000 multiplied by 365? Why would you ask yourself such a question? I'm not really sure but I ask myself the question at the start of the year and the answer was mind boggling. It was 5,475,000. That's 5,475,000 steps that you can do in a year if you do 15,000 a day. It was mind boggling to me for a very simple reason: I could never reach that goal. At least that's what I thought. I could never, ever reach that goal.

Then I thought about my parents. I thought of my grandparents, my great grandparents and all of them would have reached that goal. Every single one of them would have reached that goal every single year.

My parents, my grandparents, my great grandparents, they'd never known what it was to go to a gym. They never knew what it was to diet. They ate pretty much anything they wanted and any amounts of it and then they drank stuff. In the case of my dad I know that he smoked a lot as well and at 75 he was still riding his motorcycle.

So why did I got down this bizarre path of calculating these 5,000,000 steps a year? The reason I went there was because I heard an interview somewhere. This doctor was talking about the opposite of success. In his case, he was talking about obesity and weight issues. He says, "The opposite of it is not standing still. The opposite of it is decay."

That struck me like a thunderbolt. The opposite of success is not not being successful. It's decay. It's almost like you've decided not to brush your teeth anymore and what happens. We're not really talking about standing still, are we? We're talking about decay. We're talking about stuff going really bad.



In today's episode I want to talk about three things. The first is about learning, the second about fitness and the third is about achievements. Let's start off with the first one which is learning.

I'm not a neuroscientist but I know enough about the brain to realize that the brain works on a [dimmer 03:20] setting. When we don't learn something it doesn't exactly forget that something, but it sets it on dimmer.

Last year, my niece Marsha and I we learned 150 countries and 150 capitals in sequence. We would go at high speed going across the continents Europe, Africa, North Asia, South Asia, The Pacific and of course, South, Central and North America.

A year has passed and if you asked us to go through that sequence at high speed, first we couldn't do it but also, we can't always remember the capitals. We know where they are. We haven't forgotten, but our brains are on a dimmer switch.

When you look at most of us, our real learning took place when we were in school and university and we spent many hours a day learning. Then after that we've done very little. We've learned to program here and there. We've studied some course and done some workshop, but that's about it. Technically, we're in a state of decay.

The problem with this lack of learning is that we're not working at our full efficiency. We're working in our full capacity but not our full efficiency because full efficiency means that you could do the same job in one-fifth a day or maybe one-tenth a day, but you're spending all day doing stuff.

Like writing an article for instance. Most of us would spend a half day or a day writing an article. You might spend a month or two writing a book. You could do it in a week. Better still, you could do a better book in a week than most people could do in a month or two.

The decay really takes its toll and it takes its toll in terms of energy because now we're so tired that we can't do much. Of course, because we're working all the time we don't take breaks. I'm not even talking about weekend breaks or month-long breaks. I'm just talking about breaks during the day. Just half an hour here, an hour there, two hours there.



We've entered a state of decay. We no longer have control over our lives. It's almost like being unable to brush our teeth. We're not really standing still. We're moving backwards.

Of course, the same thing applies to our fitness. Several years ago I went to the doctor and he called in my wife and he said, "This guy, his blood sugar is up, his cholesterol is up, his pressure is up. I don't know what you've been feeding him but he's got to change his habits."

I'm a bit of an iconoclast. I didn't actually change my habits. I wasn't that bad, anyway, but I definitely wasn't exercising as much as I should have been and so I started working. We started doing 10,000 steps a day.

I got a Fitbit about two years ago and that caused me to park further away from the store instead of getting the closest spot near the store. It caused me to walk to the store. Often, I just leave my car behind. In fact, the car got so useless I had to sell it. We still have one car but the point is we had a couple of cars but I was using the car so infrequently that we had spider webs on it.

Even so, it was inconsistent. We'd walk a few days then not walk some days. If it is raining we wouldn't walk. That consistency wasn't in place. Then I realized we could do 5,000,000 steps. Actually, you could do 5,475,000.

To do 50,000 steps a day is phenomenal. It is very hard to keep up to that level, but almost all of us could do about 3,000,000 steps a year. 3,000,000 steps a year. 3,000,000 steps a year that most of us aren't doing.

The reason why we aren't doing it is because we're not tracking it. We're not tracking it because we don't have a goal in place. We don't have those 3,000,000 or those 4,000,000 or those 5,000,000 steps.

Track it. Get a pedometer of some kind. It doesn't have to be a Fitbit, but start tracking it. The reason why I chose Fitbit is simply because it sinks up with all my friends and of course, we are competitive and that causes me to do better.

If I'm trying to compete with myself it's very easy to just give up. The Fitbit works for me, it might not work for you. Choose whatever you like. Get those 3,000,000 steps in, get those 5,000,000 steps in because the opposite of that is decay.



How do we know this to be true? Well, in my case, at least, I went back for the next test. The doctor said, "Whatever you're doing, that's great. Whatever you're eating, that's great." But I hadn't changed anything. I just changed the walking.

The opposite of success becomes decay. We have decay in learning, we have decay in fitness and we have decay in our achievements.

Let's talk a bit about achievement, shall we? I was sitting at the barber the other day and I had all these papers and pens in my hand and he was cutting my hair and he says, "What's all this stuff?" I said, "Well, that's my planning." Of course, you can see the amused look on his face, but that's what we had to do.

We went through maybe a year or two years of not planning on a regular basis. We'd make a plan but then we wouldn't look at that plan again. It didn't work for us. We pretended that Fridays didn't exist. Fridays weren't the day that we could meet any clients or do any stuff. We were going to plan on Friday.

