

The
Wisdom
of
100

MICHAEL RUCKER, Ph.D.

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PREFACE
PREFACE

Back in 2007, I embarked on a 25-year journey named [The Live Life Love Project](#). The project was set up to support three personal goals. One, donate a year's salary and a year's worth of work hours to worthy causes (I keep a scorecard of that effort [here](#)). Two, to ensure I experience at least 100 exciting things in my life (each quarter, I highlight a new life experience in my quarterly [newsletter](#)). Three, garner wisdom from a diverse breadth of [thought leaders](#) across the globe.

The document you are reading now, The Wisdom of 100, is an artifact culminating the wisdom gleaned from reaching the halfway point of [The Live Life Love Project](#). It is the summary result of thought leadership from over 100 people (100 recorded interviews, where a few interviews had multiple thought leaders) in areas I find interesting: Fun, Play, and Life Experience; Health and Wellness; Entrepreneurship; Productivity; Digital Health; and, Leadership.

In this book, you will find a meaningful quote from each thought leader interview. For each quote, the interviewee's name is clickable—containing a link to their corresponding interview (useful for readers who would like to go deeper on a particular topic).

I treated each opportunity to speak with these incredible people as a gift, and I am honored to now pay that gift forward by freely offering this culmination of wisdom throughout the pages that follow.

[Have fun](#) and enjoy.

Sincerely,

Mike Rucker, Ph.D.

SECTION 1

SECTION 1

FUN, PLAY, AND LIFE EXPERIENCE

From successful entrepreneurs to cutting-edge wellness experts, The Wisdom of 100 contains amazing lessons on topics ranging from business, health, productivity, and leadership.

I have kicked us off with fun, play, and life experience because over the past decade, I have come to discover that the importance of fun and play are where too many of us possess a considerable gap in knowledge (myself included when I started down this path!).

The importance of fun has inspired me so much that I have created an entire book on the topic called The Fun Habit coming out in 2021.

In this section, you will find some of the early wisdom I have picked up so far. If any of the quotes stand out, make sure to clickthrough to see the entire interview. There is a lot more to be had at michaelrucker.com.

1) Dr. Michael Gervais

(on the power of having a passion for rich experiences)

“With a posture of being open to change and a continual passion for rich experiences, people naturally grow, and enhanced performance is often a pleasant by-product.” “A ... mistake that I see people make is paying way too much attention to the variables that are not within their control.”

2) Raj Raghunathan

(on the folly of over-quantifying your pursuits)

"Most of the goals we are encouraged to pursue, from individual ones (e.g., saving enough for retirement, losing a certain amount of weight) to societal ones (e.g., increasing GDP), are quantitative in nature. So, we end up never pursuing qualitative goals (like being happy or enhancing levels of trust in society). This overly quantitative (vs. qualitative) focus also makes us more prone to relying on the mind to solve problems, getting us increasingly out of touch with our instincts and feelings."

3) Gary Vaynerchuk (on the power of choice)

"If you are not happy with your life, the only way to change it is to put in an effort that creates something else for yourself. I mean some people are going to need to spend that energy with their families ... to truly crush it they need to spend more time with their families. In other words, what they need to do is spend less time at work. ... I think that if you were not happy with what you were doing in 1977, you did not have a lot of alternatives. You had to pay the rent; you had to pay your bills, right? You got home from your job in the evening, and the best you could do is maybe moonlight at some other terrible job. Today, if you come home in the evening, and you are unhappy, you have the ability to start a business online at night and work to create a scenario that could change your life. I still believe that to be a hundred percent true. Just like if you are unhappy with how much you work — well, then — go get a job that is less demanding and spend that extra time with your family."

4) Noah Kagan

(on increasing the probability your day is fun/rewarding)

"If you reflect on what things bring you the most satisfaction — where you have felt really proud and fulfilled — generally, it was something that was hard in some way. When something isn't really challenging for me, it is actually not as satisfying. It's actually not really fun." "Engineer a day for fulfillment. Figure out what elements make a great day for yourself. You clearly find fun rewarding? Ask yourself what elements need to be consistently in your day to ensure it will be fun. Was today a day worth living? I subconsciously always think about this question. It comes in and out of my mind all the time. How am I creating, end to end, the components that make my day fulfilling? It doesn't mean that every day is going to be great, but we should always be looking at ways to increase the probability or the likelihood that days in the future are going to be better than ones in the past."

5) Eric Quick

(on the power of playing well-designed educational games)

"Gaming is a very powerful medium, especially for younger people, to create behavior change. I believe we are wired to enjoy games. ... It is really quite remarkable what games can do to help people in a fun way."

6) Chip Conley (on creating joy)

"What I believe is that what is remarkable — what creates joy — is when something surprises you and then it delights you. There can be surprise and disappointment, or there can be surprise and delight — when it is surprise and delight, it is unexpected. Unexpected delight is memorable." "Look at pictures of yourself at childhood and get a sense of what it was that gave you bliss. How can you manifest that in your adult life? I was always fascinated about Walt Disney and how he created Disneyland. I was fascinated by creating experiences for kids in the neighborhood, so ... I would do just that. I would create a restaurant in my mom's dining room, for instance. There are clues there — find them."

7) Erik Paquet (on the power of travel)

“Travel gives you an opportunity to learn both about yourself and other people. I truly believe that travel makes the world a better place. It makes us more open-minded, and so that’s been the most rewarding part about this, is seeing how enabling people to travel can make an impact.” “I think one of the most powerful things that you can do to make a trip more meaningful is to carve out time to connect with locals and to meet people from the area. It doesn’t have to be anything that’s super in-depth. Many times, there is a language barrier. ... However, sometimes there is a breakthrough moment for many people traveling when, even if it is frustrating and hard, they try to make a connection with locals. Even something as simple as buying a cup of coffee at a local coffee shop and struggling through an unfamiliar language to order it — that conversation can add so much value and depth to the experience of travel.”

8) Charlie Hoehn (on the power of rediscovering play)

“If you have lost opportunities to play, which happens to pretty much every adult — we get recess taken away from us now after elementary school, which is a very deflating moment — but there are really simple things you can do, starting with just going on a walk in nature and just noticing the design of the trees and the design of nature all around you. It is a very simple but very grounding activity that is really, no pun intended, a breath of fresh air. You can make this activity into a playful thing.”

