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The #1 Reason Why Entrepreneurs Live Longer

Did you know that entrepreneurs live 7.47% longer than the rest of the population?

That's nearly *six full years longer!* Those six years represents a healthier life, which likely represents more joy, which likely leads to better relationships, tighter family units, and so on. Those six years are very important.

But why? Why do entrepreneurs live longer?

I believe that the reason entrepreneurs live longer comes down to one word:

Control

When many people think of the prototypical entrepreneur, they get a vision of a man or woman working 16 hours a day, pulling his or her hair out from the stress of bills, payrolls, decisions, and the fact that everything rests on him or her.

The lives of every employee and their children are in the entrepreneurs' hands.

Their families depend on the success of the business to eat, to live in a decent home, to go to the right school.

Every little decision can have a major impact. \$1,000 here or there is the difference between making the mortgage payment and not.

It can be overwhelming and at times can drive a person crazy.

It's all on me

I know that feeling. For much of the past ten years [I have been an entrepreneur](#), including for the past three. Everything rests on me and there isn't a day that goes by that I don't feel that.

When a client is late to pay, we feel it. When a sale doesn't go as expected, we have to make tough decisions. When the cost of a good or service goes up, it can change our lifestyle.

And yet...I wouldn't trade it for the best job in the best company with the best pay and best benefits in the world.

Because to do that is to relinquish control.

Good stress

The kind of stress I feel as an entrepreneur is the good kind. It's the kind that says, "it all rests on me," not the kind that says, "I can't do anything about it."

I know the stress of wondering if the company I worked for is going to go out of business. I know the stress of wondering if my boss will make payroll. I know the stress of doubting that I would have a job next week.

All of that stress was beyond my control...and it ate at me. It kept me up at night. It gave me upset stomachs. It affected my mood with my family.

Date night gone wrong

One of our family traditions is that almost every week we go out on Friday nights as a family. It's supposed to be a great way to unwind, relax, and enjoy time together.

And I was ruining it.

Three years ago, date night became "Matt complains about his job" night. I was working for a company and had only begun to start my current business on the side. Every Friday night, I took the stress caused by my boss, the people I worked with, and the uncertainty of the company's future (they'd just laid off half the staff) out on my wife and daughter.

I wasn't trying to ruin date night. I just needed an outlet. Finally, my wife Tara gave me an ultimatum. She was tired of me complaining and essentially demanded I find something else to do professionally.

That's how bad it was.

So I know that kind of stress. And I never want to feel it again. That is why I say, only half joking, that I am utterly unemployable. I'll take the stress that I feel today over any stress I felt working for someone else.

Not all entrepreneurs get it right

Even within entrepreneurial circles, some business owners believe they control the business and others believe its dependent on the economy or the government or they bemoan that they can't find any good hires.

Those types will always feel the wrong kind of stress.

They stay up late watching the stock ticker or freak out over the latest news headline (which is a big reason [why I don't watch the news](#)). They live and die with every interview. They blame anyone and everyone else for their business failing, rather than claiming control.

Those types of entrepreneurs drag down the life expectancy...or else my guess is that it would be ten years longer!

How do I become an entrepreneur?

I can hear some of you saying, "OK Matt, you've convinced me. I want to venture out on my own. What's the first step?"

You take it piece by piece.

1. Don't quit your job...yet.

You don't need the added stress of going from a guaranteed \$5,000 check (or whatever you make) every month to nothing. Start your business on the side. You can build a nice emergency fund with the extra money and find something you truly enjoy.

The best way to find what you want to do and how to do it is not through endless tests, seminars, or trying to learn the ins and outs of every aspect of what you want to do.

It's jumping head first into the deep end. As [Reid Hoffman](#), the founder of LinkedIn said:

You jump off a cliff and you assemble an airplane on the way down.

2. Start now.

That might mean you go through five different businesses before you find the right one or that you make a bunch of \$50 mistakes along the way. But what better way to learn than from failure and what better way to find out what you *don't* want to do than from hating something?

3. Don't go it alone.

No man is an island. And just because you are a solopreneur does not mean you need to do it alone.

Get help in the form of masterminds, friends, and online communities.

4. Fight.

You will live longer if you believe that you are in control. You will live a happier, more fulfilling life. Every bit of research proves that true.

But the early stages will be tough. You will fail. You will struggle. You will hate it. You will scream. You will lose sleep. You will want to quit.

And that's just what one day is like.

So you have to be a fighter.

Do you want the freedom bad enough? Do you want the success bad enough? Do you want to wake up three years from now having built something of which you can be proud? Do you want to change the world with your product or service?

If so, you will fight. And it will be worth it.

Related Post: [*A Note to All the Struggling Entrepreneurs in the World*](#)

But wait, there's more

The #1 reason entrepreneurs live longer is that one word: control. But there's more...

I have more to come tomorrow about the other five reasons why entrepreneurs live longer. So stay tuned. So be sure to subscribe to my [RSS feed](#) or get posts [via email](#) (and get my [free book](#) as a bonus) so you don't miss it.

Question: What's holding you back from taking the entrepreneurial leap?