



**The Four Hour Workweek
Escape 9-5, Live Anywhere, and Join the New Rich**

Notes by Frumi Rachel Barr, MBA, Ph.D.

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Author's Bio: Tim Ferriss is a serial entrepreneur and ultra-vagabond. He speaks six languages, runs a multinational firm from wireless locations worldwide, and has been a world record holder in tango, a national champion in Chinese kickboxing, and an actor on a hit television series in Hong Kong. He is twenty-nine years old.

Author's big thought:

The book by Tim Ferriss is about how to radically change your lifestyle or go from 'living to work' to working (as little, but effectively as possible) and making life as big as possible. Forget the old concept of retirement and the rest of the deferred-life plan, There is no need to wait and every reason not to.

Notes

- The New Rich (NR) are those who abandon the deferred-life plan and create luxury lifestyles in the present using the currency of the New Rich; time and mobility. This is an art and a science the author refers to as Lifestyle Design (LD).
- His question is: How can one achieve the millionaire lifestyle of complete financial freedom without first having \$1,000,000?
- The goal is to free time and automate income.
- The **DEAL** of deal making is also an acronym for the process of becoming a member of the New Rich.
- Here is the step by step process you'll use to reinvent yourself:
 - **D** for Definition - This section explains the overall lifestyle design recipe
 - **E** for Elimination - This section provides the first of the three luxury lifestyle design ingredients: time. |^
 - **A** for Automation - This section provides the second ingredient of luxury lifestyle design: income.
 - **L** for Liberation - this section delivers the third and final ingredient for luxury lifestyle design: mobility.

- The DEAL process will turn you into an entrepreneur in the purer sense as first coined by French economist J.B. Say in 1800—one who shifts economic resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher yield.

Step 1: D is for Definition

- Money is multiplied in practical value depending on the number W's you control in your life: **what** you do, **when** you do it, **where** you do it, and with **whom** you do it. This is the “freedom multiplier.”
- Options—the ability to choose—is real power. This book is all about how to see and create those options with the least effort and cost.
- The options are limitless, but each path begins with the same first step: replacing assumptions.
- The following rules are the fundamental differentiators to keep in mind throughout this book.
- Retirement Is Worst-Case-Scenario Insurance
 - Retirement as a goal or final redemption is flawed for at least three solid reasons:
 - It is predicated on the assumption that you dislike what you are doing during the most physically capable years of your life.
 - Most people will never be able to retire. The golden years become lower-middle-class life revisited.
 - If the math does work, it means that you are one am ambitious, hardworking machine. If that's the case, one week into retirement, you'll be bored.
- Interest and Energy Are Cyclical.
 - Alternating periods of activity and rest is necessary to survive. Let alone thrive.
- Less Is Not Laziness. Focus on being productive instead of busy. Doing less meaningless work, so that you can focus on things of greater personal importance, is NOT laziness. This is hard for most to accept, because our culture tends to reward personal sacrifice instead of personal productivity.
- The Timing Is Never Right. For all of the most important things, the timing always sucks. Conditions are never perfect. If it's important to you and you want to do it “eventually,” just do it and correct course along the way.
- Ask for Forgiveness, Not Permission.
- Emphasize Strengths, Don't Fix Weaknesses. It is far more lucrative and fun to leverage your strengths instead of attempting to fix all the chinks in your armor. The choice is between multiplication of results using strengths or incremental improvement fixing weaknesses that will, at best, become mediocre.
- Things in Excess Become Their Opposite. This is true of possessions and even time.
- Money Alone Is Not the Solution. “If only I had more money” is the easiest way to postpone the intense self-examination and decision-making necessary to create a life of enjoyment.
- Relative Income Is More Important Than Absolute Income. Absolute income is measured using the almighty dollar. Relative income uses two variables: the dollar and time, usually hours.
- Distress refers to harmful stimuli that make you weaker, less confident, and less able. Destructive criticism, abusive bosses are examples of this. Role models who push us to exceed our limits, physical training that removes our spare tires, and risks that expand our sphere of

comfortable action are all examples of Eustress—stress that is healthful and the stimulus for growth.