9) Jonah Babins (on finding and creating moments of wonder)

“There’s a lot of building blocks to magic. Like all art, and like all artists, I don’t get to choose when ideas come to me. Sometimes I’m working on one thing, and an idea for something completely different comes to me, and I go, “Oh!” That’s the kernel that grows into what is an experience of wonder.”

10) Dr. Anthony Middlebrooks (on making fun a habit)

"Having fun needs to become a habit. It needs to become a series of mental habits. In my case, there are two or three mental habits that I will typically try to keep in mind and work to develop. For instance, I will create little notes, and I will put them in front of my computer to remind me — things like: Remember to explore the world, generate ideas beyond the first one you like, or even something simple like don't forget to smile." "To 'optimize' fun mindfully, reflect on what works for you in context, as well as what doesn't. You have to be really observant and mindful about how you go about infusing fun in various aspects of life. Your credibility as a leader is all you have. If you lose it — one offensive joke, one stupidly inconsiderate activity— it is going to really hurt your ability to connect with others, communicate, and lead — much less facilitate fun."

11) Dr. Cassie Mogilner Holmes

(on the power of reframing how you spend time)

"There is a lot of value in simply reframing an experience or a period of time. It's about carving out that time in your mind as being special — it's a break from the day-to-day routine, and one may even say drudgery. You can apply this to a date night during the week or even those couple of hours at home after work with the family." "Any time you acknowledge special time, it really draws you into the here and now. Acknowledging time as special makes you fully present. You appreciate what you're doing and whom you're doing it with."

12) Dr. Mike Rucker (on the importance of time affluence)

"That's been the biggest lesson for me, to respect my time as much, if not more, than my money. This is especially true for me since I put a high value on fun, and autonomy over your time is an essential part of having fun."

13) Dr. Timothy Wilson (on the power of enjoying the moment)

"In predicting the future, people often overestimate the impact of negative events. This is because people do not take into account how much they will transform the events in their heads in ways that make the events lose their power." "When something really good happens to us, we have the same inclination to want to make sense of it and understand it. Assigning meaning can rob us of pleasure because what initially seems surprising and amazing and interesting becomes ordinary pretty quickly."

14) Gary Ware (on the power of making time for quality play)

"Mindset is so important as it pertains to play. Something I learned from researcher Jane McGonigal when play is used for escapism—to escape from doing something, or because you don't have the will to do it—play becomes a tool for procrastination. Learning this was a big eye-opener because it suggests there is very fine line between purpose-driven play and play as vehicle for escapism." "We are on this planet for such a short period of time. If everything that you're doing is specifically goal-oriented with no focus on bringing joy to yourself and to others, when you get to the end of your life, you're likely going to look back on it and regret you didn't enjoy things more."

15) Amanda Krantz (on the power of gratitude)

"It surprised me how many people were like me that wanted to thank someone but never did. Whether it's you don't know what to say, or there is not an easy way to say it, you end up not doing it. But when it's made easy, a ton more people will thank the person who helped them. Spending so much time now seeing the effects of gratitude on the sender and the receiver, I will catch myself not expressing my gratitude and make more of an effort to actually thank someone and let their supervisor know, in everything from airlines to customer service calls."

16) Dr. Susanne Cook-Greuter

(on the power of remaining open-minded)

"Freedom from constraint is not limited to early development. Anyone who has access to play, access to ideas—even access abstract constructs—who is willing to play with ideas and constructs is going to be more likely to develop than somebody who is attached to ideas and constructs in a sort of static way, 'This is how the world is.'"

17) Scott Bell (on the power of knowing what makes you tick)

"It is the person who walks through life, knowing what makes them tick that seems to get satisfaction and peace with where they are. Decisions are much less impulsive and often much easier to make clearly when these values are at the front of your mind. Instead of money becoming an enabler of materialism, wealth becomes the vehicle for values like security, time with family, and creating a legacy."

18) Dr. Jeffrey Pfeffer

(on the folly of not making time for leisure)

"There is this idea which we have come to take for granted that we have to put in long hours. Nobody really is effectively asking the question, 'Is this the best way? Is this an effective way to work? What is the toll to maintain the status quo?' Looking at both industry- and country-level analyses, we know that as work hours go up (after a certain point), productivity generally goes down." "It used to be a status symbol to have a tan because that showed that you probably took a vacation. And now, it is a status symbol to have markers that suggest you work all the time. Working is a status marker; it plays to our ego. Today's priorities do not align well with being well, and that needs to change."

19) Brad Wills

(on scheduling time for fun, family, and self-care)

"I think the biggest difference as I look ahead is allowing more time into the calendar for experiences that don't directly relate to driving business outcomes. It's not about working less per se. It's about recognizing that "you are a better you" if you've built in quality time with the family, workout time, etc. This time outside of work needs to be calendared in advance and prioritized accordingly. If life outside work is not an explicit commitment, the temptation to let work encroach into other areas of life is hard to resist."

20) Craig Lund **(on play as an entry for discovery and wisdom)**

"Play is not accidental. It's not just some interesting side part of a child's life. Play is really a root of discovery for a child, and a lot of learning as a child is their interaction with the world." "If you are engaged in what you're doing, what you're learning, then you're more likely to retain it. Play is really a way to make kids care about what they're learning. Learning through play builds faster neural connections than other types of learning."

21) Tara Gerahty **(on the power of fun)**

"When you give something scary an identity, you have better control over it. For instance, let's say you have a phobia of a snake, and you give the snake a name; for many, that snake is somehow less scary. Your fear now has a personality you can play with. When we make things fun and less scary, we can cope with them better." "Why isn't there more comedy in hospitals and emergency rooms? In my experience, people are usually watching the news or shows that are depressing. If fun is as good as we know it to be, then we should be watching funny things, lighthearted things, and releasing the stress in our bodies in these types of settings."

22) Angela Kyle (on the power of play)

“Block and construction-engineering play is a very specific kind of play. There’s been a lot of research around the skills and impact that early engagement in these kinds of building activities can have on childhood development, fostering skills around motor coordination, spatial skills, reasoning skills; foundational skills that have been proven to lay the early groundwork for STEM, for science, technology, engineering, and math.”

“Using clay as a mode of communication for kids in high-stress environments can be extremely helpful because many don’t really have the language or the means to express themselves. Instead, they can express themselves through these highly visual and tactile hands-on modes of play.”



