

# Starting and Keeping Habits even (especially) Under Lockdown

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“Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”

— Will Durant

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# Needs as understood

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- People struggling with lockdown
- To stay fit and healthy, emotionally and physically
  - Despite solitude and no one to motivate you
- You know you can
- You may do yoga, meditation, lifting, writing, etc



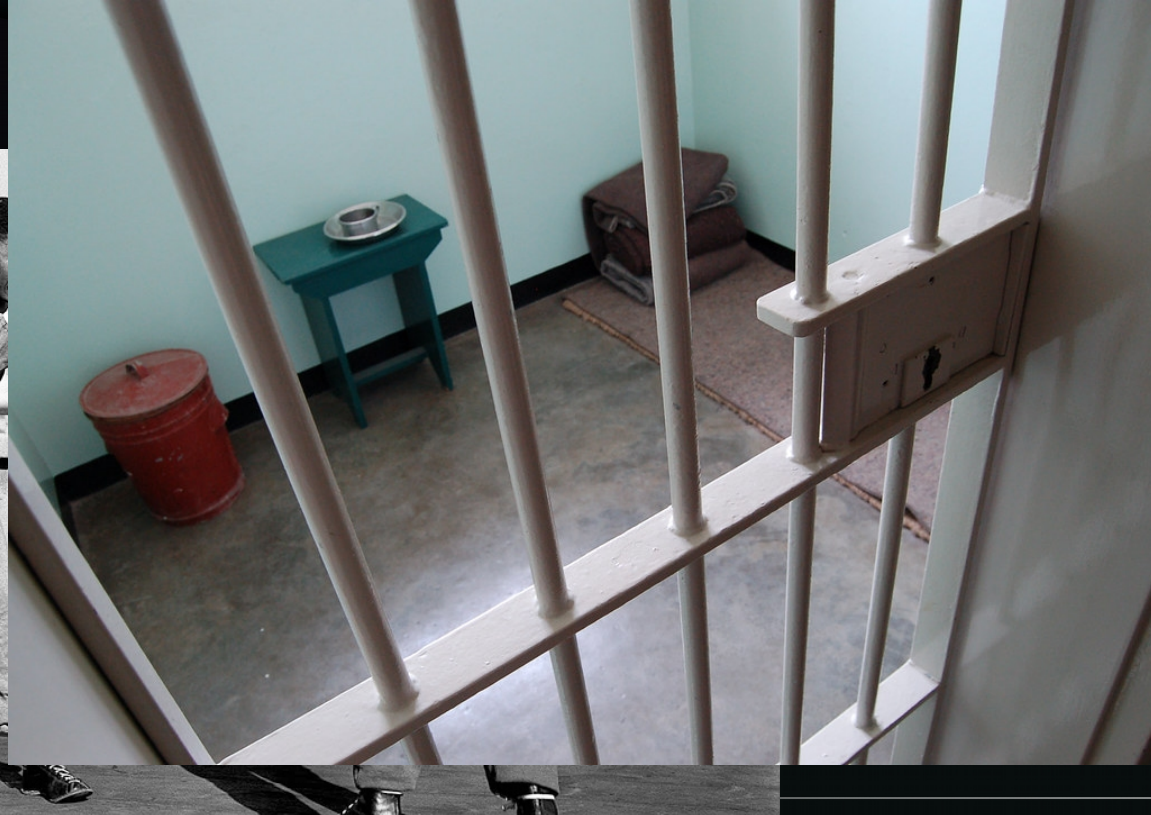
# My goal

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- May start most valuable part of your life
- Beyond short-term. Forever.
- Agnostic to activity
  - Could be exercise, painting, singing, violin, cold calls to leads, business ideas, etc

# Examples

- Mandela





# Examples

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- “I attempted to follow my old boxing routine of doing roadwork and muscle-building from Monday through Thursday and then resting for the next three days. On Monday through Thursday, I would do stationary running in my cell in the morning for up to forty-five minutes. I would also perform one hundred fingertip push-ups, two hundred sit-ups, fifty deep knee-bends, and various other calisthenics.”
- “I awoke on the day of my release after only a few hours’ sleep at 4:30am. February 11 was a cloudless, end-of-summer Cape Town day. I did a shortened version of my usual exercise regimen, washed, and ate breakfast. ... As so often happens in life, the momentousness of an occasion is lost in the welter of a thousand details.”



