

EPIC! Rule #7



The Secret to solving a “wicked and worthy” problem

EPIC! Rule #7: If you can't have fun with a problem, you can never solve it:

Have you ever faced challenges that you just want to put off until tomorrow, and then the next day? You know you need to face it. Yet you just can't face it yet? Maybe it's starting a new exercise regimen? Or doing some repair work on a relationship? Or getting your estate planning in order? Or cleaning out that closet? Or maybe you are afraid to make a bad decision - so you stay put in the “waiting” room.

There is a reason that “gamification” is one of the underlying principles of the relatively new field of behavioral economics. Play is a different energy than work. Play brings out people's greatest creativity and imagination. Play reduces their fear of losing. Research in the power of play and gamification, from infants through to the end of life, is becoming mainstream in our understanding of human flourishing and innovation. It turns out that the way in which we frame our problems determines both our approach and decisions. Luckily, one of the traits of human beings is our love of problem solving. We are natural puzzlers.

In his book *Wonderland: How Play Made the Modern World*, Steven Johnson observes, “You will find the future wherever people are having the most fun.... Play is the basis of all art, games, books, sports, movies, fashion, fun, and wonder — in short, the basis of what we think of as civilization. Play is what makes life lively.”

Putting ideas into play and playing with those ideas is the essence of the Decade Game. In a previous newsletter, I introduced [EPIC! Rule #3: If you are not having fun, you are playing someone else's game](#). Now it's time for Rule #7

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it: The secret sauce of the Decade Game is that it is a game of “broccoli-covered chocolate” instead of “chocolate-covered broccoli”. The work of designing a transformational life is hard work – and you need to eat all your broccoli. Putting challenging ideas into play and laughing and dancing with the ideas in a brave space of your own choosing, allows you to show up with all your God-given gifts. You discover that it's the sweet chocolate that has always been inside you - the deep longing to be your most essential self - that is the secret ingredient.

The more fun something is, the more you're willing to work on it. Ironically, part of what makes a problem fun is the challenge to solve it. You don't buy a game because it's easy. If it is, it's too boring – and you won't play again.

Winning in the Decade Game – making this the best decade of your life, so far – is a hard challenge. There will be unwelcome surprises and unanticipated trap doors that befall you. The strategies and tactics require you to be laser-focused about your dreams, your choices, your boundaries, and your actions. For it to be an epic game, able to turn the seemingly impossible into the possible, it has to be fun, albeit hard fun.

Want a little taste of how to tackle the challenge of uncovering your purpose and discovering your destiny? Come join Kari Cardinale, SVP of the Modern Elder Academy and me for a [FREE Live Workshop on Tuesday, February 28 at 2pm PT](#). We will have an unplugged, interactive conversation highlighting both MEA's upcoming "Living and Working on Purpose" online course and my in-person Baja, Mexico "Women's PowerPlay Book" workshop April 3-8.

[And men are welcome](#) - as we can all get connected to purpose, on purpose, and create a life by design, not default! You can register here <http://bit.ly/3kaBRKI>

Sending love and light - Carolyn