SECTION 2
SECTION 2

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

As the saying goes, “the greatest wealth is health,” so before we jump into more business-oriented wisdom, let’s learn from some of the best thought leaders in the areas of fitness, health, and wellness. Some may know me for my penchant for health technology, for those looking for this type of content I have reserved a separate section for thought leadership specific to digital health towards the end. What you will find in this section is knowledge regarding exercise, behavior change, nutrition, and holistic wellness and other pieces of wisdom related to [workplace wellness](#).

23) Dave Scott (on over-training)

“There is a point of no return in just squeezing in more distance in your training. Without teaching your body to burn fuel at the rate of your projected race pace and providing the physiological overload needed for adaptation, the athlete is destined to go slow during the race.”

24) Sean Waxman (on the power of fitness)

“What excites me in fitness is the general acceptance of exercise as one of, if not the most, powerful components to one’s well-being, a kind of cure-all. If this trend continues and is championed by the correct people/organizations, exercise, especially exercise done with free weights, can affect society on a scale as large as the personal computer has. For example, two out of the top four killers of Americans are currently cardiovascular disease and adult-onset diabetes. These are ‘lifestyle’ diseases caused predominantly by inactivity. Exercise would all but eradicate these ailments.”

25) Luke Aguilar (on coaching)

"One thing I would like to note as well is that if anyone that says one method of training, or one specific workout, is the best for everyone, they are just plain wrong. ... Each person needs to keep trying until they find what works for them." "As coaches, we all take the same classes; we all read the same books and magazines and go to the same seminars. What makes one coach better than another is their ability to wade through all this information and incorporate it into a system that is specific to the athlete they are training. So much of sport is mental, my ability to sell "my product" has been a key to my success as a track & field/cross country coach."

26) Margaret Moore (on savoring)

"What will success look like and how will you know when you get there? Some things you can measure with numbers. You can measure your blood pressure; you can measure your waist size and body fat percentage. ... However, a lot of things that people desire are subjective. Therefore, we need to create scales to quantify things that are not easy to quantify." "If you work at it, like any new habit, your brain will change, and you can shift to a more positive frame of mind more often. You can savor more; you can connect to your purpose more; you can be more mindful and appreciative in your relationships; you can empower yourself to get more out of your connections every day. ... You can relish the things that make you thrive."

27) Chris Talley (on eating well)

"I believe supplementation plays a role only after 'the basics' have been addressed. Eating a wholesome and healthy diet will carry you surprisingly far in athletic competition." "I see A LOT of athletes that eat HORRIBLY, and then try to patch it up with some over-the-counter ergogenic aids. It never benefits them in the long run when they go that route, though the placebo effect may carry them for a little bit."

28) Jeff Atkinson (on honoring the process)

"Look at it this way — you can only build a pile of sand so high. Ultimately you need to increase the width/base if you want to reach new heights. The base of this sand pyramid is a good metaphor for the foundation of your aerobic capacity." "There will be days that you don't want to advance your goal, but you know you have to as part of the 'process.' It turns into a situation of personal integrity rather than an external benefit. When you force yourself to complete the process (on a day where you wanted to give up), the moral victory becomes easily worth the effort; in turn, the process and goal become self-perpetuating."

29) Thom Gilligan (on enhancing the marathon experience)

"I believe the marathon experience can be enhanced by setting a personal time goal. This can be specifically unique to the individual, so I am not suggesting that everyone needs to try and qualify for Boston. The goal should be realistic, and ... it is important to mention that they should be specific to the race itself as well."

30) John Monagle (on holistic wellness)

"I think natural medicine is the paradigm shift. It is the way naturopathic doctors are trained to think about health in the first place. ... the beauty is, it is coming from their patients not wanting to take a drug or have surgery. More and more people are recognizing the downside of being a slave to prescription drugs. Thanks to the Internet, they are more informed about health in general, and they want healthier alternatives." "Contrary to what some might have you believe, it is important to be participant in nurturing your well-being. The more informed you are with the choices you have, the better you can tailor your own health care approach."

31) Ellen Burton (on exercise is medicine)

"Exercise is a medicinal tool, which needs to be properly addressed with health care providers and their patients. It is something that should start with the doctor, potentially get passed along to the engaged health-and-fitness professional, and ultimately adhered to by the patients themselves."

32) Dr. Matthew Nock (on behavior change)

"If we want to change our own behavior, we need to accurately understand to what extent the behavior in which we are engaging is rewarding or beneficial. We also want to accurately understand what the costs involved are. We have to seriously evaluate both the rewards and cost." "To make good choices, we need people to understand and appropriately weigh the costs and the benefits. An important part of the process of behavior change is to figure out ways to have people find similar benefits that do not carry the same costs of the behavior one hopes to change. The challenge is how to get yourself to feel good and/or distract yourself from aversive psychological states, without doing harm to your mind and/or body."

33) Dr. Liz Applegate (on tracking improvements)

"In my experience, people that really track improvements see better results by asking questions like 'how well do I sleep,' 'how good is my training program,' 'how consistent am I with my eating,' and 'what diet works best for me,' rather than looking to creatine or glutamine or any of these other type of things."

34) Mike Leveque (on employee wellness)

"I believe most reasonable executives would agree that utopia would be providing regular health assessments, thoroughly educating each employee individually on their results, and then allowing them to set the most appropriate health and wellness goals that motivate them to achieve a better future state."

35) Ben Greenfield (on healthy habits)

"Whenever you talk about optimizing performance, you have to understand that anxiety and disruptive thought patterns can affect the gut, and there is also a lot of evidence showing that what you eat can have an effect on cognitive performance." "I am a big fan of making sure that you engage in low-level activity all day long — basically standing on your feet, getting a standing workstation, or even using a treadmill desk. Avoid sedentary positions for a long period so that all day long, you are building low-level physical endurance, which you can then rely on during your interval training and endurance training."

36) James Pshock (on the complexity of workplace wellness)

“There is a value in having some type of wellness program regardless of the size of your organization. However, when you talk about the concept of workplace wellness, it is important to note that it is enormous and complex. For example, you might be looking at something as basic as smoking and say, “Well, you’re going to add years to the end of your life if you quit. Don’t believe us? Here, we can show you all these studies of morbidity rates improving if you stop smoking.” “But smoking is not the problem, in this case, it is a symptom of severe depression. I mean, the last thing on their mind is living longer, and we are discussing morbidity. We are making all these assumptions that what is important to us is important to them.”

