

Adventure Main Text

Hello, this is AJ. Here we are again for our next lesson. Now this lesson, once again, is based on a small excerpt, a small section from the book *The 4-Hour Workweek* by Tim Ferriss. Again, I highly recommend this book. It's a fantastic book, just a great book. I love it.

And this lesson is called "Adventure", one of my favorite words, in fact, adventure. And in this section Tim Ferriss talks about what he calls "ADD for Adults." Now it's a bit of a joke because ADD means Attention Deficit Disorder. You don't need to understand that. But, what it means basically, is its children who cannot concentrate. So usually it's something for children and it's a child who cannot concentrate. And usually this happens in school, right? They can't concentrate and so the doctors or the school or the teachers they decide "Your child has ADD. Your child has a problem. He can't concentrate."

Now, in my opinion, this is mostly a bullshit diagnosis. This is mostly a bullshit problem. Because the real problem is bored because the school sucks! So, in my opinion, ADD is actually quite healthy. Healthy children get ADD because they're bored in school because the schools suck, so usually a teaching problem. In fact, in my opinion, always, 100%, the teachers and the school are responsible. You don't blame the child. You don't blame the student, even if it's an adult student. You have to take responsibility.

Anyway, this ADD thing he's kind of joking about this. But he has a different definition for ADD for adults, not for children. He calls it "Adventure Deficit Disorder." Deficit means you don't have enough. Disorder is like a disease. So adult ADD means adults who don't have enough adventure in their life, they don't have enough adventure in their life. And Tim Ferriss believes this is a very serious disease that most adults have.

So what he's saying is most adults are damn boring, they're boring. They have no adventure in their life. They have no excitement in their life. And I agree, most of the adults I have met are boring, there's no adventure in their life.

So, Tim Ferriss talks about getting more adventure into your life. Not just having exciting goals, but having your entire life be an adventure. It means you're trying new things, you're growing. You're doing difficult things sometimes, sometimes scary things, but exciting, too. So let me read this section and then I'll talk more about it.

“Adventure Deficit Disorder”— Somewhere between college graduation and your second job a chorus of people enters your internal dialogue in your mind, in your head. They say ‘Be realistic and stop pretending. Life isn’t like the movies, stop dreaming.’

If you’re five years old and you say you want to be an astronaut your parents tell you that you can be anything you want to be. It’s harmless, like telling a child that Santa Clause exists. If you’re 25 and you announce that you want to start a new circus the response is quite different. People say ‘Be realistic, become a lawyer, become an accountant or a doctor. Have babies and raise your babies to repeat the same cycle.’

If you do manage to ignore all the doubters and you start your own business, adventure deficit disorder does not disappear it just takes a different form. For example, when I started my own company in 2001 it was with a clear goal in mind. My goal was to make \$1,000 per day. And my goal was to make \$1,000 per day from passive income, to make money whether I was banging my head on a computer or cutting my toenails on the beach. This business was to be an automated source of cash flow.

But, if you look at my chronology, it is obvious that this didn’t happen until a meltdown forced it despite the income. Why? Well, my goal wasn’t specific enough. I had not defined alternative activities that would replace the initial workload. Therefore I just continued working, even though there was no financial need.

I needed to feel productive and I had no other activities. This is how most people work until death. Most people think ‘I’ll just work until I have \$1,000 or \$1,000,000 and then I’ll do what I want.’ However, if you don’t define the alternative activities that dollar figure will increase indefinitely so that you can avoid the fear-inducing uncertainty of not know what to do next. This is why both employees and entrepreneurs become fat men in red BMWs.”

Alright, that’s quite a little section there. Tim Ferriss has quite strong ideas, as you can see, about life and about working. In his opinion, working for money is a bad thing. You want to work for passion. You want to work for excitement. You want to have a life full of passion and excitement, you’re life should not be dominated by trying to get money.

But he says what happens is that a lot of times we work and work and work not because we need money, just because we’re afraid to do something else. We don’t know what else to do. For example, a lot of people who retire, after they retire they lose their passion for life, they’re very unhappy. That seems crazy. Why are they unhappy they’re free? It’s because they don’t know what else to do. They have no other dreams.

So what he’s saying is that we often work a lot, just to avoid thinking about our life. Because we have no imagination, we’ve lost our imagination, we’ve lost our dreams, and so we just focus on work all the time. And, you know, I can relate to this story.

This story sounds similar to my own story. Because after about one year, after I started my company Effortless English, well after one year I was making enough money. I didn't need to work and yet I was still on the computer all the time. I still do it sometimes, on the computer checking the advertising, checking the sales all the time. Why am I doing this? Well because I haven't created enough other activities that are exciting and passionate for me.

Now I'm doing that now, but I have to be careful about this. I have to be careful that I don't focus on work just to avoid boredom, just to avoid adventure. I have to make myself be adventurous. That's why I travel all the time. That's why I spend three to four months in Southeast Asia. So I break my pattern so I don't just get stuck in this same boring routine doing the same thing all the time. I force myself to break that, every year, break it, and go someplace different than San Francisco.

And so you need to do that, too. You have to find some adventure in your life. Go someplace new. Find a new crazy goal, something strange and wonderful. Don't get stuck just working, working, working. And if you have a job where you're forced to work, work and work all the time, you know, get a new job for God sakes. Find a new job.

Even if you start your own company, don't let the company own you. You own the company the company does not own you. Make sure you create a company that will give you plenty of free time so that you can have adventure in your life, so you can travel, where you can learn amazing new things, different things. Not for money, just to learn, just to enjoy, just for the challenge and the adventure.

So find other activities outside of work. If work is your only focus in life you're going to become boring. That's why I'm taking singing lessons and I'm practicing singing every day. Because I've always wanted to do music and to be a singer, so now I'm doing it and it's exciting. I love it. That's why I travel to Thailand and to Malaysia and why I want to go to Vietnam and to South India and I want to go all over the world. Because it's an adventure, I don't know what's going to happen. There's always a surprise every day when I do that. It's not the same boring routine all the time.

And so I encourage you to do the exact same thing. Do something crazy, do something different. Bring surprise into your life. Bring variety into your life. Bring adventure into your life. Go find it. If you do that you'll find that, again, your energy and your love for life are going to increase so much. So I challenge you, go find adventure.

Have you been just doing the same thing every day, every week, every year after year? Well it's never too late, change it. Break that pattern and just do something crazy and fun and adventurous. You will not regret it, you'll be so happy you did it. And then make it a habit again and again. Always be finding new adventures, breaking your patterns.

Any time you just find yourself doing the same thing again, again, again, break it and do something different, do something new. Even if it's crazy, just do it. Travel to some new place you've never been. And don't just travel, don't plan the vacation, go without a guide book. Try that. You've never been there, no guide book, oh my God. That will be fun. That will be surprising and interesting. That will be adventurous.

Or start some crazy new project, even in your hometown. Go do something totally different that you've never done before. Start breaking those mental patterns then you'll get more creativity in your life and more energy.

Alright, I will see you next time. I want to hear about your adventures. Again, go to the Forums, tell us your adventures. What crazy, fun, amazing things are you doing now or have you decided to do soon? Tell us. Tell us so we can become excited. Maybe we'll try it, too. Maybe we'll join you.