

THE BIG IDEAS

It's Time

To turn up the heat.

Winning Olympic Gold

Little things matter.

212° Focus

What's your ONE Thing?

Prune the Diversions

What needs to go?

And-Then-Some

The secret to success.

212° The Extra Degree

Extraordinary Results Begin with One Small Change

BY SAM PARKER & MAC ANDERSON · SIMPLE TRUTHS © 2016 · 96 PAGES

“Raising the temperature of water by **one extra degree** means the difference between something that is simply very hot and something that generates enough force to power a machine—a beautiful, uncomplicated metaphor that ideally should feed our every endeavor—consistently pushing us to make the **extra effort** in every task we undertake. 212° serves as a forceful drill sergeant with its motivating and focused message, while adhering to a scientific law—a natural law.

It reminds us that seemingly small things can make tremendous differences. So **simple** is the analogy that you can stop reading right now, walk away with the opening thought firmly planted in your mind, and benefit from it for the rest of your life.

That's the purpose of this book—to help you internally define and take ownership of the most fundamental principle behind achieving life results beyond your expectations. This simple idea has a singular focus—an actionable focus.”

~ Sam Parker and Mac Anderson from *212° The Extra Degree*

212°.

It's that extra degree where all the magic happens.

We've talked about the concept in various contexts but I didn't pick up the book until I was working on a +1 called “[Are You a Should-Head?](#)” inspired by Rory Vaden's wisdom from [Take the Stairs](#) (in which he references this little book).

It's a SUPER short book. Like jumbo-short.

And...

Over 1 million people have purchased a copy!

To put it in perspective, this is one of the few books my brother has. (I think I got all the “read every book out there” genes in the family! Hah.)

Although I hesitated to do a Note on it because it's so short, I realized that some of the highest-impact Notes are on the shortest little books like James Stockdale's speech/essay [Courage Under Fire](#) and James Allen's [As a Man Thinketh](#).

So... Here we are!

I think you'll dig the little book. It's co-written by one of the guys who started Successories (Mac Anderson) and it's the perfect gift for a friend who might be into the basic idea of improving their lives but not *that* into reading. (Get a copy [here](#).)

With that, I say we jump in and have fun turning up the heat with a few of my favorite Ideas!

IT'S TIME TO TURN UP THE HEAT

“At 211°, water is **HOT**.

At 212°, it **BOILS**.

And with boiling water, comes **STEAM**.

And steam can power a **LOCOMOTIVE**.

It's your life. You are responsible for your results.

IT'S TIME TO TURN UP THE HEAT.”

What do you get at 211°?

Hot water.

But what if you jack it up to 212°? ... Just O N E little degree hotter...

You get steam. Which creates enough power to move a train or a steamboat.

Or your life.

We've talked about this in a few different places.

Pop quiz: Do you remember what this whole thing is technically called?

Answer: **Activation energy**.

Michael Lardon is the one who first defined it for us in [Finding Your Zone](#). Here's how he puts it: “Activation energy is the energy required to start a chemical reaction. For example, you may not know that paper burns at 451 degrees Fahrenheit and does not ignite at 450 degrees. Now imagine yourself lost in a forest, cold, needing warmth. You invest energy by rubbing two sticks together, causing friction in hope of igniting some paper and leaves. You create heat by your efforts and even raise the friction area's temperature up to 450 degrees without successfully creating fire. Sadly, you quit in discouragement, not knowing that the activation energy is 451 degrees. However, if you push a little harder and create a little more heat and raise the temperature one degree, the chain reaction occurs and the fire ignites— burning without more effort, burning by itself.

Great champions know that if they push a little more and prepare better than their competitors, they will move past the threshold and consequently set the stage to enter into the Zone. The difference between good and great is immeasurably small. Sometimes all it takes is a bit more perseverance and you find yourself at the next level. This process of giving that little extra builds upon itself and forms the foundation for great performances.”

Then we have Orison Swett Marden who puts it this way in his classic [He Can Who Thinks He Can](#): “Before water generates steam, it must register two hundred and twelve degrees of heat. Two hundred degrees will not do it; two hundred and ten will not do it. The water must boil before it will generate enough steam to move an engine, to run a train. Lukewarm water will not run anything.

A great many people are trying to move their life trains with lukewarm water—or water that is almost boiling—and they are wondering why they are stalled, why they cannot get ahead. They are trying to run a boiler with two hundred or two hundred and ten degrees of heat, and they cannot understand why they do not get anywhere.

