

Do Something!

September 9th 2009 Issue 112

Living The 80/20 Life.

This newsletter comes to you from Kate Harper of Harper Coaching.

email kate@harpercoaching.com <http://www.harpercoaching.com>

Welcome to this issue of **Do Something!** - the newsletter that drops into your inbox every 2 weeks and is intended to inspire you to change the way you think and to stimulate you into action.

Welcome to all our readers, new and not so new!

I am so happy to be able to say I have subscribers from pretty much all over the world - **Albania, Australia, Canada, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, Switzerland, the UK and the USA.**

It is really strange. I keep seeing the numbers 80 and 20! Almost every day, I read articles and reports that contain these numbers. Have you noticed it too?

Many of you will already have heard of the Pareto Principle, but for those of you who haven't, it states that 80 percent of results come from 20 percent of actions. It is essentially the law of *the vital few versus the trivial many*. Originally, the principle came from Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto's observation that 80% of wealth seems to be held by 20% of a population, however, the idea has been applied to almost every area of life, including the idea that we might wear 20% of our clothes 80% of the time, that 80% of revenue comes from 20% of customers (the big payers and the repeat buyers), that 80% of road traffic accidents are caused by 20% of drivers and so on. Interesting idea....

The other context in which I came across the 80/20 idea was while reading a brilliant book called "*Mindless Eating*" by Brian Wansink (ISBN-10:184850117X) in which he looks at the numerous factors that influence our eating habits. Research into the inhabitants of Okinawa, Japan, have shown that very few of them are obese and their general health is excellent. This can be attributed not only to what makes up their diet, (with the emphasis on vegetables, whole grains, fruits, legumes and fish with limited amounts of lean meats) and their general lifestyle (they are relaxed, positive, helpful, take sufficient exercise to keep their body in shape, and often practise yoga, tai chi or meditation), but also to the concept of *Hara Hachi Bu* – which advises that you only eat until you are 80% full. To do this it is recommended that you eat slowly and be entirely aware of what you eat; chew well and never entirely finish your plate and always leave something. It seems so obvious really, but how many of us actually do it?

Both of these ideas tie into the concept of *Mindfulness*. In the Pareto Principle it is focusing on the 20% that matters, of being aware of the importance of that 20% and conserving your efforts, whilst still achieving worthwhile results. (The 80%). In the concept of *Hara Hachi Bu*, it is the 80% that becomes important. Being aware of not only *what* you are consuming, but also paying attention to how full you are is the key to good health.

80. 20. I think it is worth becoming aware of those numbers and start living the 80/20 life. What do you think?

Do Something to move you towards your goals. Are you putting in 80% effort and only reaping 20% results? Perhaps it is time to evaluate what you are doing and sharpen your focus. What are you doing now that takes up time and energy that is not showing results? Your goal is to put in 20% effort and reap 80%, so that you can enjoy the other 80% of your life. A challenge, certainly, but well worth doing.

Do Something today that you've been putting off for a while. Has it been niggling at the back of your mind that maybe you are wasting your efforts? Perhaps by bringing yourself back to those tasks that are the most productive, you will find that you become less overwhelmed and more able to cope with everything.

(If Procrastination is one of your challenges and you haven't already done it, go to <http://www.harpercoaching.com> to sign up for my complimentary 7-day mini e-Course on this subject.)

Do Something for yourself. By applying both of these ideas to your life, you will be able to make more time to do what you take pleasure in and be in a good state of health to make the most of it.

Do Something active every day. The residents of Okinawa not only rely on eating well and mindfully, they also indulge in some form of physical activity every day. This does not have to be hard cardio sessions at the gym, but could be more measured activities such as yoga and tai chi. By following their example you will be setting yourself up to be in the best possible physical state to focus on what needs to be done to get the best results.

Do Something because you want to, not because you *have* to. Who doesn't want to achieve more by doing less? There is a phrase that is often bandied about – 'Work smarter - not harder'. This must be based on the Pareto Principle, don't you agree?

Do Something new every day. In how many areas of your life can you apply the 80/20 concepts? You may have to embrace new ideas and new actions. By doing these every day, consistently, you will see the best results.

Do Something creative every week. I am sure your creative side will come up with some way to incorporate both aspects of the 80/20 idea into your life and consciousness. You could design meaningful post-its to put up to remind you of both concepts. You could do a vision board of pictures and words that show what they mean to you and how you plan to incorporate these ideas into your life. (Contact me if you have no idea how to do this.)

Do Something for nothing. They are just numbers. To be honest, they could have been 85/15, 75/25, 70/30. It really doesn't matter. What matters is that when it comes to effort, you are not wasting it, and when it comes to eating, you are not overdoing it. Simple really. Now comes the challenge. Are you willing to put it into practice and begin to live the 80/20 life?

Do enjoy this quote:

"You can do only one thing at a time. I simply tackle one problem and concentrate all efforts on what I am doing at the moment."

Maxwell Maltz, Author of 'Psycho-Cybernetics: A New Way to Get More Living Out Of Life'

I do hope that this issue of **Do Something!** has inspired you to pay attention to those numbers!

Have a good couple of weeks and, even if it's only a *little thing*, **Do Something!**

Warm wishes,

Kate

Passionate about helping you achieve your goals.

Kate Harper is a Personal Development Coach with a special interest in Motivation & Wellbeing. She lives in the beautiful Highlands of Scotland.

To find out more about Kate's services please contact her at kate@harpercoaching.com or see www.harpercoaching.com

© Kate Harper 2009. I am happy for you to reproduce the content of this newsletter, providing you include full authorship, copyright, my website details and subscription information.

If you have any questions please email me at kate@harpercoaching.com

I will never sell, share or otherwise divulge your contact details, including your email address, to any third party.