

Flow: Finding Optimal Experience in Daily Life

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The Doris A. Howell Foundation for Women's Health Research

Flow

- When a person becomes fully and energetically absorbed in an activity such that you lose track of time



Flow Equals:

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- Motivation
- Cognitive efficiency
- Activation /productivity
- Positive affect
- Satisfaction
- Overall increased well-being

Citations for lower right corner in smaller font (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson 1984, Lefevre, 1998; Csikszentmihalyi & Nakamura, 1986; Lefevre, 1998)



Identify your Flow Activities

- Identify current and past flow activities in your life.



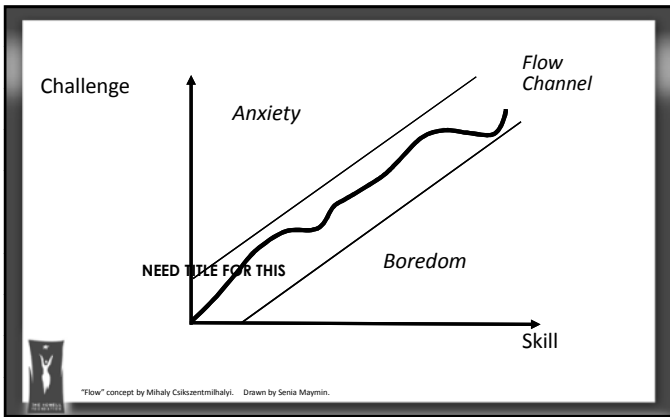
Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

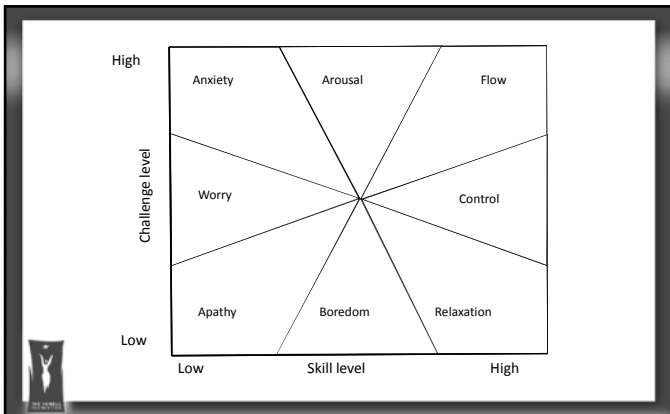


Conditions of the Flow Experience



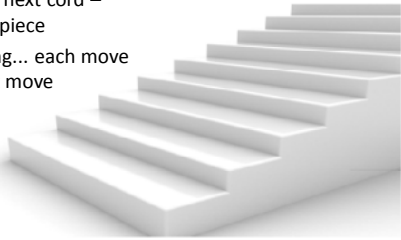
- There is a balance between challenge and skill
 - Constant seeking of equilibrium between anxiety and boredom





Conditions of the Flow Experience

- There are clear goals every step of the way
 - Goal is to hit the next cord – not to finish the piece
 - It is self-catalyzing... each move dictates the next move



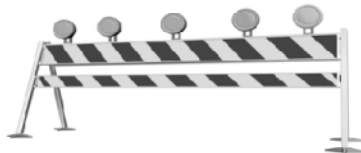
Conditions of the Flow Experience

- There is immediate feedback to one's actions
 - Climber, you know you put hand in right spot
 - Experienced runner that paces themselves to run forever



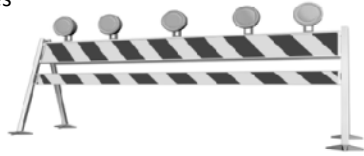
Common Barriers:

- Emotions
- Cognitive thoughts
 - Focus on outcomes
- Stigma
 - Self-consciousness
- Distractions
 - Multi-tasking
 - Cell phones



Common Barriers:

- Over/under matched
 - TV watching
- Lack of planning/time
- Other responsibilities
- Outsourcing
- Pressure



Activity:

- Discuss ideas for adding more Flow to your life.
- What is one new Flow activity you could try this week?
 - Make a plan!

Books by M. Csikszentmihalyi:

- M. Csikszentmihalyi:
 - *Flow*
 - *Finding flow*
- Carol Dweck
 - Mindsets

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