- Most people choose unhappiness over uncertainty
- Conquering Fear = Defining Fear
- The antidote to fear is asking and doing the following;
- Define your nightmare
 - What steps could you take to repair the damage or get things back on the upswing?
 - What are the outcomes or benefits, both temporary and permanent, of more probable scenarios?
 - If you were fired from your job today, what would you do to get things under financial control?
 - What are you putting off out of fear?
 - What is it costing you—financially, emotionally, and physically—to postpone action?
 - What are you waiting for?
- People who avoid all criticism fail. It's destructive criticism we need to avoid, not criticism in all forms.
- Usually, what we most fear doing is what we need to do (most). That phone call, that conversation, whatever the action might be – it is fear of the unknown outcomes that prevents us from doing what we need to do.
- Ninety-nine percent of people in the world are convinced that they are incapable of achieving great things, so they aim for the mediocre. The level of competition is thus fiercest for “realistic” goals, paradoxically making them the most time and energy-consuming. Do not overestimate the competition and underestimate yourself.
- Doing big things begins with asking for them properly.
- Excitement is the more practical synonym for happiness, and it is precisely what you should strive to chase. It is the cure-all. The question you should be asking is: “What would excite me?”
- This is how most people work until death: “I’ll just work until I have X dollars and then do what I want.” If you don’t define the “what I want” alternate activities, the X figure will increase indefinitely to avoid the fear-inducing uncertainty of this void.
- Dream-lining applies timelines to what most would consider dreams.
- It is much like goal-setting but differs in several fundamental respects: The goals shift from ambiguous wants to defined steps. The goals have to be unrealistic to be effective. It focuses on activities that will fill the vacuum created when work is removed. Living Like a millionaire requires doing interesting things and not just owning enviable things.
- The most important actions are never comfortable. To have an uncommon lifestyle. We need to develop the uncommon habit of making decisions, both for yourself and for others.

Step II: E is for Elimination

The End of Time Management

- It is not only possible to accomplish more by doing less it is mandatory. Enter the world of elimination.

- The intention of this chapter is an increase in personal productivity between 100 and 500%. The principles are the same for both employees and entrepreneurs, but the purpose of this increased productivity is completely different.
- The employee is increasing productivity to increase negotiating leverage for two simultaneous objectives: pay raises and a remote working arrangement. Employees intent on being employees for now need to implement the process as D-E-L-A. They need to Liberate themselves from the office environment before they can work ten hours a week.
- Even if you work 10 hours a week and produce twice the results of people working 40, the collective request will be, “Work 40 hours a week and produce 8 times the results.” This is an endless game and one you want to avoid. Hence the need for Liberation first. The entrepreneur’s goals are to decrease the amount of work you perform while increasing revenue. This will set the stage for replacing yourself with Automation, which in turn permits Liberation.
- Being Effective vs. Being Efficient
- Effectiveness is doing the things that get you closer to your goals. Efficiency is performing a given task (whether important or not) in the most economical manner possible. Being efficient without regard to effectiveness is the default mode of the universe.

- Doing something unimportant well does not make it important. Requiring a lot of time does not make a task important. **What** you do is infinitely more important than **how** you do it. Efficiency is still important, but is useless unless applied to the right things.
- The 80/20 Rule (Pareto’s Law): 80% of the outputs result from 20% of the inputs.
- Alternative ways to phrase this, depending on the context, include: 80% of the consequences flow from 20% of the causes. 80% of the results come from 20% of the effort and time.
- Which 20% of sources are causing 80% of my problems and unhappiness? What 20% of sources are resulting in 80% of my desired outcomes and happiness?
- For the entire day, the author put aside everything seemingly urgent and did the most intense truth-baring analysis possible, applying these questions to everything from his friends to customers and advertising to relaxation activities. Don’t expect to find you’re doing everything right – the truth often hurts. The goal is to find your inefficiencies in order to eliminate them and to find your strengths so you can multiply them. In the 24 hours that followed, he made several simple but emotionally difficult decisions that literally changed his life forever.
- Remember this: Most things make NO difference. Being busy is a form of laziness – lazy thinking and indiscriminate action
- Being overwhelmed is often as unproductive as doing nothing, and is far more unpleasant. Being selective – doing less – is the path of the productive. Focus on the important few and ignore the rest. Lack of time is often a lack of clear priorities.
- Since we have 8 work hours to fill, we fill 8 hours. If we had 15, we would fill 15. If we have an emergency and need to suddenly leave work in 2 hours but have pending deadlines, we miraculously complete those assignments in 2 hours.
- Parkinson’s Law dictates that a task will swell in (perceived) importance and complexity in relation to the time allotted for its completion. It’s the magic of the imminent deadline. If I give you 24 hours to complete a project, the time pressure forces you to focus on execution. If I give

you a week to complete the same task, it becomes six days of making a mountain out of a molehill. If I give you 2 months, it becomes a mental monster.

