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2015

## Motivation and Performance, Blog 12

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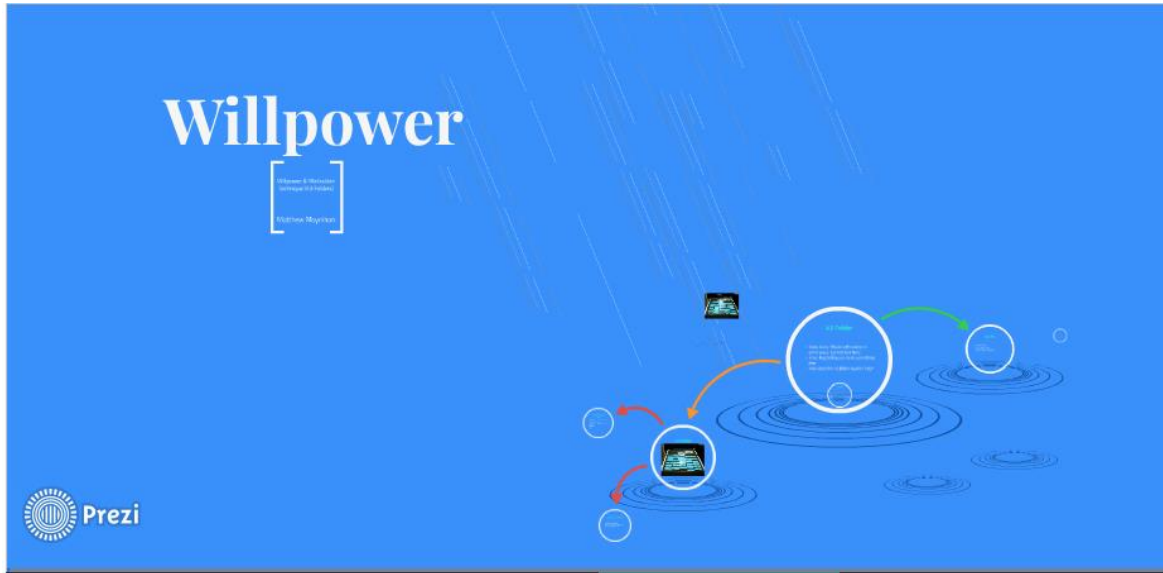
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# Bike Race – Motivation

<https://rampages.us/moynihanmc/>

Matthew Moynihan



## FINAL PROJECT

OCTOBER 5, 2015 LEAVE A COMMENT

[http://prezi.com/scmt57fbmd3\\_/?utm\\_campaign=share&utm\\_medium=copy](http://prezi.com/scmt57fbmd3_/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy)

Here is my final project on the 43 folder method.

DAY10

## DAY10 – PROJECT

SEPTEMBER 29, 2015 5 COMMENTS

Hi everyone, it's Matthew and my goals are to pass my CPA exam in the next six or so months, and to get back into tournament tennis. I have already been working on the CPA goal for a long time. I started it about 2 and a half years ago when I chose accounting as a major. It has been a long process but, thankfully I am almost done. It is reaching the hardest part though, and I have to really focus all my willpower to attain it. The tennis goal will be much more fun and I think it exciting enough that the motivation will be easy enough to attain.

For the final project I think I will make a video that focuses on a specific method of improving motivation and willpower. I think I might focus on the daily scheduling with folders technique that was brought up in the Drew Carey section. I could really relate to a lot that he said in that

chapter so I think that technique will work for me the best. I will probably lay out the method and maybe take pictures of how I am going to set it up. I think that would be a really cool way to show people how to schedule using this method.

Since the video can only be 5 minutes I will try and just focus on one or two things. I want to see if I can find another method for improving motivation that interests me but, I have not fully decided on one yet. I will probably figure that out in the next few days.

I really enjoyed reading the 'Willpower' book and I think I can really benefit from the techniques and stories that were in the text.

DAY9

## DAY9 – SETBACKS

SEPTEMBER 27, 2015 2 COMMENTS

My name is Matthew and my goals are to pass the CPA and get back into tournament tennis. I have experienced tennis setbacks in the past. When I was 17 or so, I got really bad tendinitis (tennis elbow) but played through it because it was tournament season and I was captain of the tennis team. This was a huge mistake which made the tendinitis so bad that I could not even lift my arm above my waist without a lot of pain. This lasted about a year and by that time I had quit tennis because of my inability to play. Now that I am getting back into tennis, I need to listen to injuries and make sure I let them heal before continuing. A few weeks of injury is much better on your motivation than a year of not playing. I think it's good that I have two goals because if I have a setback in one of them, I still have another goal that I am working towards.