37) Mitesh Patel (on wellness programs)

“A common problem with some wellness programs is they are often one-size-fits-all. For instance, lose 10 pounds and get a reward, but really, we need to do a better job at personalizing to the individual. This highlights the importance of paying attention to how these programs are designed. We are facing complex problems, and oftentimes we are meeting these problems with solutions that are frankly too simple.” “I think technology possesses great potential to help us change behavior. One of the main reasons is that we could not measure these behaviors up until [roughly] 5 or 10 years ago. The greatest promise of technology is being able to, on a large scale, automate this idea of passively hovering and get a rich data set so that we can see what is working (and what is not). Furthermore, we can do this while the only expectation for the participant is to continue doing what they are doing, which, if you think about it, is a big deal.”

38) Jeff Galloway (on maximizing the enjoyment of running)

“The question I do not get asked enough is, ‘How can I maximize running enjoyment?’ When asked, my answer to this is: go out easier at the beginning of your runs, find the right group to run with, and enjoy the process.”

39) Matthew Heineman (on healthcare)

“We as a society need to find ways to create a system of health, a system that incentivizes people to be healthier; a system that incentivizes doctors and team-based systems to provide care before disease actually takes place as opposed to only treating disease after it occurs.” “I really believe that the private sector has a big role to play in terms of helping to solve our healthcare crisis. ... The key is not to blame the individual — it’s my belief these incentives should not be positioned as penalties. In my opinion, the key is to figure out how to incentivize people to stay healthy.”

40) Laura Putnam (on workplace well-being)

“I am more and more convinced that when it comes to the practice of well-being, we are less ‘creatures of habit’ and more ‘creatures of culture.’ Therefore, as wellness practitioners, we must become experts in culture change — and not just experts in behavior change.” “I’m more and more convinced that the only way we are going to have real impact is if we start to integrate wellness and well-being holistically and not have myopic standalone programs. A great way to do that is by channeling Leonardo da Vinci, the Italian polymath, and taking an interdisciplinary approach toward promoting well-being in the workplace.”

41) Tom DeLong (on fitness programming)

“With any program/system you: one, analyze; two, optimize; three, maximize for efficiency and effectiveness; four, minimize anything that decreases anything that inhibits your ability to achieve all the goals within that program/system.” “You can standardize the process of aligning the tires on your car. But if you try to use the same measurements and metrics of a Hummer and apply that to a Mini, you are going to have real problems. That would be ridiculous; they are two different cars. The same holds true for exercise prescription.”

42) Brodie Burris (on acupuncture)

"Left to its own devices, our bodies will eventually heal from most ailments on their own. The object of medicinal intervention then is to assist this process and speed it along." "Healing is a natural process. Acupuncture is a very useful tool in actively accelerating this natural process, and because of this, it is an ideal medium for treating sports-related injuries."

43) Ben Rubin (on behavior change)

"When we were interviewing consumers about change and asking them what worked, again and again, they would mention community and the community's respective leader. It became very clear that one of the key aspects of behavior change is actually shifting your identity to become associated with the view within the group. This concept/idea is supported by academic research, too."

44) Dr. Dike Drummond (on burnout)

"We must have opportunities to meet, connect, and get to know each other outside of our work hours. If you want any culture at all, you need to have an active social calendar. It doesn't have to be all 300 of those doctors getting together. But it could be interest groups, right? It could be the triathletes; it could be the bowling club; it could be the writers; it could be the Tai Chi group. You must have things outside of medicine that are sponsored specifically for the physicians because physicians tend not to attend things that are for all staff. This should be a signature piece of the organization's strategy to prevent burnout."

SECTION 3
SECTION 3

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

From personal successes and failures as an entrepreneur, I can attest the journey of entrepreneurship is not for the faint of heart. Over the past decade, I have been honored to learn entrepreneurial lessons and garner wisdom from some amazing entrepreneurial talent, from household names like Tim Ferris and Gary Vaynerchuk to academic oracles such as Olav Sorenson. In this section, I have curated sound bites from these fantastic innovators. If one or more stands out, be sure to click the individual's name for access to the entire interview.

[45\) Stuart MacFarlane](#) (on venture capital)

"One big mistake is building ... before you really understand the problem you are trying to solve. ... Do not try and close a deal on the first meeting. Oftentimes in a first meeting, you are not meeting with someone who can make the ultimate decision."

[46\) Mark Friedman](#) (on early-stage considerations)

"As an entrepreneur, it often takes stubborn single-mindedness to succeed and an ability to block out negativity and doubt. However, if your concept really has zero potential, no matter how hard you try, it's like holding onto a boat anchor. The dilemma is knowing which advice is right and how long to keep at it." "As an entrepreneur, there are going to be ebbs and flows in your business that are beyond your control. During the good times taking something for yourself helps ensure that all your efforts don't go up in smoke if the company doesn't survive the long haul."

47) Ed Baker (on growth)

"Entrepreneurs need to start considering the tradeoff between short-term virality and long-term engagement. There is value in keeping users around. The question that they should be asking is, 'How can we truly engage our users?' ...It seems obvious, but if you are more focused on how to reach users than on how to make a great product, you're doomed."

48) Olav Sorenson (on strategy)

"If you are going to do something, do it well and do it simply. You can offer choice but do it without increasing cost. Taco Bell is a great example. You go in there thinking there are an exorbitant amount of items to choose from, but they are really all made from the same limited amount of ingredients. The more complicated things get, the higher the risk of failure." "Remember that almost everyone is over-confident, especially entrepreneurs."

49) Bryan Pate (on launching a product)

"It is a tough sale to get people to put money down on something they can't immediately start using. Part of consumerism is instant gratification. ...We understand the importance of our first customers. In some sense, they will be our de facto sales force, and because of that, we need to make sure we take care of them and foster a great relationship with them."

