

As AI takes the easy, you must choose your hard

Been stressing about this week's article. Have published four weeks in a row. Afraid that if I'll miss a week, it'll be the beginning of the end.

Want to write it. Enjoy writing it. Makes my day better when I do.

But deep in the throes of my next book. Deadline is May 1.

Final edits are going good. In the zone. Can't stop thinking about the book. Waking up early thinking about it. Hope you find a project like that.

Doing the work worth doing is a wonderful thing.

That's what I'll write about today—how doing work that makes you better as a result of the work, not because of any results you might get from it, is worth doing.

Write for yourself, first, to find ideas

Usually I don't publish how I get to my ideas. Thought I would today.

Didn't know what I wanted to write about. Just started. Wrote for me. Dumped my brain on the page. Led to an idea. This idea. And, off we go.

Usually I'd delete the first part. The part that you just read. The part that comes before the article that helps me figure out what I want to say. The worthy struggle nobody sees.

The first step is to write for myself pretending I'm writing for you. Eventually, my brain makes sense of what it's thinking. Teaching truly is the best way to learn. Guess that's why this pic from [The Obvious Choice](#) keeps [going viral](#).

I've never been a guy who keeps a journal. But maybe that's what this is. A journal, forcing me to think deeper into things like [small talk](#) or [social media growth](#) or my [disappointment surrounding my book launch](#) from earlier this year.

Discovering work worth doing in an AI world

People say writing will disappear with artificial intelligence. And perhaps some of it will.

But writing is clarity of thought.

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And clear thinking in a world where everything is simple and easy will become even more valuable as less people do it.

Just as the washing machine freed us from scrubbing clothes by hand but didn't eliminate the need to care for our families, AI frees us from information processing but doesn't eliminate the need for human judgment, creativity, and connection. Each technological revolution asks us again: What hard will you choose now?

Maybe it's writing like this.

Maybe it's brain dumps like this.

Not to publish. Instead, primarily done as a way to think better.

Maybe that's, like, actually, really important.

You don't have to write though. There's other ways.

I've got a friend who watches a movie every night after his 9-5 at a bank. Some middle management position at a local branch.

Twice a week, he and a buddy record a podcast about obscure movie trivia. That's awesome! They even have a sponsor now. What a cool thing to work on.

He took something that he enjoys and turned it into a project to share with a friend. Now he's building a side hustle business out of it.

Will it go anywhere?

Don't know. Doesn't matter.

He's having fun and learning new things. Audio production, selling sponsorships, communication.

AI tools are redrawing the boundaries of what work we can delegate versus what we should do ourselves.

When anything repetitive, analytical, or information-heavy can be outsourced to an algorithm, what remains? The work that transforms us. The hard that changes who we are and deepens our connection to the people that matter to us.

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Choose your hard

There's a chapter in my next book called *Choose Your Hard*. Here's a bit from the introduction:

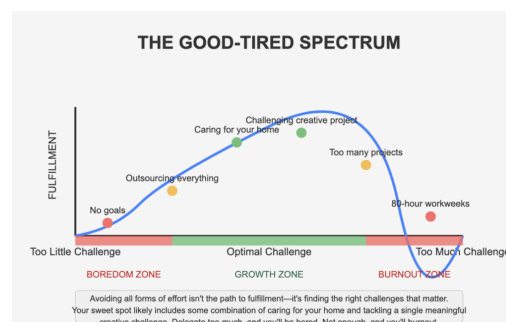
There's a paradox with fitness that, while working out is hard, living out of shape is harder. The same is true of mental work. Our brains, like our bodies, need the right kind of resistance to remain sharp and function at their best.

Much of our current culture celebrates escaping work, suggesting that the goal is to earn an effortless life.

But what if that's exactly backward?

What if the goal isn't to eliminate hardship but to choose the right kind of hard?

A bit later on in that chapter I share this image. Ignore the roughness of the pic for now. It's not quite there yet. But the illustration is close enough for you to get the gist.



I'm thinking about this more and more because of Artificial Intelligence.

How AI is redefining work

I'm a late adopter to stuff. To everything. My Instagram handle is literally [@itscoachgoodman](https://www.instagram.com/itscoachgoodman).

Not my name. Or last name. Or even the word "coach" and then my name.

No, there's an 'its' before it. Lol, that's not even proper grammar—it should have a sky comma.

That's how late to Instagram I was.

It's the same as everything. I move slow.

Turtles are my spirit animal. I don't jump on trends. And, because of that, I'll never be the guy in the spotlight. But you bet your ass I'll always be there. Working. Chugging along. Improving.

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Anyway, I'm late to the party but I've started to use AI heavily. I get the hype. I don't buy into much hype. I wear a Casio F-91W for God's sake. But, with AI, I get the hype.