I do not think my CPA goal will have many setbacks. I could obviously fail some of the exams but, I see that as more of a learning experience than a setback. Only about 45% of people pass each test so all I can do is try my hardest and continue working from there. The CPA goal is just a goal that takes a lot of time and commitment. If you properly allocate your time to it you will succeed, it just takes people different amounts of time.

I think I understand the possible setbacks in achieving my goals. I think this will help me with motivation because I know what I have to do if anything bad happens.

DAY8

## DAY8 – FAMILY & GOALS

SEPTEMBER 27, 2015 5 COMMENTS

Hi everyone, my name is Matthew and my goal is to pass the CPA exam and get back into tournament tennis play. I think most of my friends and family are aware of my goals but I think it is hard for them to support them. No one I know really cares about tennis or understands anything about it, so I understand that few people are going to be excited for me to pursue this. I think my family is happy that I am staying healthy but, I think that is the extent of it.

As for my CPA I know none of my friends particularly care about it. This does not really effect me though because of the autonomous motivation for this goal. I do not really think any of them could hinder me in this goal either. I have already made up my mind and devoted years to this so whatever they say will not change my mind. I think my parents are pretty supportive of the CPA goal because they see it as a way to a successful career.

I think my biggest obstacle will be to just stay internally motivated. I honestly think my tennis goal is harder because there is less pressure to actually finish it. I am just going to continue doing what I have been doing, along with adding some tricks I have learned in the 'Willpower' book. I like the idea of scheduling a lot, so I am definitely going to try that.

DAY7, UNCATEGORIZED

## DAY7 – COOPERATION VS. COMPETITION

SEPTEMBER 25, 2015 4 COMMENTS

Hi everyone, it's Matthew. I think everyone has experienced social loafing at some point in their life. It happens on sports teams, group projects, and presentations. Social loafing is when people exert less effort when put in a group setting. It is the free-rider theory that says people will put forth less effort when they know others can help them pull the weight. Social loafing is especially present when there are no clear guidelines or assignments in the group.

I have found that the best way to deal with social loafing is by having a lot of meetings, and assigning people to do specific things. When there is a deadline and they have a specific assignment they need to complete, I find that they generally get it done. It also helps when there are consequences for not contributing, such as a grade penalties.

For sports it is a little different. It is harder to tell when someone is not trying their hardest on a team. This is something I never really experienced because I played tennis, which is generally a solo sport. For cycling I do not think it would be as present either. It would be very obvious that someone was not trying their hardest because you are all riding your own bike. I think social loafing would be more present in sports like football, soccer, tug-of-war, etc. I think your effort is less likely to be noticed in these sports because the actions of everyone are seen as a whole rather than just at the individual level.

I think people who are more likely to practice social loafing, are less motivated individuals. When deciding who is on the team, I think it is important to make sure you have motivated people to avoid these issues.

DAY6

## DAY6 – STRENGTHENING WILLPOWER

SEPTEMBER 24, 2015 1 COMMENT

Hi everyone, it's Matthew and my goals are to pass the CPA exam in the next half-year or so, and to get back into tournament tennis. I like the idea of making my larger goals into smaller goals. I used to do this a lot when I did rowing. I would not really think about the overall goal of going 10km per session but, I would focus on 1km at a time. This made it a lot easier to accomplish my larger goal. It is almost like a reward system. If I were to just focus on the 10km, I think it would be much harder to achieve.

The method of having smaller goals is something I want to try when working towards my CPA. The CPA is split into four different tests and you generally take one test each month. My goal should be just to pass each test but, I think I can split this up even further. I think my goal should be just to study one topic each day. I think this would benefit me the most because it gives me daily progress and is fairly easy to accomplish.

As for my goal of getting back into tournament tennis I think I can accomplish this through the same method. I can split this goal up into smaller goals. I think I will set a goal of playing tennis twice a week for the next six months. This makes the goal so much easier to achieve because I pretty much just have to show up to achieve it. It gives me a definitive plan that I can view my progress each week.