# Examples





# Examples

- Dalai Lama
- Gandhi, Buddha, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Benjamin Franklin, John Coltrane, any artist or musician
- Search “every day for a year”
  - Dance, sports, yoga, art, music, foreign language, proposing, etc





# Overview

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1. My background
2. Stories and lessons
3. What to do
4. Questions

# My Background

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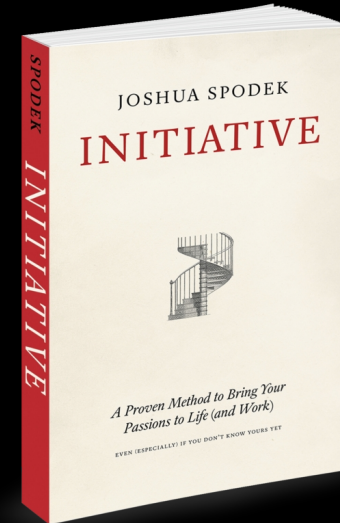
# Joshua Spodek

- CV credentials
  - PhD
  - Satellite
  - Entrepreneur
  - MBA
  - Educator: NYU, Columbia, SpodekAcademy.com
  - Blogger, speaker
  - Podcaster
  - Bestselling author



“This is practical leadership training made perfect. Bravo!”

—**Booklist**



# Habits accomplishments

- Blog posts: 3,800
  - Columns in Inc. and Psychology Today, bestselling author, award-winning podcast
  - [Leadership Step by Step](#) and [Initiative](#)
- Burpees: 150,000
  - Featured in Tim Ferriss podcast, 3-page profile in *The One-Minute Workout*
  - Resting pulse: 40 bpm, blood pressure: 106/62, BMI: 20
  - Not sick or depressed in 8+ years
- Cold showers: 484
- 1-minute wake-up: 1,250 days
- 1 piece of litter: 1,100 days

EntreLeadership  
**PODCAST**  
Tim Ferriss  
Best-selling Author



"Persuasively shows just how effective super-short workouts are for increasing both fitness and health."  
—GRETCHEN REYNOLDS, AUTHOR OF  
THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER *THE FIRST 20 MINUTES*



## The One Minute Workout

Science Shows a Way to Get Fit That's  
Smarter • Faster • Shorter

With 8 Interval Workouts Plus 4 Microworkouts

**Martin Gibala, Ph.D.,** with **Christopher Shulgan**



# “Avoiding” habits

- Packaged food: under one load of garbage per year
- No flying: fifth year
  - Three TEDx talks
  - Keynotes, TV, etc
- No internet first hour (not bad)
- No internet after 10pm (not so great)



# More results

- Others' accomplishments:
  - Calendar
  - Million burpee guy (Christian

83m Josh these 30 days were fantastic, thanks for introducing me to SDOHA! It felt good working each day down and be confident that its something I can continue consistently. I've also started doing jumping jacks more consistently as well; too before I play a game of chess each day (I play a lot of online chess... this keeps me from playing too much). Anyway thanks again, looking forward to what's next! Chavis &

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<p><b>SUN 7</b></p> <p>RAD 2015</p>	<p>10 BURGERS 7:30 PM</p> <p>DAY 1</p>	<p>10 BURGERS</p> <p>4:12 PM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>11:06 PM</p>	<p>10 BURGERS</p> <p>after 15 min of JUNE OPS 8:14 PM</p>	<p>11:27 AM to BURGERS</p> <p>after 6:30 am or personal trainer the way is difficult</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>11:10 AM</p>
<p>10 B</p> <p>11:41 PM</p>	<p>12 @</p> <p>6:03 PM</p>	<p>10 of them at 5:30 PM but this was after personal trainer</p>	<p>12 th out driving school and bike failed 11 years 11 the biggest never found 9:30 PM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>10:28 PM almost forget</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>7:29 PM</p>	<p>12 B</p> <p>12:13</p>
<p>10 B</p> <p>10:13 PM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>11:05 PM</p> <p>staying home</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>1:30 AFTER 15 mins of JUNE OPS</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>9:12 PM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>11:22 PM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>9:17 AM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>9:17 AM</p>
<p>10 B</p> <p>9:57 PM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>12:25 PM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>5:14 PM</p> <p>20 min after home to</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>11:15 AM</p> <p>10:15 AM</p> <p>10:15 AM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>9:02 PM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>10:45 AM</p> <p>10 seats of 10 w/ 2 min breaks</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>11:46 AM</p>
<p><b>MIAMI!</b></p>						
<p>10 B</p> <p>6:29 PM</p>	<p>10 B</p> <p>4:30 PM</p> <p>DAY 30</p>			<p>eat your lettuce today! Thanks!</p>		

