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PROGRAM

## Attraction Principle #02: Unhook Yourself from the Future

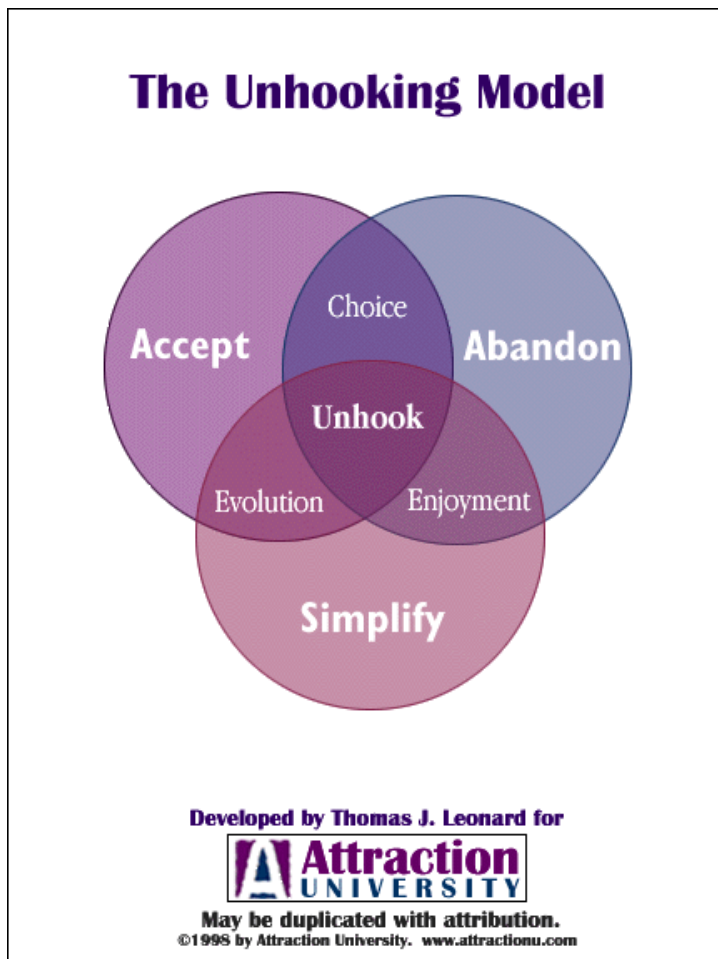
### Introduction

ATTRACTION WORKS IN THE PRESENT, NOT IN THE FUTURE.

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### Other Ways of Phrasing This Principle

- Stop chasing goals.
- Stop living for the future and start enjoying all that today offers.
- Stop striving





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### Related Quotes

"Why do you think they call the present a gift?"

We do not know whether it is good to live or to die. Therefore, we should not take delight in living nor should we tremble at the thought of death. We should be equal minded towards both. This is the ideal. -Mahatma Gandhi

I still lived in the future - a habit which is the death of happiness. -Quentin Crisp

Memory, the priestess, kills the present and offers its heart on the shrine of the dead past. -Rabindranath Tagore

The supreme value is not the future but the present....Whoever builds a house for future happiness builds a prison for the present. --Octavio Paz

My ambition is to do a good job. I never plan anything. --Ilie Nastase, former professional tennis player, running for mayor of Bucharest, Romania, 1996

Let us be of good cheer, remembering that the misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never happen. --James Russell Lowell

I never think of the future. It comes soon enough. -Albert Einstein

Forget the past and live the present hour. --Sarah Knowles Bolton

Life isn't a matter of milestones but of moments. --Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy

Love the moment, and the energy of that moment will spread beyond all boundaries. - Corita Kent

Seek not, my soul, the life of the immortals; but enjoy to the full the resources that are within thy reach. -Pindar

The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time. -Abraham Lincoln

If we discovered that we had only five minutes left to say all that we wanted to say, every telephone booth would be occupied by people calling other people to stammer that they loved them. --Christopher Morley



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### **Distinctions To Draw**

Commitment vs. Striving. When you're naturally committed to something or someone, striving is the opposite of what you'd do because you're already there.

Vision vs. Pipedream. A vision is inevitable with or without you; a pipedream is not going to happen no matter what you do.

Present vs. Future. The best future occurs from well-lived present.

# Top 10 List

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### **Top 10 Ways to Unhook Yourself from the Future**

You are most attractive when you're living in the present moment, not living in the future or striving for it. But how does one keep focused on today, yet still attract a better future? This Top 10 List will help you make this important change in how you live and think.