This method of splitting up my goals into smaller ones is something that I will probably start right away. I think this, along with making to-do lists will help me achieve my goals the most effectively.

DAY5

## DAY5 – EGO DEPLETION

SEPTEMBER 23, 2015 5 COMMENTS

Hey everyone, my name is Matthew. My goals are to pass my CPA test in the next six or so months, and to get back into tournament tennis. Ego depletion is an idea that our willpower and self-control are limited. I have heard it described in other books as a muscle that gets fatigued as you use it, and you can only use it so much before it runs out. 'Willpower' talks about ego depletion is a set of categories including our thoughts, impulses, emotions, and performance control. I definitely struggle with the impulse control and performance control more than the others. Impulse control refers to resisting temptation, and the book gives examples such as tobacco, alcohol, and Cinnabons. Performance control is about focusing your energy on the task at hand and managing time.

I find myself suffering from ego depletion a lot, and especially when shopping. This refers to impulse control. When I am shopping I find myself making a lot of impulse purchases. Especially when passing places like Starbucks. I almost always stop and buy an iced coffee. I also find myself with ego depletion when I am reading text books. I seem to not manage my time well and am always getting distracted. It gets really tiring reading long chapters of text, and especially when the topics are not interesting.

I think I find myself in these situations of ego depletion because I generally do these activities later in the day, and I have already used up a lot of willpower. Also when I am shopping I am making a lot of decisions and am using willpower the whole time. This drains my overall willpower and causes me to make impulse purchases.

The book mentions a good way to prevent ego depletion. It says that when you are trying to make a big change in your life you should not try and make a lot of other changes at the same time. There is an example in the book about Benjamin Franklin. He would try and be a better person by only focusing on one virtue at a time, he knew that trying to accomplish them all at the same time would only hinder his progress.

I think recovering from ego depletion would be the easiest option. I think the best option would be to take a lot of breaks while studying or shopping. I think this would clear my mind and help recover from ego depletion. It is almost like a reward system. After I use my willpower I get to take a break and restore some of it.

Preventing ego depletion seems a bit more difficult, because it seems like it takes willpower to prevent it. I think preparation would be the best option. Before I go shopping I could eat a big meal or bring a drink with me. I think this would help me avoid going to places like Starbucks every time I pass one. I think for studying the best way to prevent ego depletion would be from preparing a good place to study. By going to the library and only bringing study materials with me, I will not have to use as much willpower avoiding distractions. Since there will be less distractions, there will be less willpower for me to use to avoid them.

DAY4

## DAY4 – DECISION FATIGUE

SEPTEMBER 22, 2015 4 COMMENTS

Hi everyone, my name is Matthew. I never really thought about decisions being fatiguing but, it makes a lot of sense when you think about it. Whenever I go to the mall I am way more likely to stop and get ice-cream, pretzel, etc., after shopping for a long time. I almost never have the temptation when I am entering the mall however. This makes me wonder what ways I can prevent this decision fatigue. Maybe deciding what you are going to buy the night before, or making a list of things you need would help lessen the amount of decisions you have to make.

I can also relate to decision fatigue when I am studying. I can definitely tell that studying gets harder the longer I study for. I think this is why so many researchers and studies recommend

taking breaks often. I bet this would also work when making decisions while shopping for example. After shopping in a store, maybe you could take a 10 minute or so break, by sitting down and listening to music or whatever works for you. If it works for studying I am sure it could translate to other decisions made in your life. I think this is something I would be interested in trying.

I also can tell my decisions changing depending on the time of day. I think I make my best, most logical decisions in the late morning to early afternoon. Right when I wake up I am pretty much on autopilot and at night I feel too fatigued to make tough decisions. I think the best option would be trying to make most of my decisions before it gets too late.

I thought this was a very interesting chapter but, I wish it gave some guidelines on how to avoid the decision fatigue problems more.

DAY3

## DAY3 – MONKEY MIND

SEPTEMBER 21, 2015 6 COMMENTS

I could really relate to this chapter, and Drew Carey's story so much. I feel like I have so many goals and a constant voice telling me to start working on something else. This makes it so easy to give up on goals, or just fall behind. I am really considering the idea of the 43 folder approach that Allen talked about. I think this would really help clear my mind and let me focus on one goal at a time.