- Two synergistic approaches to increase productivity:
 - Limit tasks to the important to shorten work time (80/20)
 - Shorten work time to limit tasks to the important (Parkinson's Law).
- Ask: Am I being productive or just active? Am I inventing things to do to avoid the important? We must eliminate all activities that are "crutches" and begin focusing on demonstrating results instead of showing "dedication". Dedication is often meaningless work in disguise. Be ruthless and cut the fat.
- The key to having more time is doing less: Define a short "to do" list; define also a "not-to-do" list:
 - If you had a heart attack and had to work only two hours per **day**, what would you do?
 - If you had a 2nd heart attack and had to work only two hours per **week**, what would you do?
 - If you had a gun to your head and had to stop doing 4/5 of different time-consuming activities, what would you remove?
 - What are the top-three activities that I use to fill time to feel as though I've been productive? Be honest with yourself...what are your crutch activities? Answering all of your e-mail? Meetings on non-mission critical topics?
- Learn to ask, "If this is the only thing I accomplish today, will I be satisfied with my day?" Don't ever arrive at the office or in front of your computer without a clear list of priorities. Compile your "to do" list for tomorrow no later than this evening. There should be no more than two mission-critical items to complete each day.
- To counter the seemingly urgent, ask yourself, "What will happen if I **don't** do this, and is it worth putting off the important to do it"?
- Put a Post-It note on your computer screen with the question, "Are you inventing things to do to avoid the important"?
- Do not multi-task. If you prioritize properly, there is no need to. It is a symptom of "task creep" – doing more to feel productive while actually accomplishing less. To repeat: you should have, at most, two primary goals or tasks per day. Do them separately from start to finish without distraction.
- Use Parkinson's Law on a Macro and Micro Level
- On a Macro weekly/daily level, attempt to leave work at 4:00 pm and take every other Friday off....this will focus you to prioritize.
- On a Micro Level, limit the number of items on your to do list and use impossibly short deadlines to force immediate action while ignoring the little stuff.

The Low-Information Diet

- Develop and maintain a low-information diet. Lifestyle design is based on massive action – output. Increased output necessitates decreased input. Most information is time-consuming,

negative, irrelevant to your goals, and outside of your influence. I challenge you to look at whatever you read or watched today and tell me it wasn't at least two out of the four.

- Go on an immediate one-week media fast.
 - I read the front-page headlines through the newspaper machines as I walk to lunch every day and nothing more.
 - I only read the sections of a book that are relevant to immediate next steps.
 - Go on an immediate one-week media fast! No newspapers, news websites, television (except for one hour of pleasure viewing evenings), no reading books (except one hour of fiction before going to bed) and no web surfing at your desk unless necessary to complete a work task today.

- Develop the habit of asking yourself, "Will I definitely use this information for something immediate and important?" If no on either count, don't consume it.
- Practice the art of "non-finishing". Starting something doesn't automatically justify finishing it.
- If you're reading an article that sucks, put it down and don't pick it up again.
- More is not better, and stopping something is often 10 times better than finishing it.
- Problems, as a rule, solve themselves or disappear if you remove yourself as an information bottleneck and empower others.
- Develop an uncanny ability to be selectively ignorant. Learn to ignore or redirect all information and interruptions that are irrelevant, unimportant, or unactionable. Most are all three. The first step is to develop and maintain a low-information diet.

Interrupting Interruption and the Art of Refusal

- An interruption is anything that prevents the start-to-finish completion of a critical task, and there are three principal offenders:
- Time wasters: Those things that can be ignored with little or no consequence. E.g. meetings, discussions, phone calls, and e-mail that are unimportant.
- Time consumers: repetitive tasks or requests that need to be completed but often interrupt high-level work. Here are a you might know intimately: reading and responding to e-mail, making and returning phone calls, customer service, financial or sales reporting, personal errands, all necessary repeated actions and tasks.
- Empowerment failures: instances where someone needs approval to make something small happen. E.g. fixing customer problems

Time-Wasters

- First, limit e-mail consumption and production. This is the greatest single interruption in the modern world.
 - Severely limit e-mail consumption and production
 - Turn off the audible alert if your on Outlook or a similar program
 - Turn off automatic send/receive (which delivers e-mail to your in-box as soon as someone sends them)
 - Check e-mail only twice per day, once at 12:00 noon and again at 4:00 pm.

