



Die Empty: Unleash Your Best Work Everyday by Todd Henry

Summary by Cecilia Gorman

Die Empty is about embracing the idea that time is finite and making the unique contribution to the world that only you can make. Henry shows how to cultivate the mindset and the methods you need to sustain your enthusiasm, push through mental barriers, and unleash your best work each day.

“Embrace the importance of now, and refuse to allow the lull of comfort, fear, familiarity, and ego to prevent you from taking action on your ambitions.... The cost of inaction is vast. Don’t go to your grave with your best work inside of you. Choose to die empty.”

Chapter 1: Don’t die full of your next body of work. Unleash your best work and refuse to take it to the grave with you. Choose to Die Empty.

Ask Yourself: Before I die, I want to _____

How do you set in motion a course of action that will allow you to unleash your best, most valuable work while you still can?

One ounce of preventative discipline today is worth a pound of corrective action later. Die Empty is about making steady, critical progress each day on projects that matter in all areas of life.

Chapter 2: Your contribution: your body of work (any way you contribute value to the world using your available resources) should reflect what’s important to you.

Available resources: Sum total of where you chose to place your limited focus, assets, time & energy.

Deeply gratifying work requires consistent focused efforts to cultivate your instincts and skills, and make measured progress toward your goals.

The notion that brilliant work is forged by those who consistently approach their days with urgency & diligence. You are building a body of work today through both what you do and how you do it.

Chapter 3: Mediocrity doesn't just happen suddenly, it develops slowly over time.

7 DEADLY SINS OF MEDIOCRITY

1. Aimlessness: general lack of cohesiveness within your day-to-day activities.
Cure: define the battles you need to fight each day in order to make meaningful progress
2. Boredom: how we handle boredom is what determines whether it becomes a trigger for productivity or stagnancy.
Cure: intentional and applied curiosity
3. Comfort: the love of comfort is frequently the enemy of greatness. Leads to stagnation and decreasing returns on effort.
Cure: identify relevant skills that will help you continually contribute, build practices in your life to help you develop them, and have frequent check points to gauge progress
4. Delusion: cultivate the self-awareness you'll need to add the value you are capable of adding.
Cure: you must have an accurate sense of your skills, your weaknesses and your core drivers

5. Ego: often times Ego stands in the way of our success. People become inflexible and unwilling to adopt or learn because their ego stands in the way.

Cure: adopt a learner's mindset. Stay flexible.

6. Fear: It's paralyzing effects are often rooted more in imagination than reality.

Cure: instill a practice of strategic, intentional and purposeful risk taking in life and in work

7. Guardedness: When you isolate yourself from other people you cut yourself off from some of the most valuable opportunities to grow and collaborate.

Cure: "Finding the balance between going out to get what you want and being open to the thing that actually winds up coming your way."

Progress is often made through one's willingness to persist at the small activities that no one else sees, but that truly generate results.

Chapter 4: To counter aimlessness, you must define your battles wisely and build your life around winning them.

People sell their souls by running away from battles they know they should be fighting. Identify your through line around which to devote your time, focus and energy.

You need a process that requires persistence and a good deal of self-awareness. Misguided passion leads to aimlessness. Productive Passion motivates you.

What will you stand for today? _____

The mission statement of Boca Restaurant Group: Blow People Away

What do you know you should be doing but have been ignoring? Make a list of these things, of what you know - deep down - you should be doing.

What action will I take today on a forgotten battlefield? _____

Chapter 5 – Be Fiercely Curious. Ask How? Why? What if?

Don't be Busily Bored - highly productive but mentally stagnate professionals. Know any?

We've forgotten how to be curious, how to just look out the window and think.

Redefining the problem - explore the edges of the problem with these 4 things:

- 1) ASPIRATIONS - define the objective "what would be the ultimate end?"
- 2) AFFINITIES - see if you can identify any similarities that can provide you with traction. "How is this like?"
- 3) ASSUMPTIONS - perceived limits you place on yourself. "What assumptions might I be making about this?"
- 4) ATTRIBUTES - characteristics of the problem.

Chapter 6 - Get uncomfortable and embrace lifelong growth and skill development

YOUR LAST DAY

Imagine you will have someone with you all day tomorrow, from wake to sleep, documenting it. They will take copious notes on your schedule, how you interact with family, friends and coworkers, how you engage in tasks and projects, and your mindset throughout the day. The person then takes all their notes and creates a book on your life. It becomes the permanent testament to how you live your life.

When you image this, how does your behavior compare to how you actually live you life? _____

Knowing we are being recorded causes us to go outside our comfort zone, do what we know is right.

Chapter 7 – Know Yourself. The stories we believe about the world provide a framework through which we filter our experiences.

The stories can be motivating or limiting. It's important for us to understand what our deeply held beliefs are, but also how they might be affecting our daily activity.

Establish your code of ethics – identify that which you hold dear and hold yourself accountable to that every day.

Chapter 8 – Confidence and Adaptability prevent an inflated ego from stalling progress on your most important work.

When you are funneling too much of your focus, energy and time into more selfish efforts rather than into adding value, this is a problem.

Chapter 9 – Find your voice and conquer the fear of failure by taking small, calculated risks each day.

Auditing vs Accountability – like take a college course for no credit. Going through the motions without facing up to your fear of failure.

Not engaging in the difficult work necessary to find their voice. Walk toward your dreams.

Take daily concerted efforts toward your biggest goals.

Be intentional and enjoy the scenery along the way, the journey becomes more meaningful than the end result.

Chapter 10 – Establishing genuine connections with others will prevent guardedness from infecting your life.

We need other people to help us stay aligned and bring out the best in us. Pursue relationships with a high level of diligence and urgency.

Don't operate by default. Intentionally pursue relationships that keep you on track to your goals.

Chapter 11 – Live Empty

Use Daily checkpoints to refocus on your effectiveness rather than your efficiency.

All progress is not true progress.

E = Focus on your ETHICS

M = Focus on your MISSION

P = Focus on PEOPLE

T = Focus on TASKS

Y = Focus on YOU

The logo for Cecilia Gorman, featuring the name "ceciliagorman" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. A small green leaf icon is positioned above the letter "i" in "gorman". The logo is contained within a white rectangular box with a thin black border.

ceciliagorman