THIS ONE FIRST

7 June  
Hello Josh -

I was going to do some offbeat + witty activity but I decided to just do burpees instead. Here is a calendar I made to mark each day off I will also make a special annotation when I do them in skinny jeans + blazer

-K

~~NAME~~

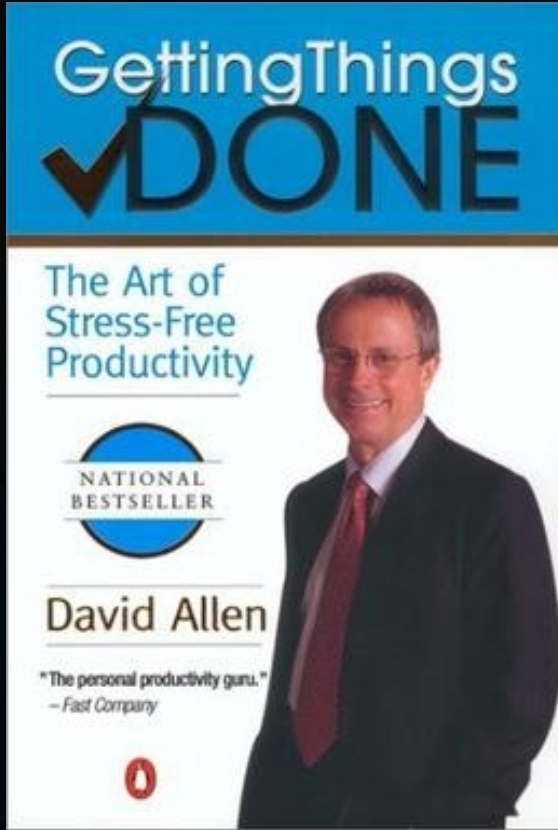


# Stories and Lessons

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# David Allen



- Goal is **mental freedom**, comes through structure



# Martha Graham

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“The dancer is realistic. His craft teaches him to be. Either the foot is pointed or it is not. No amount of dreaming will point it for you. This requires discipline, not drill, not something imposed from without, but discipline imposed by you yourself upon yourself.

Your goal is freedom. But freedom may only be achieved through discipline. In the studio you learn to conform, to submit yourself to the demands of your craft, so that you may finally be free.”