- Never check e-mail first thing in the morning...instead, complete your most important task before 11:00 am to avoid using lunch or reading e-mail as a postponement excuse
- Before implementing the twice-daily routine, you must create an e-mail auto-response that will train your boss, co-workers, suppliers, and clients to be more effective
- Suggested e-mail template: "Due to high workload, I am currently checking and responding to e-mail twice daily at 12:00 noon (PST) and 4:00 pm (PST). If you require urgent assistance that cannot wait until either 12:00 or 4:00, please contact me via telephone @ 626-321-4107. Thank you for understanding this move to more efficiency and effectiveness. It helps me to accomplish more and serve you better."
- Create the same type of template with your phone voicemail.
- Create systems to limit your availability via e-mail and phone and deflect inappropriate contact:
 - Get the auto-response and voicemail script n place now, and master the various methods of evasion.
 - Replace the habit of greeting "How are you?" with "How can I help you?"
 - Get specific and remember – no stories
 - Focus on immediate actions and practice interruption-killing policies.
- Master the art of refusal and avoiding meetings. From this moment forward, resolve to keep those around you focused and avoid all meetings, whether in person or remote, that do not have dear objectives. It: is your job to train those around you to be effective and efficient.
- Decide that, given the non-urgent nature of most issues, you will steer people toward the following means of communication, in order of preference: e-mail, phone, and in-person meetings. If someone proposes a meeting request an email instead and then use the phone as your fallback offer if need be.
- Respond to voicemail via I via e-mail whenever possible. This trains people to be more concise. E-mail communication should be streamlined to prevent needless back-and forth. Thus, an e-mail with "Can you meet at 4:00 p.m.?" would become "Can you meet at 4:00 p.m.? If so.... If not, please advise three other times that work for you." This "if...then" becomes more important as you check e-mail less often.
- Meetings should only be held to make decisions about a predefined situation, not to define the problem. If: someone proposes that you meet with them or "set a time to talk on the phone," ask that person to send you an e-mail with an agenda to define the purpose. The e-mail medium forces people to define the desired outcome of a meeting or call. Nine times out of ten, a meeting is unnecessary and you can answer the questions, once defined via e-mail. Impose this habit on others.
- If you absolutely cannot stop a meeting or call from happening, define the end time. Decisions should not take more than 30 minutes.
- Don't permit casual visitors.

Time Consumers: Batch and Do Not Falter

- Batching is the solution to our distracting but necessary time consumers., lose repetitive tasks that interrupt the most important. Batch activities to limit set-up cost. What can I routinize

by batching? What tasks (like laundry, groceries, mail, payments, sales reporting, etc.) can I allot to specific times each day, week, or month so I don't squander time repeating them more often than necessary?

Empowerment Failure: Rules and Readjustment

- Empowerment failure refers to being unable to accomplish a task without first obtaining permission or information. It is often a case of being micromanaged or micromanaging someone else, both of which consume *your* time.
- For the employee, the goal is to have full access to necessary information and as much independent decision-making ability as possible. For the entrepreneur, the goal is to grant as much information and independent decision-making ability to employees or contractors as possible.
- If you are a micromanaged employee, have a heart-to-heart with your boss and explain that you want to be more productive and interrupt him or her less. "I hate that I have to interrupt you so much and pull you away from more important things". Before this conversation, develop a number of "rules" that would allow you to work more autonomously with less approval-seeking. The boss can review the outcome of your decisions on a daily or weekly basis in the initial stages. Suggest a one-week trial and end with "I'd like to try it. Does that sound like something we could try for a week?" or my personal favorite, "Is that reasonable?" It's hard for people to label things unreasonable.
- If you are a micro-managing entrepreneur, realize that even if you can do something better than the rest of the world, it doesn't mean that's what you should be doing if it's part of the minutiae. Empower others to act without interrupting you. Do not let people interrupt you. Find your focus and you'll find your lifestyle.
- Learn to recognize and fight the interruption impulse This is infinitely easier when you have a set of rules, responses, and routines to follow. It is your job to prevent yourself and others from letting the unnecessary and unimportant prevent the start-to-finish completion of the important.

