Stop Trying so Hard: Achieve more by doing less (TedTalk) Deidre Wilson July 7, 2022

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| Working hard for the sake of working hard is ultimately counter-productive  Upstream vs. downstream effort  Changes come with inner work first  Individualized approaches to authenticity and success | * Can become addicted to the attention and approval of successes * Wear busy-ness like badge of honour * Derive value from busy-ness * Busy-ness comes at the cost of health and wellness * There needs to be some effort, but balance this with ease * Two types of effort: upstream (paddling a boat upstream against current – trying really hard, health and wellbeing being impacted) and downstream (still trying, but paddling boat downstream with the current, loose attachment to the goal and more focus on the process) * Lots of upstream effort happening in society * “Easy” seen as bad * Different types of success * Definition of authentic success is individual * Downstream effort can be way to reaching authentic goals * Need to do inner work first (value identification, how we want to feel every day) * Resonance-performance model: top performers had specific ideas about how they wanted to feel every day (A goal), but focus on process to goal versus goal itself. Obstacles don’t mean more effort, but are a signal for reflection to come back to how they want to feel daily * Authenticity: internal and external (need to own our feelings, and then act on them) * Can sometimes get negative feedback from others about our authenticity * Need to evaluate the results of our decisions (is this upstream or downstream) * Will know it’s downstream by: experiencing “flow”, synchronicity more likely * Authentic success might not look like success to others * Before you try harder, ask: Is this a time in my life when upstream effort is necessary? Have my values changed? * Sometimes we need to quit one thing so we can make space for downstream effort * Few people live this way * Global Wisdom Traditions reflect this * Important for health, well-being, authenticity |

Cultural conditioning around valuing hard work for its own sake is detrimental to health and wellness. Reflecting on whether effort is upstream or downstream, as well as connecting with one’s values and personal definitions of authenticity and success are key to achieving the goals that matter.