

ACTION IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

The desire to live a good life is a common need. We would all like a peaceful environment incorporating fulfilling work, a happy family, pleasant friends and, of course, good health to enjoy it. Many of us, however, would like to expand that kind of life to include prosperity and success. Such a life might include having a successful business and being able to travel extensively, as well as to help those less fortunate than ourselves. There is only one way such success is going to come to pass and that's if you take action to make it happen.

Let's be very clear that a "so what" attitude should not have any negative connotations. It is not a "she'll be right, mate" attitude that says you can be lazy and not do anything. On the contrary, it means accepting where you are, making peace with your situation and then moving on to where you want to be without looking back. The only way you *can* move forward is by taking action. Visualisation is part of the process but action is an outward movement of your imagination and it expedites results.

It is important, however, to be aware that every action has a reaction and that your actions today form the consequences of tomorrow so when action is needed it should be well thought out. Before you act, train yourself to think, "What is best for me in the long run?" Too often we fail to think about the future and the long term results of what we do. So, although action is needed, it should be considered, carefully thought out, action. That should not be an excuse, however, for not taking action at all.

Most of the problems in life stem from failing to take action. Many of us have a problem with getting ourselves to follow through with ideas so that we produce something concrete and sometimes taking action is harder than it may seem. It can, therefore, be easy to make excuses not to mobilise ourselves. Procrastination is often a major hurdle because deep down inside many people are lazy or afraid of failure if they do step out. So they tell themselves the conditions are not yet right to move ahead and continue to wait for the 'perfect' conditions to appear. Conditions will *never* be perfect; there will always be something that is not quite right. It takes courage to succeed and action will always take you out of your comfort zone, but if you don't step out you will never accomplish what you set out to do. Recognise any defeatist thoughts for what they are. Acknowledge them but then determine to change those thoughts and move on and do what needs to be done. You didn't get where you are today without taking some action.

Many, many people will tell you that 'knowledge is power' but that is only a half-truth. What good is knowledge if it is not used? It is completely wasted. If you wish to utilise your knowledge you must put it into action. The adage should therefore read, 'knowledge plus action is power'. Only action applied with your knowledge will give you the results you are looking for.

Inventors have wonderful ideas and pictures in their mind but if they didn't act on those ideas nothing tangible would appear and there would be no inventions. You can be the most talented person and have the best ideas, yet if you don't take action you won't achieve anything. The only value in an idea is when it is implemented so if you have an

idea that you really believe in, do something about it. The natural Law of Attraction says that whatever thoughts you put out will be returned in kind. That means if you do nothing, nothing will happen; if you do little, little will happen; if you do much, much will happen. The bigger the action you take the bigger will be the results. If you commit to act on an idea, more ideas will be created.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was one of the most prolific geniuses in history. He lived to the age of 82 years and his literary output included 142 volumes spanning the fields of literature, theology, poetry, drama, humanism and science. In his dramatic masterpiece, Faust, Goethe reveals the secret to his great productivity: “Lose this day loitering – it will be the same story tomorrow – and the next more dilatory; each indecision brings its own delays and days lost lamenting over lost days. Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute – action has genius, power and magic in it. Only engage and then the mind grows heated – begin it and then the work will be completed.”

How do you take action? First, “begin it” even if it is a small start. Ideas are transient – they vanish from our mind if we don’t do something about them immediately, so if you don’t take some action you are just a dreamer. Taking the first step is very important because it leads you to the next step and so on. Once you have taken the first step the next steps will seem easier to take. The most important step to activate a great idea is to act on it immediately by writing it down. Then tell someone and brainstorm your idea – do anything to keep it alive. You could then write out a practical plan which includes definite stages to make your dream a reality. Following that you will need to implement your plan. Don’t wait for inspiration and don’t wait until you are ‘in the mood’. Reinforce the habit of ‘doing’ by taking action when you are not in the mood. If you want to achieve something you can’t let life just ‘happen’; you need to set your goals, make your plans and action them.

It is easy to talk about taking action but there will be times you may not know what to do or how to do it. At times like this it is wise to seek counsel from someone you trust and who has the wisdom and experience in the area that you need help. Always be prepared to ask if counsel is needed.

We have discussed at length the fact that everyone will encounter roadblocks on the road of life, not once or twice but hundreds of times and that difficulties and crises will only have an ongoing contrary effect to what we want if we do nothing about them or act on them in a pessimistic fashion. The key to a happy and fulfilling life is in knowing how to use your mind to clear those roadblocks and how to take positive action to get back on track.

As I have mentioned before, positive thinking on its own will not work. Many gurus say, you should think positively, say affirmations, and then believe that something will happen and you will receive. None of that can help if action is not included. I read somewhere the following saying, “affirmation without implementation is self-delusion” and I must agree wholeheartedly. If you find that your thinking tends to move to a negative plane when difficulties occur you need to make an effort, change your mindset

and turn your thinking around and back on to a constructive and beneficial plane. Once you have your mindset firmly set toward an effective solution, you will be able to think clearly about what action you can take to change the circumstances to give you a successful conclusion. Remember, your actions can control your circumstances. You will need to use your mind in your favour to think about and analyse the problems; about the mistakes that have been made and ways to improve your existing situation. Write down your thoughts and decide which ones have the best possibility of succeeding then follow them through and act on them.

It takes initiative and courage to take action but it is the only way to get things done. Whether you have just had a wonderful idea that you wish to market or whether you are thinking about how to overcome the latest hurdle in your life, nothing will happen until those ideas are implemented. Focus on what needs to be done and get down to the business of 'doing something'. When other people see that you are serious about getting things done they may want to join in and help you. Once the ball is rolling you will build confidence in yourself and in others and the journey will become easier. It's all about applying that little six-letter word called "action".