Step III: A is for Automation

Outsourcing Life

- Eliminate before you delegate.
- Never automate something that can be eliminated, and never delegate something that can be automated or streamlined
- Principle number one is to refine rules and processes before adding people. Using people to leverage a refined process multiplies production; using people as a solution to a poor process multiplies problems.
- Why should Fortune 500 firms have all the fun? Why can't you join the biggest business trend of the new century? Why can't you outsource your low-end tasks? Why can't you outsource your life?
- *Get a Virtual Assistant* – even if you don't need one. Begin with a one-time test project or small repetitive task. One can give an Indian remote personal assistant their assignment when they leave work at the end of the day in NYC, and they will have the presentation ready in the next morning. Sample custom requests outsourced:

- web research
 - following up appointments, errands, tasks
 - online shopping
 - document creation
 - proofreading and editing
 - updating databases
 - market research
 - charting a diet plan
 - apologizing and sending flowers and cards to spouses of clients
- Indian Virtual/Remote Assistants will run \$4 – 15 per hour (the higher end including the equivalent of MBAs and PhDs. Need a business plan to raise funding? Brickwork.com can provide it for \$2500 – 5000.
 - US and Canada: www.assistu.com; www.yourvirtualresource.com
 - North America: www.elance.com
 - India: www.b2kcorp.com (\$15/hour+)....business stuff only; www.yourmaninindia.com (\$6.25/hour)....business and personal task (more routine)
- Start small, but think big. Look at your to do list – what has been sitting there the longest? Each time you are interrupted or change tasks, ask, “Could a VA do this better?”
 - Identify your top 5 time-consuming non-work tasks and five personal tasks you could assign for sheer fun.
 - This book offers more specific advice and counsel on just HOW to manage and brief a remote VA for best results!
- *Golden Rule #1:* Each delegated task must be both time consuming and well-defined. If you’re running around like a chicken with its head cut off and assign your VA to do that for you, it doesn’t improve the order of the universe.
 - *Golden Rule #2:* On a lighter note, have some fun with it. Being effective doesn’t mean being serious all the time.
 - It is impossible to predict how well you will work with a given VA without a trial.
 - Hire a VA firm or VAs with backup teams instead of sole operators. besides simple disaster avoidance, a group structure provides a pool of talent that allows you to assign multiple tasks without bothering to find a new person with the qualifications.
 - Misuse of financial and confidential information is rare.
 - Never use the new hire. Prohibit small-operation VAs from subcontracting work to untested freelancers without your written permission.
 - Information theft is best thought of as inevitable in a digital world, and precautions should be taken with damage control in mind. There are two rules to minimize damage and allow for fast repair.
 1. Never use debit cards for online transactions or with remote assistants.
 2. If your VA will be accessing websites on your behalf, create a new unique login and password to be used on those sites.

Step IV: L is for Liberation

How To Escape The Office

- To create the proper leverage to be unshackled, the author suggests doing two things: demonstrate the business benefit of remote working - make it too expensive or excruciating to refuse a request for it.
- More value means more leverage for negotiations.
- Step 1: Increase Investment
- Step 2: Prove Increased Output Offsite
- Step 3: Prepare the Quantifiable Business Benefit
- Step 4: Propose a Revocable Trial Period
- Getting what you want often depends more on when you ask for it than how you ask for it.
- While entrepreneurs have the most trouble with Automation, since they fear giving up control, employees get stuck on Liberation because they fear taking control.

Recommendation: Whether your dream is escaping the rat race, experiencing high-end world travel, earning a monthly five-figure income with zero management, or just living more and working less, this book is the blueprint. There is a ton of information and resources to help think of ideas, research products and set up a structure for new businesses.

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About the reviewer: Frumi Rachel Barr, MBA, PhD

Many CEO's find themselves asking "What now?" to sensitive situations that only an experienced former CEO can understand. Frumi is brought in to solve problems and often remains to work with you, as your confidante and secret weapon. She has an uncanny knack of getting to the heart of your corporate climate and maximizing your team's performance, profitability and sustainability.

To schedule a free ***Break From the Pack to Success*** consultation email

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