**The Compound Effect**

**By Darren Hardy**

**The Compound Effect can either help you or hurt you in all areas of your life**

**(A book review by John Vaughan)**

Two things I liked about this book before I ever read it: (1) over 1 million copies sold, and (2) the author’s mentor was Jim Rohn – someone I had as our guest speaker for a weekend in Canaan Valley, WV; and an especially funny and creative motivator.

The book gives one Compound Effect example that everyone should take the time to fully understand. It teaches an important life lesson. What if you started saving **$250 a month** when you were age 23 and continued for **17 years** until age 40? Growing at 8% interest compounded monthly, you would have **$1 million** by age 67- the normal retirement age for Social Security. If instead you saved $250 a month for **27 years** **starting** at age 40, at age 67 you would have **only $300,000**. Doesn’t seem right or fair! You saved for 27 years, not 17; and you ended up with less than a third of the money.

The Compound Effect can either help you or hurt you in all areas of your life, not just financial. Start today with small positive steps- it is never too late to improve.

Weight control is another great example of the Compound Effect. One person cuts 125 calories a day and someone else at the same starting weight makes different food selections and adds 125 calories a day. At the end of just 31 months, the weight difference between these two people is 67 lbs. Make small, smart choices, consistently over time. Don’t get too comfortable and become complacent. Great empires have failed based on very small, yet consistently harmful, steps.

The only path to true success is through a continuum of mundane, unsexy, unexciting, and sometimes difficult daily choices compounded over time.

Choices are needed. If you haven’t made a choice or set a goal, then you have. You have chosen not to be part of your own success. You are sleepwalking thru life.

Forget about **willpower**. It’s time for **why-power**. You’ve got to want something, and know why you want it, or you will give up too easily. Your why must be something that is fantastically motivating – to you. All the **hows** will be meaningless until your **whys** are powerful enough. When the reason is big enough, you will be willing to perform almost any how.

Monetary and material goals are great, but material stuff can’t really recruit your heart, soul, and guts into a fight. That passion has to come from a deeper place. Achievement without fulfillment is not true success. You don’t have to be motivated for great humanitarian reasons. What matters is that you feel fully motivated. Write down your most important goal(s) and make plans for accomplishment. A five-year goal could be your most powerful why.

I was blessed with a wife who supported my why. She started out by surprising me with a gift of framed pictures that represented what I deeply wanted. She was smart, help increase my focus and then stand back and support what I did. It was win-win.

To reach new goals and develop new habits, it’s necessary to create new routines to support your objectives. It’s not enough to start your day with a positive routine, you need to bookend your days. You can’t control what will show up in the middle of your workday, but you can almost always control how your day starts and ends. Read an inspirational book. Create rhythms you can do for the rest of your life. Plan ahead. Create boundaries for family time. Enjoy some travel getaways. Be the tortoise who wins the race.

Three things can influence you: what you feed your mind, the five people you spend the most time with, and your surroundings. You must stand guard. Americans spend 4.7 hours a day watching TV. Turn your car into a rolling university since you drive 300 hours a year – that’s two semesters of college. Be willing to pay for the best coaches and trainers there are.

Clear out the clutter in your life. Each and every incomplete piece of your life exerts a draining force on you.

Everyone faces challenges. Don’t wish it were easier, wish you were better. It’s OK to do the unexpected. Add a little audacity to your repertoire.

Have you learned from reading this? Good. Learning without execution is useless.

You can do it!

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