

10 habits of this, 5 qualities of that – actually, I’m happy the way I am!

Written by David Daly
Tuesday, 18 April 2017 11:38



There’s an awful lot of it on Facebook, and an increasing amount of it on Linked In: lists of things that really happy people do, or traits of great entrepreneurs, or the strangely-titled “Unique Habits of Ridiculously Likeable People”, which I came across recently. Last week, I saw “42 Little Things You Can Do Today to Find Your Passion”. Yesterday, it was “How Smart People Work Less and Get More Done” – I didn’t read it, but I bet one of them was don’t procrastinate or spend time reading pointless things. And then there’s this gem:



It seems to me a ninth quality is needed here – understanding gobbledegook and buzzwords.

I can't be the only one who dislikes them

Is it me, or do other people find these really irritating? Apart from the above, many of the points are so basic and obvious. In any list of 10 things, there are probably six that you do well anyway, three that you could be better at and one that you don't do, probably for a good reason. Nine out of ten isn't bad! Yet the implication inherent in these insidious articles is that the reader is somehow less than others - less likeable, less productive, less smart, less capable - and that there are those much greater and more successful than you who must be emulated.

10 habits of this, 5 qualities of that – actually, I’m happy the way I am!

Written by David Daly
Tuesday, 18 April 2017 11:38

Yes, we all need and benefit from advice, but I don’t think these lists are the way to go. All the best advice I ever got was from someone at a particularly relevant point. No boss ever gave me a list of tips or qualities – I learnt them one at a time when it was most appropriate, and they have stuck with me throughout my career. I remember the situation, the advice and, indeed, the advice giver.

It’s just not in my nature

But it seems to me the main reason that I will never be the kind of person about whom these lists are written is because I don’t really want to be. I know I’m not lucky enough to have a real world-beating talent for something, so that in itself takes care of that part. But also, I’m not so madly driven to be outrageously successful at everything. I don’t think most of us are, and I’m very content that way.

I will never be massively rich, but I earn enough to feed, clothe, house and educate my family. I may not be “ridiculously likeable” (whatever that is), but I am happily married with four healthy children who are now starting to make their own way in the world, and I have a core of good friends whose company I enjoy. I will never own a yacht, but I get a couple of good foreign holidays every year, where below the surface with my recently-gained scuba training I see things that you could never see from the deck of a boat. I doubt I’ll ever be asked to give a TED talk, or be followed as a business guru online, but my clients appreciate my work, and I like to think I have given my children and others some good advice and direction over the years. I won’t shake up the world as a philanthropist, but each week I help someone in financial or other difficulties through my involvement with a local charity. I’m not a highly efficient genius, and I do waste time flopped in front of the TV or wandering around the internet, but I think I’m reasonably smart! And although I’m not particularly passionate about anything, there are lots of things I really like and enjoy, and I do those as much as I can.

Ditch the lists

Of course, my life’s not perfect, and there are moments when I think I could do better, or worry less, or have brighter days, and I do try. There are always things that will make me happier or better, but one thing I know for sure is that they are not on a list of any sort. And I bet that’s the same for most of us.

10 habits of this, 5 qualities of that – actually, I'm happy the way I am!

Written by David Daly
Tuesday, 18 April 2017 11:38

**"Now and then it's good to pause in
our pursuit of happiness and just be
happy."**

Guillaume Apollinaire
1880 –1918
French writer

So here's my single point - ditch the lists, and get on with being you!