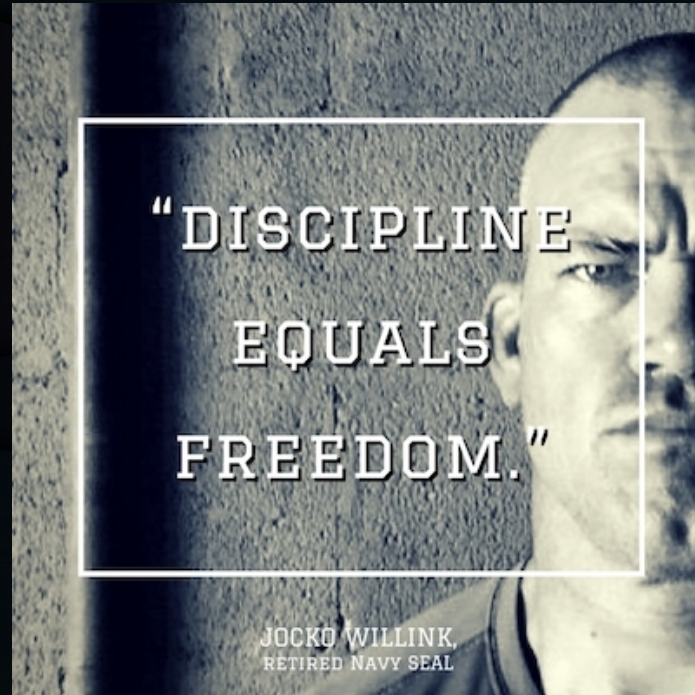
# Vince Lombardi



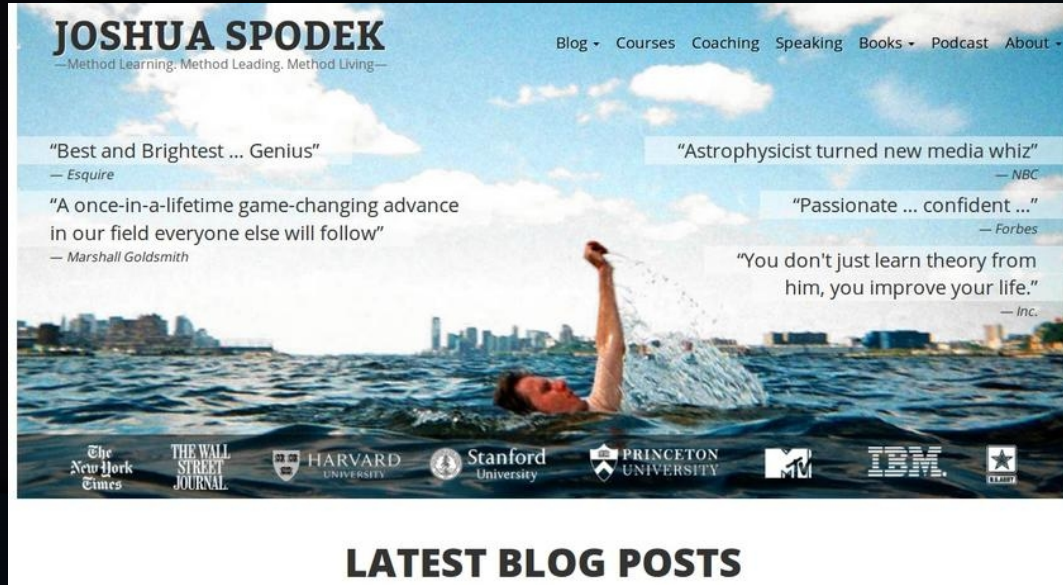
"Winning is not a sometime thing; it's an all the time thing. You don't win once in a while; you don't do things right once in a while; you do them right all of the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing."



# Jocko Willink



# Starting blogging



- If you miss one day you can miss two. If you miss two, it's all over.



# Starting burpees

The New York Times Magazine

## What's the Single Best Exercise?

By Gretchen Reynolds

April 15, 2011



Let's consider the butterfly. One of the most taxing movements in sports, the butterfly requires greater energy than bicycling at 14 miles per hour, running a 10-minute mile, playing competitive basketball or carrying furniture upstairs. It burns more calories, demands larger doses of oxygen and elicits more fatigue than those other activities, meaning that over time it should increase a swimmer's endurance and contribute to weight control.

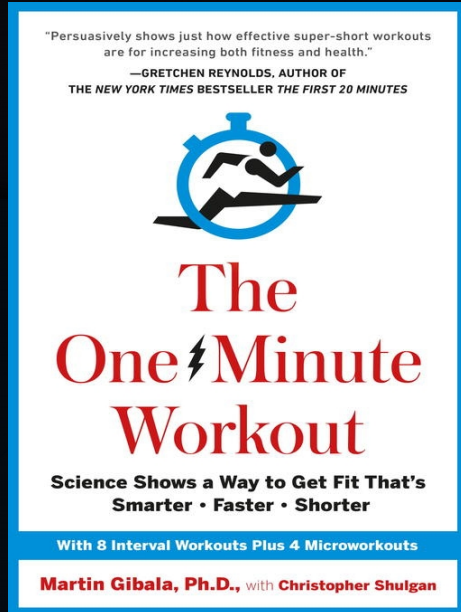
So is the butterfly the best single exercise that there is? Well, no. The butterfly "would probably get my vote for the worst" exercise, said Greg Whyte, a professor of sport and exercise science at Liverpool John Moores University in England and a past Olympian in the modern pentathlon, known for his swimming. The butterfly, he said, is "miserable, isolating, painful." It requires a coach, a pool and ideally supplemental weight and flexibility training to reduce the high risk of injury.

