



Stay Focused by Staying Accountable

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by Doug Shapiro

I knew, as I entered my forties, that I was inheriting my father's legacy of off-color humor as well as high cholesterol and a prominent belly. (In his words, "With a tool like mine, you have to build a shed over it!") I love that man, and when he died seven years ago of cancer of the spine, he also had a torn rotator cuff, diabetes, and a recent triple bypass surgery for his heart.



So, I go to my yearly physical this past November (which I had been avoiding because I was not taking my doctor's previous dietary advice.) I was already on Simvastatin for dangerously high cholesterol. I stepped on the scale and...

198.

5'11" and almost 200 pounds.

I immediately sprung into action:

- anger at myself,
- standing behind people in pictures,
- pulling the sheet up over my belly in bed so my husband wouldn't have to see it,
- more anger at myself,
- feeling apologetic at auditions,
- feeling terrible that I was going to die at 65 like Dad leave my husband a widower.

Strangely enough, this use of my energy didn't work.

I would jog a few blocks one day, but with no one to whom I could be accountable, it would not last to the next day. Having a gym and a pool IN MY BUILDING didn't work. I was always rushing off to the next commitment and wouldn't make time for exercise. I was also very excited about a well-known online weight-loss program, but could only stick to it when I was away doing a gig. Once I came back to NYC, I just wouldn't prioritize accountability to a faceless website that continued to charge me monthly. So, I remained pissed off and chunky.

A little while later, I'm getting together with my pal Anna Wood at Tea and Sympathy in the Village, squeezing myself into a very small space. Conversation turns to her work with MyBodyTutor.com. I adore Anna. I respect Anna. She has a rockin' body and I saw her make healthy and delicious food choices as we ate together. Her passion about her work is infectious and I signed up right away.

Anna's ideas are right in line with strategies that personally motivate me.

- I'm a career coach for actors, so if I'm being accountable to a coach, I had better follow through if I'm going to have any integrity in my own work.
- Logging what I eat every day is simple enough to do. It's a small enough baby step that I don't go into overwhelm and shut down.

Stay Savvy and Connected!



What we're talking about...

Accountability Agents Auditions **Brand Business** Career Coaching
 Communication Control Creativity
 Determination Discipline
Empowerment
 Entrepreneur Finances
 Gratitude Growth Ideas
 Introductions Marketing Network
Organization Passion
 Persistence **Planning Real**
 Life Reflection Relationships
 Sales Specificity Success
Support system Talent website

TheSavvyActor on Twitter

- By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail. Benjamin Franklin #SavvySayings
- Better than succeeding little by little is failing at one go. Jose Bergamin #SavvySayings
- A simple fact that is hard to learn is that the time to save money is when you have some. Joe Moore #SavvySayings

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- MyBodyTutor.com takes care of the whole person, checking in on things in your life for which you're grateful and patting you on the back for what you may have sacrificed that day. I found myself sacrificing a lot of sugar and subway trips.
- Anna and Adam Gilbert (the founder of the program) are personally invested in my success. They celebrate my successes, even on social media sites.
- Adam writes and shares articles that are well-informed and keep me motivated. One article for sensible holiday eating right before Passover was perfectly timed.

This process is working for me because I know and trust my accountability partner. She is giving me her time and in return I want to show up for her in a way that proves I have made that time worthwhile. The way I would want her to step up if I was the one offering my valuable advice.

So, My Savvy Actors, I ask you this:

What is the one thing you need to do for your career that is so big and scary that you've just put it aside and given up?

- Revamping your website?
- Overhauling your audition book?
- Mastering ProTools so you can audition for Voice-Overs from home?
- Doing actual research and brainstorming on your character before rehearsals begin?
- Attending networking events?

Write this challenge down on a piece of paper.

Good. Now who is one person in your life that you respect and trust to coach you through the series of "next steps" that it will take to get you there? Someone about whom you care enough to help them achieve their dreams?

Write their name down on that same piece of paper.

When they say yes, you've found your accountability partner. Contract how often you'll be checking in with one another and start challenging each other to take each small step forward.

Do this, and you will soon feel the shift from fear of this challenge to loving the journey.

And if you want to bump it up a notch, you can watch The Savvy Actor video on [Creating a MasterMind Group](#).

Fellow busy person, you too can make a profound change in your life. Honor your colleagues by letting them mentor you along the way.

We here at The Savvy Actor are proud to be with you on this journey too.

By the way, I weighed myself yesterday and realized that I've surpassed my target weight of 175. I'm down 24 pounds to 174. That's the power of having an accountability partner.

Choose.

Go.

Okay, for those of you concerned with weight loss, here's a little bonus. Through Anna's coaching with MyBodyTutor.com, here are some things I've learned:

- Start every meal with the protein. If I eat protein, I am not hungry. If I do not eat protein, I will still be hungry.
- Steel-cut oats with raw almond butter is a great way to begin every morning.
- One piece of a brownie can be as satisfying as the whole thing (especially when you have a very trim husband who is more than happy to take one for the team and finish off the rest.)
- When going out with your spouse, share one entrée and one appetizer. It's really enough food.

- If you know you're going to be accountable to a friend/respected coach for every item you eat, you will think twice before picking up another piece of bread.
- If you're going to eat carbs, make sure it's really worthwhile. Don't waste it on a nasty Italian bakery sawdust cookie.



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Thanks Doug for the inspiring words. <http://t.co/la1F7e2G>

Leila J. Babson
(@bason)
15 days ago



Doug, Awesome article. As you know even though I am not an actor myself, I am a coach, and this is a PERFECT example of the value of coaching and an accountability partner in getting you to ANY goal you set. You never cease to amaze me. (And congratulations on your weight loss!)

Mark Dana
15 days ago



madeline Jaye
15 days ago

As someone who is thin, having lost 35 lbs during college, and then having had to loose 20 of those lbs again, after college, and who several years later gained and lost 47 lbs twice! with 2 pregnancies, I feel compelled to add to your diet advice. In order to loose it and keep it off: 1. eat what you are hungry for when you are hungry for it. i e. if you crave gravy, don't have an entire steak and mashed potatoes with gravy, dinner. Just have some gravy on a baked potato. You'll be happy and your body will feel satisfied. 2. Replace the tape in your head that constantly says: DON'T eat, or don't' eat that, or I shouldn't eat, with the new tape: I SHOULD eat. I should nourish my body. What would make me feel good, healthy and nourished? then seek out that thing. it will focus you, keep you from grabbing something junky. plus it will start to have an effect of kind of elevating your palate, making junky choices taste gross, eventually. 3. if you are having a very hard time resisting that which is not nourishing, tell yourself : I can eat it on Sunday. On Sunday, ask yourself if that is still what you actually crave. most often you don't. but if you do, it won't kill you to eat it one day of the week. Eventually, Sundays will come and you will realize you don't want to eat junky stuff or over eat, anymore. Then you'll be free!! The idea being to put yourself in charge, and in a positive position rather than depriving and rewarding. But I love the idea of incorporation an accountability coach to get you started. Great idea!



Andre Saintrose
14 days ago

Being accountable is surely something I'm missing and desperately need to be more forthcoming in taking action in what I call my career. Things can become very distant even forgotten when pushing forward to give your contribution to society as a successful working actor. So thank you Sawy Actor for reminding me of what I need and suppose to doing as being accountable . You're the best!