

LOOKING OUT FOR No. 1

From Where You Are To Where You Want To Be

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MAIN IDEA

Looking out for number one is the conscious, rational effort to spend as much time as possible doing those things which bring the greatest amount of pleasure and less time doing whatever causes pain. To achieve this on a regular basis, you must be aware of what you do and the reasons why.

To succeed in looking out for number one, there are a number of hurdles to clear. Each hurdle has the ability to stop a person being successful in their quest to maximize the pleasure in life. Each hurdle has its own little twists and turns.

Yet, ultimately, when all the hurdles are cleared, a person can maximize their pleasure and satisfaction. Life becomes something that can be lived whole heartedly, instead of simply going through the motions.

THE PERSPECTIVE HURDLE

Clearing the perspective hurdle means getting yourself and your problems into proper focus with respect to the big picture. When problems are magnified beyond their relative merits, you lose the ability to cope rationally.

THE REALITY HURDLE

To clear the reality hurdle, you must be a realist. A realist bases life on facts and dislikes anything imaginary, impractical, theoretical or utopian. Some people confuse reality with their own likes and dislikes. Clearing the reality hurdle means correctly perceiving reality and having the courage to acknowledge it.

THE PEOPLE HURDLE

Clearing the perspective hurdle means getting yourself and your problems into proper focus with respect to the big picture. When problems are magnified beyond their relative merits, you lose the ability to cope rationally.

THE CRUSADE HURDLE

Clearing the crusade hurdle means maintaining control over your actions and refusing to relinquish control to the desires and whims of any group. Do your own thing. refuse to be swept along by a herd instinct, the rhetoric of absolute moralists or slogans.

THE FINANCIAL HURDLE

Clearing the financial hurdle means succeeding in a rational effort to achieve whatever degree of financial success you want without making life a misery in the process. It ultimately means having the financial resources to be able to act out of choice rather than necessity in most areas of your life.

THE FRIENDSHIP HURDLE

Clearing the friendship hurdle means establishing value-for-value relationships or friendships with the people of your choice so your life can be made better because of those friendships.

THE LOVE HURDLE

Clearing the love hurdle means finding the Real Thing. It means living each moment to the fullest, with your mind unclouded by visions of the past or the future. It means filling each other's needs and keeping your scales balanced. It all adds up to pleasure, the ultimate aim of looking out for no. 1.

1. LOOKING OUT FOR NUMBER 1

Main Idea

Looking out for number one is the conscious, rational effort to spend as much time as possible doing those things which bring the greatest amount of pleasure and less time doing whatever causes pain. To achieve this on a regular basis, you must be aware of what you do and the reasons why.

Supporting Ideas

Weight-And Balance Happiness Scale Theory

Everyone has an inbuilt computer which automatically weighs every known choice in any situation and chooses the option that will bring the most happiness.

The tricky part lies in making sure the computer is fed rational thoughts. As long as the scale functions properly, you will spend most of your life feeling good.

Volcanic Ash Theory

Happiness is where you find it. Don't be carried away by illusions of idyllic happiness somewhere in the distance.

Only you know what makes your heart sing and what makes you cringe. Never make a decision based on an emotion that somewhere off in the sunset lies a haven where your every dream can come true.

Absolute Moralism Theory

Absolute moralists take it upon themselves to decide what's right or wrong for everyone.

If an absolute moralist suspects that you don't make your choices on the basis of rational self-interest, then he will bombard you with advice on what you should do. Eliminate any and all unsolicited moral opinions.

Law of the Harvest Theory

You get out of anything a return which is in direct proportion to whatever you have put in.

In other words, nothing worth achieving is ever easy. The key consideration is simply whether whatever you are aiming for is worth the price that you will have to pay to own it.

Changing Circumstances Theory

The one absolutely certain thing in life is that the circumstances will always change. What is not known is when they will change.

Be flexible in your planning so that changes won't unduly upset your plans. Failure to do this means you're constantly caught off guard and struggling.

Theory Of Sustenance of a Positive Attitude Through Assumption of a Negative Result

Since most things in life will not work out due to factors beyond your control, it's realistic to assume the worst in any situation. That way, you won't be devastated if the law of averages holds and plans don't work out.

Prepare and hope for the best but realistically expect the worst possible result. Be prepared to take full advantage if it does work out, but assume it won't be on the safe side. View short term losses as losing a battle while you focus on winning the war.

Avoid short term patches at all costs. Analyze the price of whatever you want to achieve in life. Once you've made up your mind to go after that prize, pay the price required and get it over and done with. The sooner you pay the price, the sooner you can start enjoying the rewards.

Key Thoughts

"The end for which we all more or less strive is happiness. Our differences in behaviour are due to different notions of what happiness is."

– Louise Ropes Loomis

"If someone says that giving is the key to happiness, isn't he saying that's the key to his happiness?"

– Harry Browne

2. THE PERSPECTIVE HURDLE

Main Idea

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Supporting Ideas

Theory of Relativity

Few people take the trouble to consider facts in a relative light; until one does, one cannot intelligently settle on a proper course of action.

Having problems is nothing new, but keep in mind they are only problems in your mind. In the big picture, personal problems don't feature at all.

Every problem should not be faced like it is the end of the civilized world. You need perspective. When problems are in proper focus, you'll often find they're not as significant or insurmountable as you first thought.

The term "problem" is relative, not absolute. Never let problems stop your forward progress.

3. THE REALITY HURDLE

Main Idea

To clear the reality hurdle, you must be a realist. A realist bases life on facts and dislikes anything imaginary, impractical, theoretical or utopian.

Some people confuse reality with their own likes and dislikes. Clearing the reality hurdle means correctly perceiving reality and having the courage to acknowledge it.

Supporting Ideas

Theory of Reality

Reality isn't the way you wish things to be, or the way they appear to be, but the way they actually are. Either you acknowledge reality and use it to your advantage or it automatically works against you.

Is's versus Ought To's Theory

The degree of complication in any person's life corresponds to his insistence on dwelling on the way he thinks the world ought to be rather than the way the world actually is. An "ought to" life is based on fantasy rather than fact. It's easy to fall into the trap of creating illusions intended to pass for reality.

The world is full of Mr. Magoos and ostriches. Mr. Magoo's do have the ability to perceive reality correctly but refuse to do so. Ostriches also refuse to perceive reality correctly, and instead choose to live in a fantasy land.

Whenever any person speaks of reality, keep in mind he is speaking of his perception of reality.

