



July 2007

Doing More with Less

- making time if we choose to, and taking back control of our lives

This article is about the choices we make in our day-to-day lives that involve us choosing what we want to do and making it happen.

By Warren Macdonald

Doing more with less. What does that mean? Sometimes we can get bogged down in terminology and concepts that just don't seem "real". How can I do more with less? I can't do everything I need to do now, let alone with less. Less time, less money, less resources... I like to keep things simple. Doing more with less comes about naturally if we CHOOSE wisely. All of us, without exception, make hundreds if not thousands of decisions each and every day. Every one of those decisions sends us down a CHOSEN path whether we consciously realize it or not.

For example, how many times have you blown somebody off, or not taken up an opportunity to go and do something fun because you "didn't have time"? We're all busy, but

the reality is that all of us can make time if we CHOOSE to. What if we hadn't read the newspaper from cover to cover this morning? Would our lives really suffer if we missed a single day of soaking up all of that information from all over the world? Wouldn't it be nice to swap from time to time to let yourself just be, in the moment; to focus on what's happening inside? Plus, we'd have an extra half an hour of "time" up our sleeves! How much time do we actually waste focussing on time we think we haven't got? What are we teaching our kids when we tell them we "haven't got time" to play with them when they've seen us sitting in front of the television all afternoon?

Doing more with less is about taking back control of our lives.

People often ask me how I can possibly do as much as I do.

How could I not? There is so much to do, and none of us are here forever.

Wheeling around the streets of Arusha, Tanzania in the lead up to my climb of Africa's tallest peak, Mt Kilimanjaro, I became constantly amazed, almost overwhelmed, by peoples reaction to what I had set out to achieve. They stopped me in the streets to shake my hand to tell me how great it was that I was going to climb their mountain. I would thank them for their support, before adding "but I haven't climbed it yet, I may not make it to the top". It wasn't until somebody pointed out to me that it didn't matter whether I made it to the top or not; that they were impressed that someone

could make the COMMITMENT, that a man with no legs had the VISION and BELIEF that he could reach the top of an almost 6000 metre (19,222ft) peak.

Most of us have goals and dreams. How many of us act on those dreams, taking the time to focus on turning them into reality? All too often I hear people say "I'd love to do this", or "I'd love to do that", and then proceed to tell me why they can't!

They've already made the decision in their minds; already put forth an obstacle that may or may not have arisen. There are enough real obstacles in this world without conjuring them up in advance in our heads. Why shouldn't it be possible for all of us to achieve our dreams?

If not us, then who?

The only difference between successful people and those not living to their full potential is that successful people realise that it takes ACTION to achieve a dream. Action is what is required to turn a pipe dream into reality,

and most people are afraid to take action because it involves a degree of RISK.

What they are failing to realize is that only through risk are we introduced to OPPORTUNITY. Sure, with risk there is always the possibility of failure, and we don't like failure because it messes with our sense of security. What we really want though is FREEDOM, and many of us have made the mistake of trading our freedom for security. Until we realize that REAL security can only come from within, we have to accept that in trading freedom for security, we usually end up with neither...

Where does that leave us? Consider this. When I woke up in hospital 6 years ago having just undergone the amputation of both legs at mid thigh, I could have been forgiven that all was now lost, that I'd never again be capable of leading the life I'd become accustomed to, a life of travelling to exotic places, of adventure in the world's forests and mountains.

At that moment I was faced with a choice, a

distinct "fork" in the road with two very different paths. Down one I saw a life of misery. Of blaming the world, or whoever cared to listen, for what had happened to me. Of playing the victim, and letting go of any control over my life, because control had been "taken" from me with the loss of my legs.

I saw that path as leading down into a deep, dark hole... Down (or should I say up) the other road I saw an opportunity.

I'd lost everything I prided myself on – the legs that took me to places few humans had ventured. I saw an opportunity to not just get back up, but to see just how far back up I could get. Doctors told me I'd never walk again. They didn't say anything about cycling, or swimming, or paragliding or climbing....

Only through accepting responsibility for what had happened to me was I able to move forward. To do more than anyone could have imagined.

To do more with less.

Warren Macdonald is an Adventurer/ Professional Speaker based out of Vancouver BC. His first book "A Test of Will" is a gripping account of his accident and triumphant return to the mountains. In March 2003 he became the first double above-knee amputee to summit Africa's tallest peak, Mt Kilimanjaro. For information on how Warren can help you and your team change the way you see the world, please contact your bureau representative.