



Marcus T. Anthony (PhD)

www.mindfutures.com/blog
marcus.a@mindfutures.com

A review of the book:

The 4 Hour Work Week

by Timothy Ferriss

Follow your bliss, and doors will open", Joseph Campbell famously stated. In *The Four Hour Work Week* Tim Ferriss details how he has followed his bliss, and the doors have certainly opened for him. Rather generously, he then tells us how to do the same.

I found this book to have much that is very worthwhile. There is an enormous amount of information here, and the reader is free to pick and choose what he/she wants to take or leave. It has changed my life

for the better.

Some reviewers on Amazon.com commented that they found the first half of T4HWW fascinating, but then lost interest. Assuming they are not the very time-deficit folks Ferris talks about, this is probably because the first portion of the book is entertainingly anecdotal, while towards the middle it becomes heavy with lists of information sources - web sites, organisations, reference books and so on. I have personally found this later section to be incredibly useful. That's because I have read and re-read the book with an intention to actually use it. I get the sense that a lot of the critics have never really tried to apply the book's philosophy and specific tips, and quickly returned to re-testing the keypads on their Blackberries.

I found many of the listed web sites very useful. I have always wanted to feel the rush of being a colonial master, so I have hired book editors, programmers, virtual assistants, and translators from sites mentioned in the book, and all at very inexpensive prices. If I hadn't read the book, I would not have been aware of that these people even existed; or at the very least, would never have thought that I, with my one-man writing/publishing business, could ever use them.

One other philosophical positive, Ferris is scathing of the modern culture of work for work's sake, information overload, and time wasting with gadgets. I fully concur. People are wasting their lives tapping away on mobile phones, Blackberries and lap-tops, just like I am now. There's a whole world out there waiting for us when we unplug from the matrix of the money and machines society. I personally loved the stories Ferris relates about his experience with this.

Some people have expressed concerns about the ethical side of this book, and someone compared Timothy Ferriss to a snake oil salesman. I don't share this view, but I understand it. A clear statement of ethics earlier in the book would go a long way - what is right and wrong. In one section detailing how to become an expert, Ferriss says that the idea of expertise is largely a myth. All one really needs to do is read the three leading books in the field and come up with a new angle, then sell it. It may well be true that you could pass yourself off as an expert doing this, but I don't see it as being ethical, because it is a deliberate deception. If you have a brilliant idea, a fair enough; but you shouldn't be telling people what to do or what to buy if you don't have significant experience and knowledge of the subject (go into politics instead, where you will find lots of friends). To be fair though, Ferriss much later states that he will not work with unethical or dishonest people.

Nonetheless, I do agree that it is often great - and very freeing - the break the rules; but the golden rule is never do harm to others.

Towards the end of *T4HWW*, Ferriss encourages the reader to act upon what really moves us, what makes us happy; and he asks us to be of service to the world. "Take time to find something that calls to you, not just the first acceptable form of surrogate work" (p. 297), he writes. Once we have decided this (or "permitted" might be a better word), the task is to find out how to help others, the future generations, to do the same. He then implores us to develop a habit of charity.

This very closely approximates my own approach to life, as I've

outlined in my book *Sage of Synchronicity*. One thing I would suggest though, is developing a set of specific tools to enable you to really follow your inner guidance system. I call it listening to the "Sage". Ferriss doesn't address this issue specifically.

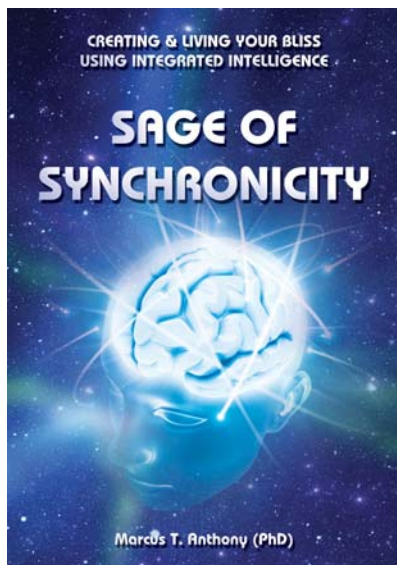
I suspect T4HWW will work best for western audiences. Besides being a lot fatter and generally more annoying than just about everyone else, studies tend to show that westerners are more individualistic and free-thinking than other cultures. In comparison, Asian cultures have a low tolerance for ambiguity and change (Singapore has the lowest capacity in the world, Hong Kong, where I live, is fifth last - so don't come here trying to change anyone's mind). A central point Ferriss makes is that people develop life and work habits which drain their souls of vitality, spontaneity, and the adventurous spirit of the child (I am in complete agreement). To shift those habits one has to begin to jettison the conformist, conservative and restrictive culture of one's society.

It is unfair to criticise Timothy Ferriss for not always having followed the formula outlined in T4HWW. He's a relatively young man in his early 30's who is finding his way through the world with active experimentation, by being adventurous. He is following his Bliss. So give the poor New Rich kid a break. I say, "Well done, Tim. Keep up the good work!" - and it is how to do good (fun, vitlising) work that he is teaching us. And as Ferriss points out on his web site, the title should not be taken too literally. The author doesn't work four hours a week. He merely does what he loves, when he wants to do it, where he wants to do it. That's what I call smart. That's living your Bliss.

I give Timothy Ferriss' *The 4 Hour World Week* a 5-star rating. It is

potentially life-changing. This is not a book you read just once for inspiration. It is hands on, and chock full of practical tips and know-how. T4HWW will work best for those who have an entrepreneurial and freedom-loving spirit, those who like to think outside the box, and preferably outside the country. It is highly recommended.

Marcus T. Anthony



Find out how to live your Bliss by reading *Sage of Synchronicity*, the new book by Marcus T. Anthony. Available from Amazon.com & other online retailers. For the eBook version go to:

<http://www.lybrary.com/marcus-anthony-m-29204.html>, OR:

<http://www.cyberread.com/Sage-of-Synchronicity/Anthony-Marcus-T/id321854/>

Futures with depth

*"The heart of the future is not a flying car
or
a faster internet, but the soul of humanity."
--Marcus T. Anthony*