50) Hammad Zaidi (on learning from your failures)

"One of the most important lessons I learned in film school is it is almost impossible to determine if you will have a hit on your hands, but it is usually pretty easy (if you are honest with yourself) to identify a project that will fail. This same lesson can be applied to any business, and an important takeaway is that you can learn a lot more from prior failures than successes. It is difficult to find a blueprint to success, but there are plenty of well-known paths to failure." "It's become my mission to actively seek out tremendous life experiences, good and bad, because it's those experiences that make us the sum of who we are. My mission has allowed me to attend the last 18 straight Super Bowls, make 10 trips to the Canadian Yukon to see a three-day concert under the midnight sun, and it's allowed me to try to inspire everyone I meet to live out their dreams to their fullest capabilities."

51) [Morten Hansen](#) (on being deliberate)

“One of the findings that surprised me the most is that top performers seemingly collaborate less than their counterparts. This is not to suggest that top performers are not great collaborators. What my research does suggest is that top performers are very deliberate about what collaborations they accept—meaning they often say ‘no’ to projects more than they say ‘yes.’ However, when they do say ‘yes’ to collaborating, they go all in.”
“From the various academic work on deliberate practice, we know that most people get better at something when they focus their learning on a specific task. It is difficult for us to get good at something if we are diluting our attention on several things at once.”

52) [Scot Hacker](#)

(on the power of believing in yourself and your tools)

“Just remember: If your idea doesn’t sound a little bit crazy, you’re probably not on the right track. You’ve got to trust your craziness. If you have some wild hunch, go with it! Just get out there and be the best at executing your nutty idea.” “Believe in your tools. In my case, I passionately love the Django framework, and working with it is part of what I personally wanted. Yes, I was passionate about the site concept, but it wouldn’t have been fun to build with Drupal.”

53) [Todd DiPaola](#) (on creating value)

“If you want to make money in business, seek out an existing ecosystem that you can make more effective and capitalize on the upside.” “I’ve succeeded because I develop companies that guarantee value. I don’t make a dollar until my client makes two. My companies are based on performance, and in turn, the value proposition sells itself.”

54) [Jerome Breche](#) (on user experience)

“Great service builds brand advocates, which is a powerful form of marketing. Our company mantra is to treat every customer or prospect exactly the same way. To make it scalable, we constantly try to improve support.” “When a website visitor sees a real person’s smiling face, they are way more likely to respond to this message and engage.”

55) Sunil Saha (on consumer loyalty rewards)

"You want to focus rewards on things that are repetitive, with low intrinsic value to the customer. So, for example, checking into the gym, very repetitive, doesn't take very much creativity or thought, but it does actually drive health benefit, and it also drives loyalty to a business, so you want to reward that. However, one might want to avoid using rewards as the main mechanism for a weight loss program. You're going to lose all creativity, all flexibility, and all consumer autonomy from the process of reaching that goal."

56) Alex Kaplinsky (on good web design)

"Good brands are now about utility, about simplicity, and being able to achieve what you want to do quickly and efficiently. Businesses getting it wrong get in the way of the user. Businesses getting it right understand reciprocity. They understand that by putting the user's needs first, they will be rewarded for their effort." "A fair number of projects fail because they are bound by a timeline but also require the sign-off of an executive who has no availability. Trying to comply with time constraints, you are forced to act upon visual designs that haven't been officially approved, only to find out that the key stakeholder disapproves of the design, and now your project is late and over budget. So, these things are commonalities of companies that get it right. The ones that get it wrong don't plan, have no content strategy, and have unrealistic expectations."

57) Gear Fisher (on creating value)

"If you can get the most critical things communicated to your user quickly, you've done a good job. From there, they can dig into the deeper, more complicated features. The people that dig in are ultimately your best customers, and they quickly move past ease of use and just want features." "We charged for our product from day one. We focus on providing value to our customers, and we're not afraid to make people pay for it. If we do a good job, we believe we'll be rewarded by paying customers, and so far, that's worked out very well for us."

58) Pat Fellows (on the power of 'good enough' and saying no)

"Realize that your 70 percent is probably better than most peoples' 100 percent. If what you do is truly passion-based, then on most days, you have to accept that 'finished' is good enough. Kind of the progress vs. perfection idea, if you're passionate about something, you can get in your own way." "Say no. This is hard, but there is only so much time in the day. You have to say no to okay, to have time to say yes to awesome."

59) Erik Allebest (on selecting a domain name)

"There are 4 factors I consider when purchasing a domain: 1. Current traffic: How much traffic does it currently generate? 2. Potential traffic: How much traffic do I think I can generate based on keywords in the domain? 3. Brand: How does it sound? How easy to type? How does it 'feel'? 4. Market: How monetizable is each visitor?" "Your domain is your brand, your address, your face, and your No. 1 salesperson all rolled into one. Get over the notion that 'domains cost \$9.' They don't."

60) Bill McBride (on service delivery)

"The high end that can't be replicated with ease (cost of entry too high) will always serve a consumer need: exclusive, lifestyle, family, and prestige based. These companies create an emotional bond, evoke status and its members are brand connected and in many cases for generations (think Four Seasons, fine dining, etc.)." "Results are a by-product of a great offering. The focus should be on delivery and habits."

61) Ned Dwyer (on the value of a prospect list)

"Packaging works. We have bundled some of our best services based on our ability to deliver on the identified needs of our customers, and it's helped with some of our growth." "Never underestimate the value of your email list. ... Early entrepreneurs can benefit from working on a qualified list early, and then see to what extent they can work their list without fatiguing their core base."

62) Nir Eyal (on important performance metrics for startups)

“When I look for opportunities to invest in or consult with companies, the three criteria I always look for are: growth, engagement, and monetization. A startup must possess two of these at the onset, with a strategy to obtain the third, or I’m likely not going to be interested.” “When we feel happy, we don’t have a problem. Every solution is used to address a problem.”

63) Brad Bowery (on building culture)

“If there is dissidence between the culture of the company you are creating and the culture of the space in which you are doing it, you could be wasting energy. A bad decision is not without consequence; this new space is likely where you are building your company’s foundation (i.e., new hires, social norms, etc.)”

64) Tim Ferriss (on networking)

“Don’t amass connections on LinkedIn like a collector and think you are a great networker. Knowing 10 to 50 people really well, influencers in your niche is far more important than the total amount of contacts you have. In fact, handling contacts like a collector is handicapping. You reach a point of saturation that makes it impossible to maintain any meaningful relationships. Approach people, you would like to meet with a “just-in-time” strategy, not a “just-in-case” strategy. Make sure that if you meet someone you would like to connect with, you have something to say!”