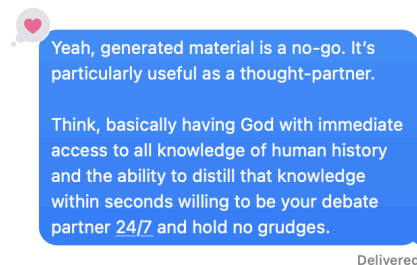
It's the first time I've ever used anything that, within a few days of using it, I cannot imagine doing work without it as a companion.

AI as my book writing partner

Said earlier that my book edits are going well. That's because I'm working with AI as a developmental editor.

As a thought partner.

I wrote the first three drafts without AI. Now I'm using it to take my book from great to mind-blowingly incredible.



My agent asked me how it's going. Here's what I responded with:

An example: I loaded my entire manuscript into Claude.Ai. 60,000+ words. Told it I wanted to ask a bunch of questions. But first, asked the system what else it needed to know about me and my goals for the book before we began.

For an hour, I taught it about me. Who I was. Who the book is for. Areas I know I can improve upon.

Here's a concern I shared that I had:

5. Biggest concern is widespread applicability. I don't know what I don't know. What I do know is that I have blindspots. I'm a white jewish guy from a middle to upper class family in Canada. My family always had money. I graduated from University debt-free (worked throughout, but still). And I've always been in-shape because I started working out in high school and never stopped.

In addition, I'm concerned at what effect AI-driven content will have books and cognizant of including a lot of personal stories and unique aspects that both bring the lessons alive and also make it stand out in a world where a lot of books are going to be rehashing the same basic lessons.

Finally, I want this to be absurdly practical. That's been a downfall of my previous books. Because this stuff tends to come naturally to me, I haven't build the frameworks, reflection questions, and exercises that will help others apply the materials.

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I invested an hour into answering its questions and teaching it about my goals so that it could be precise with its recommendations. Then I started to prompt it.

Each day, I'm tackling different questions to improve my work. Not do my work for me. Instead, add rocket fuel to it.

An example:

- What are the most boring sections of the book?

It told me that I didn't need two examples to make the same point in one section buried deep in chapter 4. That it was redundant and boring for readers who were already bought in.

It dug through 60,000+ words and, within seconds, found a distinct area of improvement—a literal needle in a haystack.

I agreed with its assessment and asked it to rewrite the section for me.

I asked it to keep everything intact but remove the story I felt was weaker. It spit out a revised section in a matter of seconds. Not perfect, but enough for me to zip through and clean up.

Consider what happened . . .

Within 7 minutes, an objective third party was able to find an area of improvement buried deep in the middle of an entire manuscript, fix it, and move on. That's mind-blowing man.

With AI, I'm not escaping the hard work of writing—I'm choosing the specific hard that matters most. The thinking. The story selection. The taste-making. The emotional work of connecting with readers.

And I'm delegating the rest.

It's like my brain, but better. Resulting in outsized improvements in performance, giving me superhuman capabilities.

The quality of your questions matters now, more than ever

A few other examples of questions that I've asked to make the work better:

1. What are the weakest parts of my argument?
2. What are the best parts that I should double down on?
3. Are there places where I'm being too abstract or where I could add more concrete examples?

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Think about what's going on here:

AI is going through a 60,000 word manuscript, over and over and over again, with a single different question in mind each time.

This would take even the best editor a minimum of a week for just one question. Back and forth between them and I would take days, I'd forget what I was doing in-between, and would lose my train of thought.

Now I can bat back and forth questions, get answers in real time, and plug away.

With this thought-partner I'm able to create better work than ever before. And it's not even close.

Your good work that matters is all that matters

I could go on. In the future, I'll share more of the specifics of process and prompting.

Here's how I suggest you approach content creation right now:

1. Choose an Ai
2. give it a hard take
3. educate it about your background
4. ask it to debate you
5. tell it to summarize your conversation
6. get it to spit out scripts and content pieces for you based on your conversation.

I've been brain-dumping on this article now for an hour. Time to put it into Claude and have it help me clean it up for you.

It's my thoughts and stories and ideas.

Before, it'd take me a long time to clean this all up: figure out what goes where under which subhead, cut out redundant parts, whatever.

That'd bog me down.

Sitting down and looking at a blank screen isn't intimidating anymore. My job is to think, have interesting ideas, ask good questions, and have good taste.

AI doesn't eliminate the need for hard work. It eliminates our excuses for doing the wrong kind of hard. When machines can handle the grunt work, we're left with a more important question: What difficult, transformative work will you choose to embrace?

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Finding your work worth doing

But this is less about AI and more about work. Let's get back to that.

Choosing what work you do has never been more important. Figuring out what to struggle on has never been more important. And deciding what to delegate (either to machine or man) has never been more important.

And so, I propose a new way of thinking about your work.

