

Get Traction with a 30-Day Action Intensive

Ideas not coupled with action never become bigger than the brain cells they occupied.

– Arnold H. Glasgow

To get where you want to go, sometimes you need to throw quality to the wind and go for quantity. Give up the quest for perfection, break the jam loose, and *make things happen*.

Perhaps nothing embodies that idea better than NaNoWriMo, the National Novel Writing Month. Each November, thousands of participants try to write a 175 page novel in the space of one month. The idea isn't to churn out a masterpiece. It's to liberate the writer from the need to be good so they can write, explore, and learn. As the organizers describe it, "The kamikaze approach forces you to lower your expectations, take risks, and write on the fly."

There's a great parallel between writing and pursuing your passion. Just like a writer, it's easy to stare at that blank page (the future) with a sense of writer's block (what am I going to create, and how am I going to create it?).

Maybe that block comes from a perceived need to have everything in order before you begin. This leads to that familiar analysis paralysis, where we mistake preparation for progress and wind up going nowhere. At some point, preparation becomes an excuse not to act.

It might also be because you can't see where the story goes beyond the first couple pages. Honestly, it's OK not to know. You can't always see where your journey is going to take you until you round the bend and see where the path leads. Movement creates its own possibilities that were never visible while you were standing and preparing.

Sometimes what you come up when you focus on making things happen forms a lump of clay that you can then sculpt into

a more refined version. Other times you can go back through and find the nuggets of gold that would never have come out if you had been intent on getting everything perfect from the start. Still other times your path will lead you in surprising and interesting directions, simply because you have been on the move.

Take a look at your own journey. What could you do in thirty days? What do you need to get started on without worrying about “doing it right?”

Putting It to Work

- *Set a 30-day goal.* Sit down and brainstorm answers to the question, “What could I do in the next thirty days that would be a massive step in the right direction?” Is there a project you need to pursue? A book you need to write? People you need to interview? Contacts you need to make?
- *Start. Today.* Don’t plan it. Don’t worry about getting it right. Just take the first step and keep on taking more, day after day, for the next 30 days.