Ask a dozen physiologists which exercise is best, and you'll get a dozen wildly divergent replies. "Trying to choose" a single best exercise is like trying to condense the entire field" of exercise science, said Martin Gibala, the chairman of the department of kinesiology at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

But when pressed, he suggested one of the foundations of old-fashioned calisthenics: the burpee, in which you drop to the ground, kick your feet out and push yourself back up. "It's a great exercise," he said. "It works all the major muscles, it builds endurance." He paused. "But it's hard to imagine most people enjoying" an all-burpees program, "or sticking with it for long."

- Remove excuses: weather, equipment, spotter, money, risk, location, injury, etc
- Can start with friends but don't rely on them

# Go public



- With friends and family is enough
- Creates accountability
- Attracts peers
- Creates community



# Starting cold showers



Self-  
Imposed  
Daily  
Challenging  
Healthy  
Active

**SIDCHA**

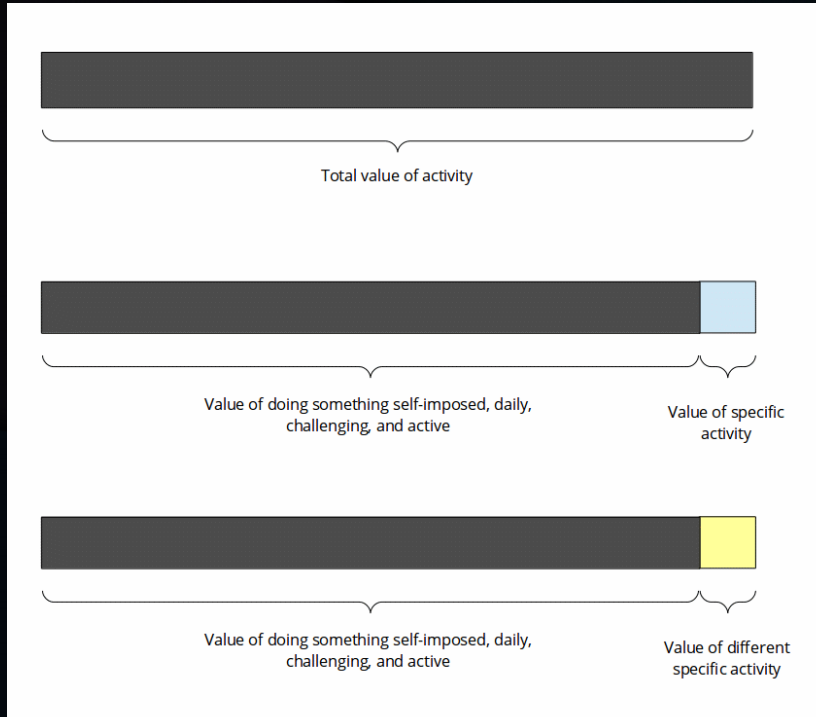
# The SIDCHA

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- Not a specific habit. Implies a threshold.
- Sidcha varieties: fitness, mindfulness, artistic/expressive, business, social, etc



# The SIDCHA



- Fastest, most effective way to find your perfect sidcha: start with any, switch if you want

# The SIDCHA

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- We don't drop habits because they don't improve our lives. Most do. We drop them from taking on too many.
- Instead of too many, having a sidcha lets you say, "No thanks, I already have one."



# One-minute wake-up

**Inc.**APPLY FOR


PRODUCTIVITY

## How I Wake Up in Under 1 Minute Every Day

After decades of morning sloth, for 7 months I've gotten out of bed in under 60 seconds each day and loved it.

in f t

By Joshua Spodek *Author, 'Leadership Step by Step'* [@spodek](#)



GETTY IMAGES

For decades, I'd take at least 20 minutes to [get out of bed](#), often 40 minutes or more.