Of course, you don't take the whole day to plan, but in the morning we'd go out, we'd sit at the café and we'd plan. It takes an hour sometimes, an hour and a half to plan the month and the year that's about to unfold.

It's bad enough to plan the week, but the month and the year, everything starts to shift and all your priorities start to shift and suddenly it's taking a good hour and a half to just get that plan moving.

Then as you're going through the week you're looking into your plan you'll find that hey, the plan is going off tangent. So even during the week you have to keep looking in the plan and you have to keep shifting your priorities and things that you have to do and the things that you haven't done.

A lot of people get very stressed with that. They go, "Well, I haven't done this." The idea is that you're re-negotiating. Most people think that somehow they have to conquer that to-do list and you never have to conquer the to-do list because you're never going to conquer the to-do list.

A to-do list is like the Himalayan mountain range. You climb to the top of one mountain and what do you see? There are hundreds of other mountains. It's a mountain range. That's your to-do list. All you have to do is re-negotiate it.



When you haven't achieve certain things, well you might see it as a sense of failure. But in reality, it's how life unfolds. There are millions of things to do and they're not going to go away and all you have to do is to keep planning and keep re-negotiating. As someone once said, "Planning is priceless but plans are useless," and in planning too we have decay.

The opposite of planning is just randomness. The more you're planning, the more you're keeping control over things, the less you're allowing decay to set in. The biggest problem with decay is we're not able to see it as it's happening around us.

We moved into this house 10 years ago and it was a beautiful house. The garden looked pretty good and the fence looked pretty good. I never really saw the decay. As we lived in the house I didn't really notice that decay happening. We were tending the [inaudible 13:01], we were pruning the hedges, mowing the lawns, doing what you do.

Then we had someone come in and do a landscape design and redo the garden. I took some photographs. I took some photographs before and after. It was amazing, especially when you look at the photograph several months later.

It's absolutely gobsmacking amazing. It's amazing how much decay had set in in the previous gut; how terrible the tiles looked; how battered the fence looked. I couldn't believe. It.

Our lives are filled with things that we need to learn, the fitness that we need to keep and the achievements that make us who we are.

If we don't have that time to learn and we don't have the money and we don't have the resources to learn, then decay sets in. The same thing happens with our fitness. We may be told by everyone that this is okay and yet we know when we're unfit. We know exactly when we're overweight. We know exactly when we're obese.

We know that we have to make some changes. You set the goal, in our case it's the 5,000,000 mark, and you go for it. Finally, you look at your achievements and all of that planning make such a big difference because the future is now.



We all hope that in the future we will write a book, we will go and visit some place, we will do this and we will do that. That future depends so much on the planning that we do today. The re-negotiation that we do every week and probably every day or two. All of this stops to decay the rot from setting in.

I used to think that the opposite of success was to be unsuccessful. Now that whole paradigm has shifted in my head. The paradigm is that it's decay. It's rot. We are the only people who can stop the rot.

What's the one thing that we can do today? Well, there is the 5,000,000 Club and it's not \$5,000,000, it's 5,000,000. Those 5,000,000 enable us do a lot of other stuff as well because I'm able to listen to audio books while walking or a podcast and so I learned and then the achievement comes from there. From that fitness of body comes a fitness of the brain and the fitness of our business and our downtime, our vacation time, our relaxation time.

The first of January has long passed, but we can have our resolution today. Get on the 3,000,000 step mark or the 5,000,000 step mark or the 5,475,000 step mark.

That brings us to the end of this episode. If you like this episode you probably also like [episode 14](#) and that is about getting things done and how the trigger plays a role. There was also a very popular episode, that's [episode 17](#), which is how to slowdown even in the midst of chaos.

If you haven't already done so, when you leave a review on iTunes or if you send us your review, you can also get a free book which is *Outwitting Resistance*. It's a really cool book and of course, it stops you from this whole rot and decay.

There's also the [workshop in Silver Spring](#). That's outside Washington, D.C. at the Sheraton on the 5th, 6th and 7th of May. This is about information products on how to construct that book. It's not about writing the book. That content you already have in your head.

This is more about what makes the book consumable. You'll learn how to construct a book that customers read from start to finish or a course or a webinar or a report that they go from start to finish just like you're doing on this podcast right now.



What is it that causes people to abandon stuff in the middle and not complete it? That's what we're going to cover in this workshop. It's pretty much one speaker and we're going to cover one topic and we're going to go three days. You're actually going to implement stuff rather than just sit there in the audience and listen. To meet us and to meet Elmo go to psychotactics.com/dc.

That's me, Sean D'Souza, saying bye from psychotactics.com and the three-month vacation. Bye-bye.

Oh and before I go—Can I ask you a small favour?

Would you be kind [enough to leave a review](#). Your review, rating (and subscription) are most appreciated. They help the rating of the show and I read every single review. And if you have any feedback, you also want to write to me at sean@psychotactics.com. Anything you'd like to see or listen to anything you don't like, just write to me at sean@psychotactics.com. I actually implement the feedback.

You can do this from your phone or your computer. [Here's a graphic, if you need any help](#).

Next Steps

If you've been a subscriber, then you know that you automatically get the downloads on your phone or on your computer if you subscribe to iTunes. If you don't have iTunes you can get —**Three Month Vacation podcast** via email, RSS or Stitcher. Click on any of the links below. The best button is the Email button, because you get goodies too (goodies found nowhere else).

[iTunes](#)

[Email \(special goodies\)](#)

[Stitcher](#) (non-iTunes)

[RSS](#)

This episode has been brought to you by the Three Month Vacation which is at Psychotactics.com.