
"A failure is not always a mistake, it may simply be the best one can do under the circumstances. The real mistake is to stop trying."

»B.F. Skinner

Your Greatest Show



I recently watched one of the more-motivational documentaries I've come across in years.

It was about the making of a movie musical. Yeah, it surprised me, too.

After coming off a longish business trip, my wife declared that we were having a family movie night – as in going to a cinema. No sleeping in a recliner while everyone else watched a movie.

Her choice was a movie I had made hard plans not to see. "The Greatest Showman", a musical starring Wolverine...uh...Hugh Jackman wasn't on my "to do" list. It sounded lame to me.

I was stupendously wrong.

Life's Slide Show



I completed a very enjoyable but draining project last week.

Over the years, I've prepared more PowerPoint presentations than I can remember. This one, however, was more emotional than most.

A few years ago, some close friends' daughter graduated high school, and I volunteered to put together a slide show with music to play during the graduation party.

Since then, it has become my assigned duty whenever a close friend has a graduating son or daughter.

This year, my wife and I were those people.

Putting together a 20-minute slide show of our older son's journey from birth to high school graduation was

I immediately downloaded the soundtrack on Spotify and proclaimed Hugh Jackman to be "the man".

How good was the movie? I have come to believe that Zac Efron is quite possibly underrated.

Yeah, it surprised me, too.

"The Greatest Showman" soundtrack has become my running music. That I know others are out there on the track with metal and rap music in their earbuds while I hum along to a Zac Efron / Zendaya duet doesn't make me feel weird... much.

When my wife asked me to pick up the DVD with the "making of the movie" footage included, I pretended not to be excited to do it. (I had already watched the movie two more times on airplanes.)

The thing that most surprised me watching what went into the making of the movie was how continually surprised I was by how hard that movie was to make. The work they put in was stunning.

I have long preached to groups that it typically takes tremendous determination and effort to make anything look effortless.

In this case, so many things that just seemed natural and even spontaneous in the movie actually took weeks, months, and in some instances, years to perfect.

We see the talented and successful actor, musician, athlete, or even businessperson and think things must have come easy to him or her.

fun, if emotionally and mentally draining.

The task of sorting through about 1,000 photos (no kidding) to find the ones that best represent sections of his life led to many evenings with red eyes.

They were sometimes red from fatigue... sometimes from tears.

I would strongly suggest that no one doing these projects should begin putting the music in too soon. It slows you up, but not for why you may think.

If you can get through Rascal Flatts "My Wish" playing behind pictures of your kid growing up without tearing up...you are a stronger person than I. I'm just saying.

During the project, I began reflecting on something I have long preached to groups about "the good old days."

I found pictures that had me reflecting on entire sections of our lives I had not thought about in years. I then began remembering various stressful events that were happening around the times of several of those smiling photos.

Some were personal. Some were professional. Some were all-consuming at the time.

Yet, I hadn't thought about any of them in years.

I contend that one of the reasons folks so often find themselves thinking things were easier or less stressful in

They are just so good and comfortable in what they do. Surely, success could not have ever been in doubt!

However, we are seeing the end result, the polished product.

We aren't seeing the work, frustrations, setbacks, and adaptations that went into getting these "polished people" to where they are.

Your own masterworks – personal and professional - are still works in progress.

Keep working.

the past is that they know how those chapters of their story turned out.

The past is safe. You survived it.

Some parts were fun, some weren't.

Certain periods may have been carefree, some weren't.

But you're here now, and wiser and more resilient from the journey.

A month, year, or decade from now, it is likely the things most worrying you today will be safe memories.

They may even evoke a smile, as hard as that may be to imagine.

Today will become part of your slide show tomorrow. Make it a happy slide.

**"When you forgive, you in no way change the past -
but you sure do change the future."**

»Bernard Meltzer

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