I loved that Drew Carey said "I have self-control in some ways, but not in others." This is exactly how I feel. It definitely depends on what is at stake for me. If there is a big test, I have the self-control to study for hours each day. There are so many little things thought, that I continuously put off, but are always in the back of my mind. Drew Carey talked about how he could not even read a book and enjoy it because he had all these things in the back of his mind. This is exactly how I feel. Over the past few years I have found it so hard to read and enjoy a book, because I feel like there are so many other things I could be doing. I always feel guilty about these things in the back of my mind that I am never really at rest.

I am considering buying the David Allen book that was mentioned, because I really think these techniques could help me in achieving my CPA goal, without getting too overwhelmed. I am grateful to have read about Drew Carey's experience because it makes me feel that I am not alone in thinking this way. My 'inner-nag' is something I can deal with rather than fall victim to it.

Matthew

DAY2

## DAY2 – SDT AND FLOW

SEPTEMBER 20, 2015 4 COMMENTS

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) talks about two different types of motivation. Autonomous motivation is described as being motivated to do something because it is seen as beneficial and something you are interested or excited in doing. Controlled motivation is revolved around rewards, punishments, self-esteem, and avoiding being embarrassed.

My goals are driven by autonomous motivation. Training at tennis and rowing are not something I feel pressured to do. I feel excited at the chance to get better at them because it will make me healthier and I just find them enjoyable. My goal to pass my CPA exam is a little different. I want to pass it for the reward of getting the certification but am also excited by the idea of being proficient in the skill. I also do not feel much pressure to pass the CPA exam on my first attempt. I think this comes from me knowing a lot of people who have failed some of the tests multiple times. I think that calms me a bit, and gives me some relief when thinking about the effort I will have to put in. I think a large part of achieving these goals, and having autonomous motivation will come from lowering my stress levels. If I get too nervous or anxious about something, I start to think about the side effects of failing too much which hurts my motivation.

My flow activities include walking and most things competition based. Walking is something I can just do and not think about anything. I find it very calming to just walk in the evenings while listening to calming music. It puts me in a different mental state. I also can get into ‘flow’ when doing most competition activities. I can forget about everything else that has been going on in my life and just focus on the game. I can even focus on things like board games a lot, and feel like my personality gets better even when playing games like Monopoly. I do not really care about winning these fun games but, I find it very easy to get my mind involved in them.

DAY1

## DAY1 – FUTURE GOALS

SEPTEMBER 19, 2015 5 COMMENTS

As the bike race gets underway, it is a great time to think about future goals. It is important to know our strengths and weaknesses when forming new goals so I took the “Personality strength assessment,” and it gave me top strengths of:

- Social intelligence
- Humor
- Bravery



- Honesty
- Perseverance

My main goals for the next few months are to pass the CPA exam, and to start playing tennis tournaments and learn rowing. The CPA exam is an accounting certification exam that takes many months to complete. It is a series of four rigorous tests that will involve a lot of time and perseverance. I will try and achieve this goal through disciplined scheduling and a balance of studying with days off so I do not get burnt out. I think studying with other people will greatly help me achieve this goal, because it will add a level of accountability.

My other goals involve physical activity. I used to play Tennis a lot but my skill has dropped off dramatically since I quit a few years ago. If I want to play tournaments I will have to train for 6-8 months to get back into shape, and reach the skill level again. I also want to learn how to do rowing. I think it would help me achieve my tennis goal because of the intense physicality of the sport. I have done rowing in the past but I would not call myself an expert by any means. I want to achieve a rowing time of 7:15 over a 2000m distance. I think this will be a good way for me to measure my progress. I expect this to take a few months.

When thinking about goals, it is good to think about your heroes because they can give you the motivation to achieve your goals. One person I admire a lot is Roger Federer. He is regarded as one of, if not the greatest tennis player of all time. I am very impressed by his work ethic and discipline when it comes to his training, and his ability to stay in the top ranks for years of play. Usually tennis players reach their peak around the 24-27 year range but, Roger Federer is 34 and still ranked #2 in the world and is consistently reaching the finals of tournaments. This can only be achieved through very disciplined training and I admire the work ethic that he has.

I think I will need very disciplined work ethic to achieve my goals over the next few months. They are not easy goals but, they are doable with the proper effort.