65) Neville Medhora (on taking action)

“First-time entrepreneurs notoriously like to complicate things, so they don’t have to take action. ... My advice: put something out there really quick and see if anyone wants it; if they do, congratulations, you are an entrepreneur! Now start working on being a better one.”

66) Bob Summers (on the importance of visibility)

"If you want a successful endeavor, you need a promoter. If you are not that person, then you might need to acquire that expertise through someone that knows public relations. It's not a secret that good PR will assist you with growth, but some forget it is a strategy that you can do well or poorly ... where perhaps hoping something goes viral is more of a wish than a strategy."

67) Dr. Chris Bingham (on innovation)

"I believe the counter-intuitive insight when you're trying to innovate is that when markets become more dynamic, more ambiguous, often the best strategies are the most simple."

68) Lloyd Nimetz (on social entrepreneurship)

"Doing well for yourself is necessary to help others. The trick is to first understand what you're getting into and make sure it's right for you before jumping in." "Doing well and doing good should be built into everything we do and every organization in the planet."

69) Mark Newman (on intuition)

"The most important thing is to trust your own expertise. You should intuitively know the customers you are trying to attract. You should have an idea of what strategies you are trying to pursue. You should already know what the important problems are you need to solve. What you don't want to do is look to data to validate some preconceived answer to your problem. Instead, you want to devote your own educated guesses as to what to do — and then you want to use data to test those rigorously to keep yourself honest."

70) Barbara Lippard

(on gaining knowledge, skills, and the right team)

"The most common universal activity I have seen that leads to success is gaining knowledge and experience in a particular industry before entering it. Furthermore, people lacking in management skills need to develop these skills. Entrepreneurs that take the time to learn general business and managerial knowledge plus the specific knowledge needed to succeed in the industry significantly reduce their chance of failing. You would think this would go without saying, but you continually see people risk a lot without any real skill, experience, or knowledge of the industry they hope to succeed in."
"Success is assisted by developing the right team, including a great lawyer, accountant, SCORE counselor, a friendly banker, and a trustworthy insurance contact."

71) Matthew Szymczyk (on the advancement of augmented reality)

"One area that I'm both excited for and afraid of at the same time is how augmented information will spread as the field develops. For instance, most companies aren't even thinking about where and how augmented ads or information can be placed both from a competitive view or placement."

SECTION 4
SECTION 4

PRODUCTIVITY

Time is a fleeting resource; as such, learning how to use time wisely is a worthy pursuit for anyone trying to live a good life. Please enjoy the wisdom in this section from productivity thought leaders.

72) Ari Meisel (on the benefits of health)

"The truth is productivity and wellness go hand in hand. ... I can make you as technologically efficient from a productivity standpoint as you can possibly be, but if you're not sleeping well enough and/or not eating right, there is going to be a limit to how much you can produce, or how happy you are going to be with your results. For instance, some come to me and say they want to be a speed reader, which most people can certainly do, but at the same time if you can increase mental focus, retention, and memory by reducing stress and improving well-being, you're going to be a faster reader because part of being a faster reader is not having to reread things." "The worst that somebody can do is to stagnate, and as long as they are doing something, even if it's a tiny thing, that's progress."

73) Kate Matsudaira (on making a plan)

"I believe there are two main ways people get stuck. The first way is, you know what you should be doing, but you're not sure how to make progress. For example, you know you really want to be a writer, but you don't know how to get a writing job. The second way people get stuck is, you have the knowledge to move yourself forward ... you have the capacity to build a plan ... but you cannot establish momentum." "To overcome being lazy, you need a plan. You need action. ... You have these really big goals, and you're so far from the finish line, it becomes tough to continue. One of the biggest lessons I learned during that time was to start with small steps."

74) David Allen (on getting things done)

"Studies have shown that the people who believe they are disorganized are actually some of the most organized. They are cognitive of the fact that the better you get, the better you'd better get. They have learned to adapt, but for one reason or another, they identify themselves as unorganized when, in fact, compared to their peers, they fall high on the scale for being organized." "People often mistakenly think Getting Things DONE is about getting rid of stuff. That has not ever been explicitly stated; rather, one just needs to be conscious of the things that are pulling at their psyche. Have as much stuff as you would like as long as it is not a distraction. It is about being honest with yourself and learning that it is okay to tell yourself and others 'no' once in a while."

75) Laura Vanderkam (on using time well)

"If you want to spend your time better, you really need to figure out where your time is going now because if you don't know where the time is going now, it's unclear that you will know to change the way you spend your time to the right thing. You may identify something that you thought was a problem but really isn't. It could also be that something you never even thought about is taking a lot more time than you might have imagined." "Too many days of effortless fun turns into weeks and months that are not memorable. When we don't have interesting experiences, we do not remember where our time went. Whole years can wind up, disappearing into memory sinkholes. Time... just gone. In contrast, if we have meaningful experiences, if we put interesting, memorable things in our time, then we do remember the experience, and that makes us feel like we have more time."

SECTION 5
SECTION 5

DIGITAL HEALTH

Digital health has been an important part of my livelihood throughout the years. Although studying fun is undoubtedly the fire that drives me, health technology remains a passion that continues to fascinate me. From being a top 50 digital health influencer, to my run as [VeryWellHealth.com's Health Tech Expert](#), I've been able to access and learn from some of the best in the business. If health tech is your thing too, this section is for you.

76) Ken Snyder (on making data meaningful)

"There is a balance between the value data provides and the effort needed to get data. We are getting better at lowering the effort threshold by reducing the friction between users and their data. We are also making data more enjoyable through various methodologies such as gamification." "Great tools let people bring forth observations quickly and easily by finding meaningful relationships in the data effortlessly."

77) Matt Holt (on behavior change)

"Let's start that we know that if we exercise and eat better, that's half the battle. I have little doubt that eventually, technology is going to make that easier, better, faster, and make it more effortless. In that sense, the construct of willpower might change." "Nutrition is particularly hard, and even with great technology, the truth is people just do not keep up with that type of change because technology has not solved the problem that some behavior change is hard."

78) Craig DeLarge (on digital mental health)

"There is a major paradigm shift in health care from a pay for service model to a pay for outcome model." "In mental health, there is a lot of non-compliance. There is a chance for digital health tech to have a complementary effect strengthening compliance and support. There is also the opportunity for better use of patient's data to create win-win therapy and outcome situations."