Lukewarmness in his work stands in the same relation to man's achievement as lukewarm water does to the locomotive boiler. No man can hope to accomplish anything great in this world until he throws his whole soul, flings his force to his whole life, into it.”

How's your heat?

Would an extra degree do your soul some good?

WINNING OLYMPIC GOLD

“Many Olympic event winners are chosen by a measure of time or distance. In most of these events, the margin of victory between winning the **gold medal** and no medal at all is extremely small.

Men's slalom	0.84 seconds
Women's slalom	0.82 seconds
Men's four-man bobsleigh	0.40 seconds
Women's two-woman bobsleigh	1.01 seconds
Men's 500m speed skating	0.84 seconds
Women's 1000m speed skating	0.84 seconds

As I mentioned in the intro, my brother isn't a big book guy. But he IS a big sports fan.

One of the reasons he loves this book is the fact that the authors break down just how little separates the best from the almost-the-best to make their point about why the 1 degree matters.

As it turns out, my brother showed me his copy of the book on the day I drove down to be with him and his wife for his first appointment with his oncologist after the surgery that led to his cancer diagnosis.

And...

As it turns out, the Winter Olympics were on TV.

And...

As it turns out, the event that happened to be on TV while we were hanging out was the bobsled.

And...

Get this: The top two finishers TIED for the gold. They had the EXACT (goosebumps) same time (after four runs!) down to the hundredth of the second.

And, get this x2: The top three finishers were separated by only .05 seconds (!) while the fifth-placed team was only .28 seconds behind the gold-medal winners—PERFECTLY proving the point that little things matter.

Our mantra throughout my brother's metabolic protocol to conquer his cancer?

212°.

Olympic-athlete style.

(Fun fact that always makes me laugh at my brother's sheer awesomeness: He's been so all-in on with his nutrition that he can plan his meals “down to the walnut”—achieving an optimal macronutrient breakdown that hits his targets perfectly. Even BETTER than nearly all Olympic athletes.)

Spotlight back on YOU: What's the #1 area of your life you'd like to Optimize?

What would YOUR life look like if you added just one degree of awesome to it?

Remember: Little things matter.

212° FOCUS

“212° focus is critical to your success in business and also in life. However, I must admit that this is something that took me a while to learn. ‘More is better’ sounds reasonable, but I’ve learned the opposite is usually true. Less, I’ve discovered, is usually more. (This book is a good example.)

The reason, of course, is that there is something powerful about laserlike focus. Having simple, clearly defined goals can cut through the fog like a beacon in the night.”

I, too, have taken a while to learn that whole “less is more” wisdom.

(Laughing as I am STILL mastering this!!)

Of course, this is the whole point of Gary Keller’s great book [The ONE Thing](#) where he tells us: *“When you want the absolute best chance to succeed at anything you want, your approach should always be the same. Go small.*

‘Going small’ is ignoring all the things you could do and doing what you should do. It’s recognizing that not all things matter equally and finding the things that matter most. It’s a tighter way to connect what you do with what you want. It’s realizing that extraordinary results are directly determined by how narrow you can make your focus.

The way to get the most out of your work and your life is to go as small as possible...

When you go as small as possible, you’ll be staring at one thing. And that’s the point.”

And all of that reminds me of another gem from another one of Orison Swett Marden’s great books. In [An Iron Will](#) (AWESOME book, btw), he tells us: *“What is will-power, looked at in a large way, but energy of character? Energy of will, self- originating force, is the soul of every great character. Where it is, there is life; where it is not, there is faintness, helplessness, and despondency. ‘Let it be your first study to teach the world that you are not wood and straw; that there is some iron in you.’ Men who have left their mark upon the world have been men of great and prompt decision. The achievements of will-power are almost beyond computation. Scarcely anything seems impossible to the man who can will strongly enough and long enough. One talent with a will behind it will accomplish more than ten without it, as a thimbleful of powder in a rifle, the bore of whose barrel will give it direction, will do greater execution than a carload burned in the open air.”*

Enter: 212° focus!

Then, continuing our old-school wisdom on focus theme, how about this gem from Earl Nightingale in [Lead the Field](#)? *“If you should visit a ship in port and ask the captain for his next port-of-call, he’ll tell you in a single sentence. Even though the captain cannot see his port, his destination, for full 99% of the voyage, he knows it’s there, and barring an unforeseen and highly unlikely catastrophe, he’ll reach it. All he has to do is keep doing certain things every day.*

If someone asked you for your next port-of-call, your goal, could you tell him? Is your goal clear and concise in your mind? Do you have it written down? It’s a good idea. We need reminding, reinforcement. If you can get a picture of your goal and stick it to your bathroom mirror, it’s an excellent idea to do so. Thousands of successful people carry their goals written on a card in their wallets or purses.”