But since November, I've gotten out of bed in under 60 seconds, [without fail, each day](#), at 6:15 a.m. I've made it my [habit](#) to turn off my alarm, which is across my room from

- Save time, money, and resources
- Pattern:
  - First weeks or months: **novelty**
  - A few weeks or months: **work**
  - Forever after: **rhythm**

# How many to start with?

- Old answer
- New answer:
  - Imagine your worst day. How many can you do then?



# How to start each set?

- Develop tricks with practice
- Schwarzenegger is no different. No inborn secret skill

# Skills and results

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- To do what I intend
- Mindfulness
- Self-awareness
- Mental freedom
- To say no to low priorities
- To know and expand my limits
- To know who I am
- To know priorities and act on them
- To attract and connect with peers
- More time, money, and resources
- Create ideas
- Community
- Youth
- Glory



# Review lessons

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# Lessons

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- Goal is mental freedom
- If you miss one day you can miss two. If you miss two it's all over.
- Remove excuses
- Can start with friends but don't rely on them
- Make sure a sidcha, doesn't matter which
- Decline new ones or switch
- Creates time, money, resources
- Pattern: Novelty → work → rhythm of life
- Start with what you can do on worst day. Add when you know you can do more on that day.
- Comes easy for nobody. Develop and refine tricks with experience.



# What to do

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# What to do

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1. Pick any sidcha, determine what you can do on worst day, start.
2. Over years: develop tricks, switch if you prefer another, increase challenge, add new ones when ready.



# What not to do

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- Don't require perfection or anything beyond not injuring yourself
- Practice will lead to improving

# Bonus stories

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# Bonus stories

- Depressed on subway
- Marathon burpees
- Burpees with girlfriend
- Rocky morning
- Why I love Equinox

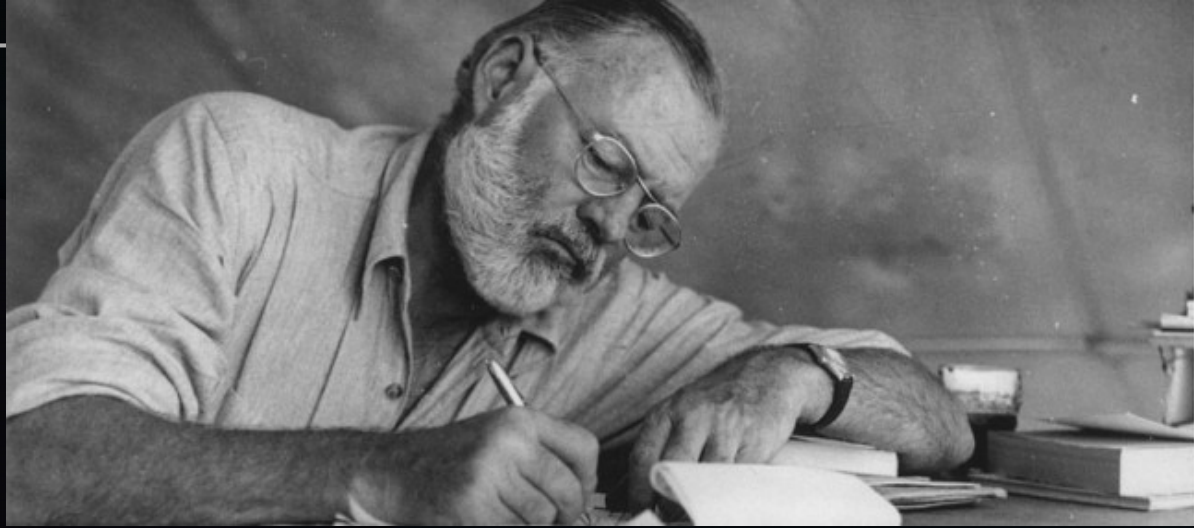




"And when a dancer is at the peak of his power, he has two lovely, powerful, perishable things. One is spontaneity, but it is something arrived at over years and years of training. It is not a mere chance. The other is simplicity, but that also is a different simplicity. It's the state of complete simplicity."

— Martha Graham





"I write every morning as soon after first light as possible. There is no one to disturb you and it is cool or cold and you come to your work and warm as you write. . . You have started at six in the morning, say, and may go on until noon or be through before that. When you stop you are as empty, and at the same time never empty but filling, as when you have made love to someone you love."

— Ernest Hemingway

# Questions

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