79) Nadeem Kasaam (on biofeedback becoming mainstream)

"I find it exciting that the day in which we have consumer devices that are truly medical grade but possess a user experience that rivals Apple is not that far away. I'm also very excited about the merger between mind and body and how new technologies will bring what has traditionally been known as 'biofeedback' into the mainstream." "If there is one thing that I have learned from my father, it is that you are never done; it only becomes grander, more enjoyable, and relaxed as you get older."

80) Brian Russell

(on health technology and the user experience)

"Devices are now letting people close the loop on their goals, too. Up until recently, one could argue biometric devices were really just arming people with data, which is great. However, now a user can say, 'what's my goal?' and can use these devices to make better choices." "If you can present people's data to them in an easy to understand way ... they will get it; they'll see the picture. Once they get it, the experience will be entertaining, which assists one in making positive changes easier." "Technology should never smack someone in the forehead; usability is paramount."

81) Jill Gilbert (on behavior change through wearables)

"Most behavior change — when it comes to wearables — is going to be as good as the prompt and/or stimulus. The closer we can get the stimulus to inspire (or be) the next desired action in the loop, the closer we get to behavior change being a non-factor." "Companies still need to be bold. True innovation and breakthroughs come from mavericks who accomplish what others say cannot be done. There is a balance. The good news for innovators is that it is hard for bigger companies to take risks, so often through the 'right' type of partnerships, a start-up can get significant help from a larger organization."

82) Dr. Henry DePhillips (on telemedicine)

"With telemedicine, it is no longer a burden to see a doctor. With the traditional approach, you generally must take time off work, schedule an appointment, travel from work to see your physician. Now, if an employee is in need of care, it is as close as their keyboard or mobile phone. An experience that used to be three to four hours can now be accomplished in 30 minutes with telemedicine — and unless you need to pick up a prescription, your experience can all take place in a virtual environment of your choosing." "Health care, as an industry, tends to be fairly conservative when it comes to technology. Think back to the Marcus Welby, M.D. days, and we have not evolved much since then in regards to care. Health care is still a very provider-centric experience. The provider tells you the times that work for them; you go to the provider's place of practice; the provider basically makes you adhere to what is convenient for the provider. I see telemedicine as the first major shift towards a consumer-centric approach."

83) Sky Christopherson

(on the power of actionable insight from correlation)

“The innovations around integration and correlation are particularly exciting. Usable products, products with a focus on great UX, mean more users will be willing to collect more data. Armed with more data – and more importantly, data from multiple sources – we can do exciting things with convergence using mathematical integration. Increasing strides in processing power and programming mean we can find correlations and new insights that were not there before because... these things have been too cumbersome up to now to extrapolate with now antiquated technologies... this will soon change... it is already changing. We will see unprecedented insight into individualized, multivariate health and wellness factors. Once you see more clearly what factors are leading to which outcomes in your life, you can act to better influence them.”

84) Alex Gourley

(on the evolution of user experience in digital health)

“I would argue that right now, what we have is only iteratively better than the analog tools we’ve had in the past. How many apps are simply replacements for a workout notebook, workout tapes, or a meal diary? These only help the people those analog tools would have helped ... those with enough willpower to deploy the tools. Unwilling or occasionally unwilling participants (most people) still find no help from diet/fitness apps and devices. But that will change soon. The next generation of mobile technology will be full of trickery – exploiting our impulses instead of trying to suppress them. And it will be very powerful.”

85) Drew Schiller (on digital health)

“One thing I will say about health care is that unfortunately, health care is slow to adopt new technologies. This is an industry that, for some good reasons actually, still largely relies on pagers and fax machines for everyday communication. The primary reason why adoption is slow is because new technologies that are brought into health care need to be bulletproof. They need to be perfect — or as perfect as you can get them — because when you are dealing with data and/or a message that could make or break a patient’s well-being, you really need to make sure delivery is perfect.” “Patients only care about their health when they have to. So, what I mean by that is, for example, if I’m a 45-year-old obese man and I know I need to cut down on my meat, and salt intake, and maybe drink less, certainly I already know all of that, right? But I’m not going to be overly worried about it until I have a pre-heart disease episode where the situation highlights, I need to make a change, right?”

86) Daniel Freedman (on virtual fitness)

“One big surprise is the willingness of people to try something different from home or get started on their fitness journey. We see with companies that often people have heard about top local instructors, they’re very curious to try them out, they’ve just never had the time, or confidence, or motivation, to actually take the class. But being able to experience it at home, from the comfort of their own home, makes a big difference.” “Just because you cannot do something in person, you are no longer limited. The virtual world bridges that divide makes people more efficient and allows them to use their time more effectively without sacrificing quality. This will only continue to improve in the years ahead.”

87) Ryan Tarzy (on interoperability)

"I think it is absolutely accurate that in the past, user-centered design has arguably been an afterthought. However, as we evolve into this next wave of digital health beyond Health 2.0, I think it is unfortunately still true that neither utility nor user-centered design is the most important factor of success. I would say, at this point, success relies primarily on a solid business model." "I've always believed that the ideal health information exchange is the "HIE of One," where the individual is the conduit of their own health information. The panacea of interoperability to create a universal portal, whether it's Google Health or Microsoft HealthVault, is the wrong way to think about it. We need the ability for an individual to easily be able to take control of their health information and have control of the back and forth. Then, consume their data in whatever portal they want."

88) John Gengarella (on health data)

"There are valid, historic concerns about the consequences of having a preexisting condition. There's a scare about how that data can be used and possible negative impacts that could come as a result of someone having that information. Again, fair value exchange becomes important. I'm willing to share if there is limited risk, and I get something in return. There will be dissection among the population: those that are willing to share health data and those that are not. There is always a sub-segment that's going to believe in some conspiracy theory that 'data will always be used against me.' They are not going to participate willingly."

89) Apple's Digital Health Team (on building a great health app)

"There isn't one recipe for building a great app." "... a good wellness or fitness app is one that ensures a great user experience for the intended audience. In addition to that, it must create utility that the end-user otherwise would not have. There also has to be a sensibility about cognitive load and user-centric design. Is the app really solving a problem or creating one? Is the app creating value by innovating or improving upon something else, or is it simply crowding the marketplace? These are questions worth asking."