What’s your goal?

Less is more. Focus.

212° style!

P.S. Speaking of fog...

Here's one more gem worth remembering from Earl Nightingale, this one from [The Essence of Success](#): "According to the Bureau of Standards, 'A dense fog covering seven city blocks, to a depth of 100 feet, is composed of something less than one glass of water.' That is, all the fog covering seven city blocks, at 100 feet deep could be, if it were gotten all together, held in a single drinking glass. It would not quite fill it. And this could be compared to our worries. If we can see into the future and if we could see our problems in their true light, they wouldn't tend to blind us to the world, to living itself, but instead could be relegated to their true size and place. And if all the things most people worry about were reduced to their true size, you could probably put them all into a water glass, too."

PRUNE THE DIVERSIONS

"When did you last evaluate the tasks you do every day against what's most important to you? When did you last evaluate them against who's most important to you? You have goals. You have time. You have energy. Where should it be invested?"

Removing just two diversions from your life each week eliminates more than one hundred distractions a year from what's important to you.

Prune the distractions. Twice weekly."

Rory Vaden wrote a book called [Procrastinate on Purpose](#) in which he walks us through how to multiply our time.

The #1 way to get more time? ELIMINATE time wasters.

As he says: "Eliminate' is the first of the five choices or strategies that Multipliers implement. Of the five strategies, this one has by far the widest swath of opportunity for time savings that we can immediately give ourselves tomorrow that we don't have today.

If we multiply our time by spending time on things today that will create more time tomorrow, then there isn't a faster way to create more margin tomorrow than by spending our time today just wiping out, deleting or removing some of the things that we're involved in that we would be doing tomorrow.

Just think for a moment about all of the stuff that you're doing that you don't need to be doing. And the real power here is that you are looking for things you can just stop doing. No explanation. No warning. No ramp-down time. No apology. What are the things that we can just stop?"

So...

What do you need to STOP doing? Now a good time to eliminate?

P.S. The authors also tell us: "Eliminate thirty minutes of television or web time each day and get back more than 180 hours each year for something more important or fun (equivalent to four and a half weeks at work)." <- That's a LOT of time for a little shift.

SECRET TO SUCCESS: AND-THEN-SOME

"The secret to anyone's success is what I call 'and-then-some' syndrome. The power of these words is captured in a poem written by Carl Holmes.

'And then some... these three little words are the secret to success. They are the difference between average people and top people in most companies. The top people always do what is expected... and then some. They are thoughtful to others; they are considerate and kind... and then some. They meet their responsibilities fairly and squarely... and then some. They are good

friends and helpful neighbors... and then some. They can be counted on in an emergency... and then some. I am thankful for people like this, for they make the world a better place. Their spirit of service is summed up in these three little words... and then some.”

Want to succeed?

Do what needs to be done.

And then some...

All of which reminds me of Jesus and going the second mile. I’m still blown away by where that comes from. Do you know?

As Eric Butterworth puts it in [Discover the Power Within You](#): “The admonition to go the second mile relates to the right of the Roman soldiers in Jesus’ time to compel subject peoples to carry their burdens for one mile. It was the imposition of despotism, but the subject people could do nothing about it. Jesus indicates an uncommon-sense way of doing something about it. They could break their bonds of enslavement by doing what was demanded of them as if they really enjoyed doing it. And that doesn’t make sense, does it? ...

When you go the second mile—give more to your work, are more thoughtful and kind to people, become a joyous giver and a gracious receiver—suddenly life takes on new meaning. On the second mile you find happiness, true friends, real satisfaction in living—and probably a larger pay check, too.”

Need to go a mile? Fantastic. Go one. And then some... With a smile.

Here’s to the extra degree that activates your greatness!

B

Brian Johnson,
Heroic Philosopher CEO

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you’ll probably like...

[Take the Stairs](#)

[The Compound Effect](#)

[The Slight Edge](#)

[He Can Who Thinks He Can](#)

About the Author of This Note

BRIAN JOHNSON



Brian Johnson is the Founder + CEO of Heroic. He’s spent half of the last 25 years as a Founder/CEO and the other half as a Philosopher. Brian loves integrating ancient wisdom and modern science to help YOU become the best, most heroic version of yourself so we can create a world in which 51% of humanity is flourishing by 2051. Learn more at heroic.us.