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The Quiet Entrepreneur

Mindset and Marketing
for Introverts in Business

with *Julia Barnickle*

Schedule

Do Introverts Need The Daily Commute?

 Guest Writer



This guest post is by Andy Mort of [Sheep Dressed Like Wolves](#)

I 'met' Andy on Twitter, and I really enjoy reading his blog, so I was very pleased when he agreed to write a guest post for The Quiet Entrepreneur. I had always tried to avoid commuting very far as an employee – so working from home is like heaven. However, I find Andy's take on this very interesting, from an introvert perspective.

~ Julia

Over the past few months I've been working from home. I am a freelancer, and currently doing a design and film project for a big client. As a highly sensitive introvert this is absolutely perfect for me.

However, since doing so I've noticed that working from home can be dangerous for me; it has changed the relationship I have with my home office space. And what's more the convenience of working where I live began to alter my creative process and the time and space I was providing myself to think and build on ideas.

A few people I spoke to said that working from home is difficult because of the distractions around you. To be honest I don't really have a problem with productivity. Most days I am more than able to get the work done.

The problem I started to encounter however was almost the opposite; I find it easy to switch on, but like many introverts, extremely hard to switch off again. The dangers of self-inflicted burn out are always very real because I get obsessive and so immersed in my work that I can go for days without thinking about much other than the problem I'm trying to solve or the idea I'm attempting to realise.

When I work from home it takes three seconds to 'get to work'. Those three seconds are not enough time or space to shift head space and escape the thought patterns of work. So I take them into the evening and the weekend and fail to remove myself from the stuff I need to leave 'at the office'. This is a problem for anyone in creative work whether they work from home or not but it is exacerbated when you don't have a commute.

The Commute is More Than a Physical Journey

There is something very powerful about journey. Physically moving your body encourages your mind to parallel the shift mentally as well. We are always leaving somewhere and arriving elsewhere. We are on our way from one place to another place. But when that is only happening in the mind we are attempting to fight our own biological impulses and psychological disposition.

The brain needs sleep as time to process, sort, and systemise all the sensory and informational input from the previous day. It requires plenty of downtime. And I believe that if we are to be truly present, effective, and better at creating margin between work and play then the downtime that we get during a mindful physical journey between the head spaces is vital.

Walking to Work

As I started to feel this negative shift in my ability to concentrate and be present I decided to begin 'walking to work'. Yes walk to work, even though I work at home.

Basically I get a lift with my wife, about a mile and a half across town to her office. Then when we arrive I get out the car and walk straight home again. It seems like a colossal waste of time but it's revolutionised my relationship with my work space (physical and mental).

I listen to ambient music or podcasts, concentrate on deeply breathing the fresh air, and I think about what I will be doing in the day ahead. I try to meditate on the idea introduced by Dr. Viktor Frankl when he asked his patients, 'if you could live today over again what would you do differently?' before the day had happened. I love this practice. It's a brilliant way of considering how the day could potentially get wasted and pledging not to let that happen.

This half an hour of journeying has changed my productivity, my efficiency, and the clarity/focus that I can apply to my day ahead. It's not always an easy discipline to maintain, especially when it's raining. And on the days when it feels like I have more to do than I have time to do it in, the seemingly pointless journey doesn't feel sensible, productive, or appealing. In truth however, those are the days it becomes even more important as it provides me a fresh sense of perspective and focus.

And Again at the End of the Day

It is the same at the end of the day. Taking the time to 'journey home' is an important thing. Sometimes I only manage a quick five minute walk around the block. But that's enough to shift focus away from work; reflecting on the successes of the day, and becoming present, mindful and deliberate with whatever is planned for the evening.

I have no perfect formula because I'm sure this kind of journey process is different for everyone. But I can encourage you from my own experience. If you do work from home, remember the intrinsic and not so directly obvious benefits of travel. If you don't work from home and travel, do you do so in a way that provides space for your mind to prepare and reflect on the day ahead, or are you in a rush, on a packed train, getting angry in traffic jams etc? A stressful commute is not so good.

Over to You

What can you do to give you mind downtime and opportunity to travel between the various worlds you inhabit? (work, home, family, volunteer roles, friends, etc) Can you build space into the way you move between these different aspects of your life?

About the author



Andy Mort is a UK based musician and writer. He is the founder of www.SheepDressedLikeWolves.com, a Blog and Podcast aimed at encouraging HSPs and introverts to embrace their creativity and push against the expectations of an often overwhelming world. He has been described as having a “daring and innovative approach to creating and releasing modern music, which has proved him and his alter-ego Atlum Schema to be a bright beacon in the depths of British music today.” Download his free eBook “[The Gentle Rebel](#)”

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