#### **1. Give up the goals which are seductive.**

We all have things we want to achieve or acquire and nothing is wrong with this. But when these types of goals get us worked up to the point that we become more passionate about the future than we are about today, then it's easy to get into trouble. Whether it's a goal to get married, make a million dollars, change the world or become somebody, these kinds of goals can lead one down a seductive path where the future is far more interesting than the present. As a result, you lose the present, which is where the real gifts are.

#### **2. Perfect the present.**

When your life isn't as you want it to be, the first thing we tend to do is to set a goal for a better future. Not bad, but if you'd take the same energy and perfect the present right now, you'd probably attract a better future instead of trying to acquire it. Very different approach. The idea is that a better future will find you when you have made the most of the present you've been given. The present is a superb teacher; the future is a seducer.

#### **3. Stop watching television.**

People get hooked by advertising messages -- they cause us to want and 'need' more, which is kinda fun, but usually very expensive, given we give up our present quality of life in order to afford that item, tangible or intangible. The tendency is to acquire a lifestyle and confuse that



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with having a life. If you stop watching television, the future won't be as seductive, because your present will be more appealing.

### **4. Stop motivating yourself.**

Positive self talk, affirmations, external motivation and other 'force' measures can be very, very effective. But they tend to be expensive because they put the blinders on and turn you into a horse running on a track. Better to enjoy all of what you already have to the point that you don't need to change a thing. At that point, a better future will find you, without the expense of motivation.

### **5. Stop trying to become a better person.**

Give up. I've coached too many people trying to become a better person that they lose their humanness. Ego is a very, very positive part of you. Faults are rich and wonderful teachers. Mistakes are golden. Weaknesses are usually just hidden strengths. So, stop trying to improve, declare the game over and get to know 100% of YOU, just as you are. Stop trying to change yourself and you'll start living much more in the present. The future does not need you to improve, but it does need you to evolve. You can only evolve when you are in the present, not striving for a better future. This is a tricky one, so stay with the it and work it out for yourself.

### **6. Stop over-planning.**

I don't mean not to plan for your financial future or to give up your important goals. But it's tempting for some personality types to think that fully laid-out plans and perfectly identified goals are the right thing to do. In fact, they may simply be a mind exercise to reduce risk and fear. Identify a vision or sketch out a plan and then learn-as-you-go, but learn quickly. Better to become a rapid in-the-moment learner than become an expert planner. Life is accelerating so quickly, that most planning skills are irrelevant by the time you master them.

### **7. Stop hoping.**

Life may improve for you, but not because you're hoping. A popular bumper sticker says it all: "Since I gave up hope, I feel so much better." If you're living in hope for something to occur or improve, you're simply escaping from the present. We all need an escape from the present from time to time; just don't turn hope (aka the future) into your personal ZIP CODE.

### **8. Give up future-based possibility.**

There is a lot that's possible in life and many of the best things that will happen to you during life will be things that you never saw as even possible. But does expanding your thinking to consider what's possible make these things happen more often or sooner? The jury is out on this one. But the idea is that if you see the possibility in the present, instead of what's possible in the future, you'll be a lot better off and more attractive.



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### **9. Stop hanging out with strivers.**

Strivers can be very fun to be with, but the net result is usually a drain of your energy. Strivers need lots of encouragement and energy from others to keep up their pace. Find folks who are happy with themselves and who are involved in creative endeavors which express their values instead of seeking to succeed.

### **10. Stop using if/then formulas.**

Whenever I hear someone start out a sentence with "if" or "when," I know they are living in the future. Entrepreneurial types, being optimists, are really good at this. The trick is to take out the words "if" and "when" from your vocabulary. That will help you stay in the present and not set you up to have what you want to occur be conditional or hinge on another person/event, such as "When I get my degree, I will make more money." Better to say something like, "I am really, really enjoying my studies." See the difference in orientation?