One that takes into account time and money, of course. But also one that accounts for the loss in the joy of the work, the loss of the pride of having done the work, and the potential loss in connection to your loved ones formed as a result of the work.

When we think about which tasks to do ourselves and which to delegate, most people use a simple calculation: "Is my time worth more than what I'd pay someone else to do this?"

I think that there's more to it. So I developed a five tests you can use as filters.

The work worth doing tests

When deciding which tasks to do yourself versus outsource, consider more than just efficiency. Ask yourself these questions:

The Connection Test: *Will this help me build meaningful relationships?*

Mowing your lawn alongside your children creates moments you can't outsource. Making dinner with your spouse might take longer than takeout. Efficiency isn't the point. Chatting while chopping vegetables is the point.

- The nutritionist who takes clients grocery shopping instead of just emailing meal plans
- A gym owner who could automate check-ins but staffs the front desk to learn members' names and stories

The Growth Test: *Will this teach me something valuable?*

Building that bookshelf might take you three times longer than a professional, but the skills and confidence you gain might serve you for decades.

- A fitness professional tracking client metrics in [QuickCoach.Fit](#) when a wearable band could do it, knowing that the manual process helps clients better understand their body.

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The Pride Test: *Will being able to say "I did that" bring me genuine satisfaction?*

Many achievements feel hollow when purchased rather than earned.

- An influencer who writes their own content, dialling down on one platform instead of using ghostwriters to blast copycat content everywhere.

The Presence Test: *Will it ground me in a physical reality?*

Knowledge workers especially need tactical work to balance digital abstraction. Dirt under your fingernails and calluses on your palms does a body good.

- Coaches who handwrite client notes after sessions to process what they observed.

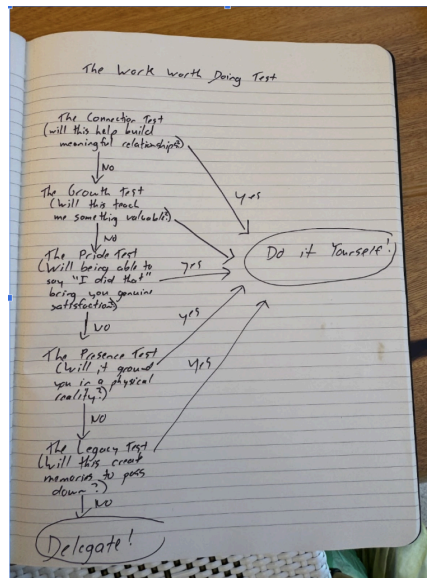
The Legacy Test: *Will this create memories to pass down?*

Teaching your child to change a tire might seem inefficient compared to roadside assistance, but you're passing down more than just a skill.

- Building a gym culture through in-person community events rather than relying on social media engagement.

Work worth delegating usually fails these tests.

Here's my terrible sketch with the process map. I call it *The Work Worth Doing Test*.



There's a difference between winning the Olympics versus ordering an Olympic gold medal off of eBay and putting it on yourself.

When you hire work to be done, it loses its meaning. It's there. The result of it is there. But it's empty. No memories. It's just another thing that exists.

The best night's sleep always comes after a hard day's work. An honest tiredness, the kind that comes when you know you've put everything you have into your day. Left it all on the field.

Every day, you face a choice.

The hard road of meaningful effort or the seemingly easy path that leads to emptiness. The work that tires your body but energizes your mind, or the comfort that leaves you restless.

It's Sunday morning now. 8am. I woke up at 6 to write this to you.

Yesterday was Jaden's 3rd birthday. Both boys had a lot of sugar. They didn't sleep well. Which means that I didn't sleep well.

Hard to say how many solid hours of rest I got last night. Three? Maybe four.

I've gotten to the point where I stop counting how many times I've woken up on any given night. It's depressing. At least six last night though. Probably more.

But I got myself up at 6am to write this to you.

On Sunday.

It would have been much easier to sleep in. And, if I'm honest, probably healthier, too.

But a weird thing happens when you discover your work worth doing. Which is that you don't mind being tired.

Like, I know I should be tired. If I'm honest, my head is heavy, though I'll never admit that to Alison. And it's time to shut off now because my kids are going to wake up soon. I just went pee and Alison was already stirring so I went in and gave her a kiss.

We have a full day ahead. Days with a 7 and 3 year old are always full. Despite not sleeping well. Despite waking up early to write. Where I should be tired, I know that getting up early to write this to you is going to leave me with more energy today for my family, not less.

That's the weird thing about finding the work worth doing. The exhaustion is satisfying. Which is energizing. I don't pretend to understand it. I can't explain it in physiological terms. But I know it to be true.

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Don't avoid work. Instead, find your work worth doing.

Choose your hard.

Choose meaningful work over empty leisure.

Choose energizing exertion over dulling comfort.

Choose focus over scattered distraction.

These choices won't make your life easier but they will make it worth living.

-Jon