

The Road to Renewal

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Are you facing change or seeking renewal in your life's work? Are you being pulled by possibility, or pushed by discomfort, to find the road to renewal? What can you do to restore your fulfillment and wellness?

Spoiler alert on your future! Your future renewal is not going to be a big, onetime event. Renewal will be a recurring life opportunity, large and small scale. You will be invited to this dance many times. Sometimes this invitation is just a whisper. You will need to pay attention. Accept! Have fun! While "the road to renewal" sounds lofty, it is simply a matter of choice and practice.



In our 24-7, connected, consumer-oriented culture, you may find little encouragement to choose (1) a purpose-full life; (2) a life in which you manage your energy by interspersing full engagement with complete downtime; and (3) a life in which you practice rituals of renewal. But in sum, these are all key elements to being on the road to renewal and avoiding the road to burn out. You must decide to go on this journey. A few ideas follow.

1. Asking the Right Questions – Where Is Your Attention?

What kinds of questions now focus your energy and attention? What percentage of your intellectual focus is on "why questions" (purpose-based questions about why you do what you do today) versus "what and how" questions (activity-based questions about what you feel compelled to do today). Both are necessary. A daily pause to focus on the "why questions" (purpose questions), however, is a cornerstone practice of a "self-renewer." Many of the world's greatest leaders and thinkers start each day reflecting on "why questions."

Richard Leider, founder of *The Purpose Company*, points to the two most important days of your life: the day you were born and the day you determined why you were born. He identifies two universal purposes each of us can utilize: to grow and to give. *Where are you going to grow today? Where are you going to give? Are you burning brightly in service to what matters most? "Save the world, AND savor the world,"* he advises.

2. Renewal of Human Potential – the Paradox

The capacity for renewal rests with the skillful management of energy. You might think avoiding

stretch or stress is a good thing to manage energy. Not true! We grow our capacities by stretching them. With great challenges, great growth can come!

Like a professional athlete, full engagement of our entire being is important training. However, what differentiates a “self-renewer” from a “burnout” *is an equally strong commitment to downtime, deep rest and disengagement between challenges.* “Stretch & stress. Rest & regenerate. Repeat.” Downtime is productive.

Both the stretch and the downtime are essential elements of renewal. Are you playing hard and resting deeply? Have you mastered cycles of stretch-time and downtime in your day, week, month, or year?

3. Developing Your Practice Plan – Renewal Rituals

ITP offers a cornucopia of practices supporting self-renewal. Weekly engagement in an ITP group and practicing the Kata regularly are excellent examples of energy renewal rituals.

How clear are your affirmations and intentions? Disciplined participation in a 6-9 month practice cycle is essential to any significant renewal. It requires time to develop, grow into and embody one’s affirmations. Are you fully utilizing the affirmation process to assess current conditions, and develop purpose-driven intentions? At the same time, are you practicing focused surrender, enjoying your practice for its own sake, apart from any outcomes it may produce?

Our human potential is a highly renewable resource, when we apply a few basic principles. ITP practices provide an infinite number of creative avenues for aiding renewal, once we understand just a few basics of regeneration.