90) Steve Groves (on using digital health for betterment)

"I think at this point; my perception is that we are not focused enough on a holistic view of the member beyond the four walls of our own clubs. I do not think we are necessarily misusing technology. Rather, the focus has been too much on technology that can be used exclusively to advance our clubs' agenda, which is different than looking at technology for the betterment of our members — whether or not they choose to do some of their activities inside of our clubs or outside of our clubs." "It seems to me as though — we as an industry — are not really focused enough on the overall outcomes that our members are looking for. We could be better at helping them with the selection of the right technology to get the results they're paying us for. The truth is this technology is not necessarily going to be specifically aligned with improving what is happening within the four walls of our club."

SECTION 6
SECTION 6

LEADERSHIP

Last but not least, we conclude with poignant wisdom from some astounding leaders (with a special section reserved for women's leadership). Growth is about change, and without leadership there is no change. To be the change you seek, you need to lead. May the wisdom found below help guide you.

91) Jamie Ramsden (on successful leadership)

"From a practical standpoint, the successful leader must recognize that he/she represents the goals and dreams of the people who put him/her in their current position and provide a framework for people to develop in four key areas: their sense of self, their sense of community, their sense of meaning (making meaning of the world around them) and their sense of purpose." "... Leadership is an everyday event. Once I realized this, I felt like I had fallen into a gold mine. We are all leaders, and we are all followers — it simply depends on the context!"

92) Edgar Schein (on humble inquiry)

"One misconception is that humble inquiry is a slow, tedious, and long-running process. I can see how it could easily be interpreted that way. But my experience has been that, if a leader—whether it's a doctor or whoever—who has time constraints, still wants to be a humble inquirer, you can do that by being more personal." "When people say, 'I now want healthy and happy employees,' they generally don't realize that whether or not they can get there depends very much on the culture that's already there, the culture they have built over however many generations. Therefore, they can slowly begin to evolve their culture in a new direction, but that also means changing your reward system, changing the way people are managed, changing all the fundamentals of the organization."

93) Al Lewis (on creating culture)

"In my opinion, what you want to do as a company, and if you listen to the wellness industry, they advocate this, too, it's all about creating a supportive culture. As the leader of a company myself, what I'm trying to do is I'm trying to make my organization be as valuable as possible. Part of that is creating an environment where people want to come to work."

94) Tania Katan

(on the power of seeing obstacles as opportunities)

"When we're approaching or perceiving tasks and jobs as drudgery or crappy, the first step is to see. To see obstacles and/or the drudgery as opportunities. ... Foundationally, when it comes to story, you don't have a play, you don't have a film, a book, you don't have anything that's interesting unless there are obstacles to overcome. We need obstacles; otherwise, there are no epiphanies; there's no journey, no story to tell. Seeing obstacles as opportunities along the journey, that's the first step to approaching drudgery in a more exciting way."

95) Dr. Howard Jacobson (on finding truth)

"I look at Truth as a dinner guest. You invite Truth to dinner with the utmost humility. In my opinion, that is how you glean Truth from scientific study. You ask Truth to come for a visit, with the hope of getting yourself a little closer to true objective reality. Given there are so many ways of asking questions, it seems to me the most respectful thing to do is to encourage people to ask lots and lots of questions in various different ways — from micro-concerns to global issues and everything in between — then look at all the information you've amassed and try to create nested priorities." "When you're examining anything, always try to see if you can broaden the context of your inquiry. Ask these questions: In what cases is the concept true? In what cases is the concept only a half-truth? In what cases is the concept false? The laws of phenomena are so unbelievably complex that whenever we attempt to break things into smaller pieces — as useful as it is to do so — we need to appreciate that some things are lost in the process."

96) Dr. Robert Rucker (on integrity)

"Success, particularly the effective movement of ideas, is all about "networking." I was lucky enough to be mentored by individuals who can trace their academic history back to those who discovered or defined the functions of given vitamins or nutritionally essential minerals. What was transferred to me, as a part of that network, was a way of thinking, also the importance of maintaining a high integrity." "... as Latour and Woolgar note, one's credibility rests on whether you are perceived as reliable. The challenge is to maintain integrity in workplaces (e.g., the commercial aspects of nutrition and wellness) that often talk about integrity and validly, but seldom want to test for it, and that are driven in large degree by the marketing of what are sometimes shallow promises."

97) Gloria Park Perin (on passion and purpose)

"I wish I knew that there would be so much more to live for after skating was over. When I was injured, I felt like the world was caving in on me. For so long, my sense of identity, meaning, and purpose had been defined by my involvement with skating, and when I saw things coming to an end, I felt lost. In that moment, I wish someone would have helped me put the experience in perspective and provided me with a way to seek out a renewed sense of passion and purpose." "True success is measured by the legacy you leave behind: By what you do for others, by giving back to the world and the community, and constantly striving to live morally, justly, and compassionately."

98) Cathy Presland (on perspective)

"Amazing things can happen when we get our egos out of the way, and these things happen faster than we expect when we do this too. You take bigger actions and make bigger asks when you're not coming from a place of ego. There are a lot of benefits from taking a different perspective, and looking differently at the world: you get calmer, have better relationships. You realize that it is actually more about how you're looking at things rather than anything that other people have done. You realize that the world is driven internally more than externally."

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

99) Kristi Frank (on believing in yourself)

"My advice to women is to follow your own needs, desires, and ideals and go from there. If you are passionate about something, there is a lot of help out there for women, but it's not going to find you, you have to seek it out." "Experience can open doors; however, I quickly learned that action speaks louder than your resume. Believe in yourself as a leader — better yet prove you can lead the pack and take ownership of your life — but to do this, you must first believe you can do it."

100) Deena Varshavskaya (on creating your own life)

"I'm a huge believer that you create your own life. My advice for women entrepreneurs is, don't put up imaginary barriers for yourself. You either have excuses and reasons, or you have results. Choose results." "Making it happen means going way outside of your comfort zone (all the time!), allowing yourself to make mistakes and learning from the experience."

THE END

I hope you enjoyed The Wisdom of 100. Be on the lookout for The Fun Habit, a book about the reasons we need more fun and how to have more of it, available in 2021. To learn more about the book and to access exclusive content, please visit: <https://michaelrucker.com/fun-habit>

