



By Silver Rose

In 1935, when Social Security's original retirement age of 65 was established, life expectancy was 63. Today, life expectancy is 78. The math is clear—if we retire at age 65, we have an average of 18 years to do...what?

With all the craziness going on in today's economy, it is likely that most of us will have to work well past the time we anticipated. I believe this is a good thing—it is forcing us to adapt to the new reality of our longer life span.

You see, work summons energy. When we are engaged in tasks that fall under the category of work (paid or unpaid), we are more alive than when we are idle.

Don't take my word for it. Think about how you feel when you have lots of time on your hands and nothing to do. Now consider how you feel when you are fully engaged in work. Don't you feel more vibrant? Even if you dislike the task, you are still more alive while you are doing it.

Most people initially scoff when I tell them the following: in 2009, USA Today reported that a recent German study has found that people tend to be most bummed out about life in general on Sundays, with Saturdays and Fridays following closely behind.

How could this be?

There is much less structure during our weekends. Left to our own devices, we rarely create structure for ourselves. Even if we have a "to do" list, there is no real pressure to get things done.

At our jobs, however, the structure is created for us and we are forced to be productive. This is much better for our mental health. I don't know about you, but for me, having too much time to think is not a good thing—my mind is a dangerous neighborhood to hang out in. And hanging out there for 18 years? Just shoot me now!

CHANGE YOUR FOCUS CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Work Summons Energy

This is the very best argument for figuring out how to thoroughly enjoy your job:

If you cannot figure out how to make your job satisfying and something you look forward to, you will not be able to create similar value on weekends or during your retirement years.

We are the same, whether at work or at home. Creating value comes from within. A boss cannot give it to you at work and your family cannot give it to you at home.

Creating value for what you do has everything to do with focus. You can focus on the task at hand in a way that drains you OR you can employ your focus as it was intended—as a way to summon more energy.

Let's use washing dishes as an example. Nobody inherently enjoys washing dishes. Those who say they do have learned how to create value around the task. If I focus on what a waste of time it is or on being a victim ("How come I have to do this? Why doesn't anyone help?"), then doing dishes is draining (pardon the pun). If I focus instead on how good it feels to get something tangible done, then doing dishes summons energy that makes me feel good.

That is the choice you have every day at work: focus on this in a way that saps my strength or focus on it in a way that creates more energy. Your job is a great learning lab. If you can learn to create value there, it will spill over into every area of your life: relationships, physical and mental health, even your spiritual connection.

Those people we admire who have lots of energy and are highly productive don't have perfect lives. What they do have is the ability to create value in all that they do. They produce lots of results, not because they are more gifted or have more money but because they have learned the secret: **Work Summons Energy.**

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