### **Additional Information:**

#### **A. How this principle is sometimes misunderstood:**

1. I am not saying not to plan well for the future. I was a Certified Financial Planner before becoming a coach. I know the value of planning and being smart about the future as a way to be responsible for the present. It's just that the tendency for some is to plan their lives away -- being so focused on becoming successful, financially independent, planning for their children's future, etc. that **life** passes them by.
2. I am not saying to give up goals, although I do suggest that a lot to clients who too focused on goals. My basic point is that when the present is perfect, the future is redundant. (Please don't read this literally -- it's more of a place to come from.) The point here is that you want to have some choice around how much 'time' you spend in the future, meaning the freedom to live fully in the present.
3. I am not saying to not use motivation. I use motivation to get things done and to achieve things for the future. But I also ask myself "Why do I need to get motivated to get this thing done? Why isn't it happening more naturally?" That keeps me aware of the trap or misuse of motivation.
4. I am not saying to stop trying to improve yourself. But I am saying to improve yourself because you want to, not because you have to. And enjoy the process of self-improvement instead of focusing only on the desired outcome. If you're striving, you are hooked to the future.
5. I am not saying to give up the notion of 'possibility.' The secret of using that notion



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readily is to simply assume, feel, get, operate as if, etc., that all things are possible, if not probable. Once you start thinking and acting that you can do anything, possibility is redundant and becomes boring.

### **B. Why this principle matters:**

#### **1. Use this principle to identify and respond to plenty of opportunities already around us.**

I feel that most opportunities that life offers are already around us -- it's just that we cannot see or feel them, often because we are too busy trying to get ahead or grab the brass ring.

#### **2. The future is not worth losing the present over.**

Too many people plan too well for the future and use their goals as a way to justify the stress or cost to their current life. This isn't right, but it's prevalent.

#### **3. Use this principle to stop striving.**

The opportunity cost of striving is much higher than cost of not striving. You'll need to work this one out for yourself.

#### **4. Use this principle to disengage from the IF/THEN trap.**

Because of advertising, we feel compelled to get more, do more and become more. These are all 'future' hooks: IF I do this, THEN I'll get that. The IF/THEN formula is very, very expensive.

### **C. What you may encounter along the path of applying this principle:**

#### **1. Confusion.**

It can be disorienting to change from a mostly-future orientation to that of a mostly-present orientation. Take your time -- don't abandon all of your goals unless you really want to.

#### **2. Frustration or boredom.**

The 'present' can seem to move more slowly and with less excitement than striving for the future can feel. Patience is a virtue.

#### **3. Lost.**

You may feel left behind, especially by your peers. Most people ARE on a striving/future track, so expect some flack. You'll probably start developing a different set of colleagues and peers at some point during this transition.

#### **4. Sadness.**

As you switch orientations, you may feel sad, given you're 'giving up' the future as you knew it. Don't be surprised if you feel a sense of loss.



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### **D. How you know you're making progress with this principle:**

1. You could care less about the future, yet you're not living stupidly/irresponsibly either.
2. Goals become optional, not desirable. You orient around them, instead of striving for them.
3. You come to expect *different* types of goals, interests and outcomes. You understand that you probably can't even see most of what the future will bring. You are humbled.
4. You focus on enjoying people more than 'creating a future.'

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### **Related Attraction OS Principles**

#### **#3. Over respond to every event.**

When you over respond in the present, you create opportunities.

#### **#19. Perfect your environment.**

When your environment is perfect, you won't 'need' a 'better' future.

#### **#21. See how perfect the present really is.**

When you do this, you'll naturally feel less hooked by the future.

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Note: This principle could be expanded to read:

### **Unhook yourself from the Future and the Past.**

Obviously, the past hooks us as much as the future does, if not more. And, if you're hooked by past traumas, emotional problems, memories, unfinished business, unresolved problems, etc., you may well feel the need to strive for a better future. Here, then, striving is coming from the need to avoid/escape the past. The solution is generally therapy rather than coaching. I wanted to keep the Attraction OS on the coaching side instead of the therapy side, which is why I didn't include "...and the Past." in the title of this principle.

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### **Teaching/Discussion Questions**

1. What makes the future more interesting than the present for you?
2. If there was no future, what would you do differently today?
3. How can you set goals without getting hooked by the future?
4. What motivates you in general?





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5. Are you creating the future or is your present creating the future?
  6. What are you hoping the IF/THEN formula will help you achieve?
  7. Are you relying on possibility, or just enjoying it?
  8. What are the clues that indicate someone is hooked by the future?
  9. What goals do you have that you've been 'seduced' into setting/wanting?
  - 10.
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### **TeleClass Title Suggestions**

How to Unhook Yourself From the Future Without Giving Up Your Dreams

Success Without Striving: When You Stop Striving and Start Enjoying, Success Will Find YOU

Thriving as a Goal Free Zone: How to Succeed Without Relying on Goals

Self-Motivation for Dummies: How To Keep Yourself Going Without Forcing Yourself

10 Days to Better Habits

Y'll Live