Recently, I took up the game World of Warcraft (WoW) after a 7 year plus leave of absence. Gaming is one my hobbies I enjoy. While I like the challenge it can present, it also affords me some down time. It is surprising the amount of people who don t have activities which afford them some down time. But that s another story. As I was playing it occurred to me that there were some valuable lessons which could be applied to life. Here they are in no order of importance;

When I first made my way back into the game I was lost. My character died way too many times for my liking. But like many other gamers, it was not a big deal. Simply get back up and try again.

In life, we often take failure to heart and forget to rise back up again. Often this is because our confidence and esteem has been eroded over time. It becomes even more problematic if we have been habituated to repeatedly fail. Our brains love repetition; hence failure begets failure.

But if we can habituate ourselves to fail, we can habituate to get back up. And further we can habituate ourselves to have a successful life. It s all about which pattern we choose to install in our lives.

We tell ourselves it s easier to get back up in a game because in the end what does it matter? I would not contend that life does not matter, but I would say as a species we love to worry, fret and make dramas over things which rationally are small. I am not talking about the death of a loved one, or some horribly traumatic experience. I am saying that much of what we worry about isn t worth worrying about.

In gaming, it s easier and clearer to see this path; In life, it s harder and often is clouded over with anxiety and stress.

Like many gamers I have been guilty of smashing the keys on my keyboard. Mostly it occurs when the pressure is on and I find myself trying to hit the keys faster and faster. Effectively I am in panic mode.

It does not help!

I pla m best when I am calm and cool. I am able to see more of what is occurring and can react appropriatel .

Life is ver similar in that we often make the worst decisions when we feel anxiet and stress. In fact, the more acute the anxiet or stress the more inclined we will feel to act. B contrast our best decisions tend to come when we feel grounded and are not overl reactive. We are relativel calm and able to assess the situation and take the appropriate course of action.

One of m tasks when working with people is to get them to slow down and act from a more beneficial perspective. When we are in panic mode, we are doing a disservice to our own unique potential and talents. Most people are far more capable than the reali e, but often the anxiet /stress clouds their minds to the point where the cannot see this.

As I am effectivel a new pla er to WoW, it is taking me time to learn m abilities, movement patterns and rotations. Rotations can be thought of a pattern. Press 1, Press 2, Press 1, Press 3, Press 1, Press 1. Rinse, Repeat. To become a decent pla er is to learn the good rotations which sometimes means unlearning bad rotations. In gaming terms, it can take a few weeks before the pattern is committed to memor .

What I find that is consistentl true is that it is eas to fall of the wagon. It seems eas to fall back into bad patterns and harder to sta on the good ones. In time though what seems initiall difficult can become relativel eas . And if we do happen to fall into patterns we don t like, we can get back onto a successful path. The caveat there is not to leave it to long before getting back into good habits.

A real-life example might suffice. I am a diabetic who has to take insulin among other medications. I had a cold/flu that took a while to get over that s likel due to the fact I am getting older. In that time, I developed some bad eating habits and more importantl did not get back into good ones for some time. Some bad blood results, made me reali e how undisciplined I had become. Getting back into a more disciplined eating routine was relativel eas since not a great deal of time had passed. This ties in nicel with the first point. There will alwa s be setbacks and hurdles in life. Therefore its important to get back up and go again.

In case ou have not guessed it, smashing the ke s is a wa of attempting to gain control. Never works in m experience

Did I mention that I had not pla ed WoW for 7+ ears? I must admit, I am gaming poorl . It is like I have never pla ed the game before, even though I have pla ed the game extensivel for few ears prior.

Our brains love repetition and if it does not get it then associated areas of the brain become figurativel dormant. Wh is this important to life? Because we can use this information to our benefit.

Take the example of a repetitive unwanted behavior. The less attention we give the unwanted behavior and the less we partake of it, then eventuall it will be extinguished. Often there are complex factors which need to be addressed. But the concept is essentiall sound as neuroscience so conclusivel demonstrates.

The message is stop the unwanted behavior. Often this involves distracting ourselves from the unwanted behavior. Once we are distracted then we tr and introduce a more positive behavior.

If I find that I am putting m self down in a game, then m task is to simpl stop it. Once it is stopped then introduce something more positive. It can be as simple as a deep breath or taking the time to relax muscles.

We are often confused about our goals both in game and in life. M intent in gaming is first and foremost to enjo m self. If I find that I am not enjo ing a game then I do not pla it.

During the aftermath of unsuccessful fight, it s eas to forget what the original goal is. Sometimes I lose track and think that a successful fight is the goal. But it is not, at least not in m case. I am there to enjo the game. If I am overl worked up because of what has occurred in the game, then its prudent to put the game aside. Sometimes this means sleeping on it or not picking the game up for a few da s. Once I am clear in m intent to enjo m self then good to go again.

It is incredibl important to know what our goals and life vision is. I have discussed this in more detail in the following article
 https://edwardtraversa.com/how-to-create-a-wonderful-life/

Hope ou enjo ed the article.

Infographic: 8 Life Skills

Aphorisms

The Role of the Pursuer
and Distancer in
Relationships

Nine Important
Foundations for a Better
Life