

# Inc.

How to Stop Missing Out on Life (and Start Becoming More Engaged)

[The Inc. Life](#)

## How to Stop Missing Out on Life (and Start Becoming More Engaged)

**Discover the difference between full and partial engagement.**



By [Matthew Jones](#), Contributor, Inc.com [@M\\_tthewJones](#)



CREDIT: Getty Images

We live in an era of ever-increasing disconnection and isolation. The [brutal truth](#) is that, as technology infiltrates all layers of the American psyche, each of us feels increasingly anxious when not [plugged into a phone](#), tablet, or computer.

While this technology certainly aids our ability to [communicate with people](#) around the world, it also changes our brains and the ways in which we engage with others. Whether you're a stay-at-home mother, an aspirational college student, or a driven entrepreneur, your use of technology has taught you to master the art of partial engagement--which not only lowers your performance, but also prevents you from experiencing greater levels of fulfillment.

To learn more about how to become more engaged and energized, I reached out to Jack Groppel, the co-founder of the [Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute](#). Groppel is an [expert in fitness and nutrition](#) and an internationally recognized authority and pioneer in the science of human performance, serving as co-chair of the Global Alliance for Health and Performance.

Here are seven ways Groppel recommends to boost performance.

## **1. Recognize the difference between partial and full engagement.**

"We are partially engaged with thousands of people on the internet," Groppel says. "We go from one conversation to another, often randomly. There is no eye contact and no true emotional connection."

He adds, "I realize that we are 'connecting' in some sense, but we must ask ourselves--are we losing the depth of connection and engagement that comes from personal face-to-face interaction?" The answer: yes. No approximation can replace human contact.

## **2. Understand that multitasking is the enemy of extraordinary.**

"We often pride ourselves on being able to multitask," says Groppel, "but let's be clear--science has demonstrated that the brain can truly focus on only one thing at a time."

Groppel says we need to understand two things: "First, if the task at hand is not one of importance, then multitask away, because a mistake won't result in harm. And second, let's be clear that multitasking is different than sequential processing, which is doing one task at time but rapidly moving between them."

"So, if you think you are truly 'good' at multitasking," he says, "think again; you're actually good at partial engagement."

## **3. Know your purpose and let that be the driving force behind your decisions.**

"Purpose runs the performance light show of life," says Groppel. "Purpose gives meaning to everything we do, to our decisions about what to do and when to do it. You should always aspire to connect with your sense of purpose in all that you do."

The best way to allow your purpose to become the foundation of your decisions is to ask yourself one very important question: What matters most right now?

Groppel indicates that we need to ask ourselves this when we're in the midst of strong emotions and harsh deadlines, because it helps us align our decisions with our purpose rather than get pulled into the stressors of modern society.

## **4. Prioritize your values and set strong boundaries with yourself and others.**

Groppel says, "We have to protect the time we have with the people and things that are important to us, be they friends, family, faith, exercise, or volunteering. As our world bombards us with information, connection, and more, it's way too easy to say 'I'll do it tomorrow' or 'I can get to it later.'"

Instead, he says, "We have to put solid boundaries around these entities and keep sacred what we say is sacred to us."

## **5. Be intentional by linking your current behaviors with your future aspirations and purpose.**

"You must make decisions that support your aspirational purpose," Groppel says.

"For example, if you say that friends and family are critical to your sense of purpose, don't take them for granted. When gathering with these individuals, you can turn off your phone or silence it."

Groppel appreciates that "life is full of choices," to the extent that we often find ourselves feeling overwhelmed with options, and then defaulting to our social conditioning of being partially engaged.

To change this, he says, "Remember to be a person who operates on purpose by asking yourself, 'What matters most right now?' and then make choices that support your aspirational purpose."

## **6. Stay in the present moment by mastering energy management.**

Groppel's studies reveal that humans are great at looking at the past and into the future, but often find staying in the here and now difficult.

He says that we can become more present by managing our energy: "When you manage your energy, you take yourself from being physically present to energized, giving you every opportunity to be fully engaged in all that you do."

"Everything oscillates or has harmonic action. Just as your own body's natural cycles that swing back and forth, like EEG, EKG, and sleep cycles, you should oscillate in your daily life as well."

Groppel recommends that we "balance stressful, high-intensity moments with downtime where you can recapture energy through meditation, deep breathing, prayer, emotional connection, or a quick walk up a flight or two of stairs."

## 7. Maximize your ability to empathize and show appreciation for others.

Groppel says we need to "work at showing people that you care. It's been shown that the more other-focused you are, the more people listen to you, gravitate to you, and appreciate you."

"The old saying is true: People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care," he concludes.

A brilliant point by an inspirational leader and a truly engaging individual.

Published on: Dec 12, 2016

More from Inc.

Sponsored Business Contentdianomi<sup>®</sup>

# Inc.

CHANNELS

[STARTUP](#)

[GROW](#)

[LEAD](#)

[INNOVATE](#)

[TECHNOLOGY](#)

[MONEY](#)

[INC. 5000](#)

[VIDEO](#)

MORE INC.

[EVENTS](#)

[NEWSLETTERS](#)

[MAGAZINE](#)

[INC. RADIO](#)

[BRANDVIEW](#)

[PODCASTS](#)

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

---

[SUBSCRIBE](#)



[MAGAZINE](#)  
[DIGITAL EDITION](#)

FOLLOW INC.

© 2018 Manuseto Ventures

[Help Center](#)

[Advertise](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Sitemap](#)