

How can I **Systematically** Build My Performance Capacity?

Musings of an Ontological Coach

SWIPE



First Things First

Have you level up your responsibilities at work or at home and experienced increased frustrations?

You are Not Alone. You might just be realizing that your current capacity is unable to produce a higher level of performance that you are expecting.

Performance and Capacity are intrinsically related. Capacity can be simply defined as the upper limit or the maximum potential to perform at a certain defined level. While there are many factors contributing to performance, CAPACITY is the baseline.



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Handling Discomfort

One key aspect of human potential is the capacity to operate under discomfort. When one is required to play at a higher level, the stakes are increased. With greater level of responsibilities, there is an increase in the level of stress and pressure.

Just like how our bodies learn to systematically adapt when we are learning cycling or swimming, the body can be systematically tuned to handle discomfort. The increase in our ability to sit in discomfort grows our human potential. Almost all types of growth require us to play outside of our comfort zone.



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Step 1

Identify and Rank Discomfort Areas:

We can start by noticing the specific activities we are procrastinating or avoiding. Stop the judgment on ourselves. Instead, focus the attention on taking note of specific activities that will create tensions within our bodies or trigger emotional responses like fear, anxiety or even resentment.

Once we have identified these areas, we can rank the discomfort from least to most uncomfortable. This ranking allows us to know how to systematically progress.



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Step 2

Create Practices of being in Discomfort:

Practice is the critical part to success. We can start with small practices of being in discomfort to stress test the body. The purpose is to get the body used to small doses of discomfort.

Create highly personalized practices that stir up discomfort within the body. For me, these practices include smiling and greeting neighbours, wearing bright colors instead of black tees, driving on the slower lane, fasting from coffee once a week.



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Step 3

Start Engaging in the Identified Areas of Discomfort:

When our practices become more consistent, we can start to intentionally engage in the activities that we avoid or procrastinate.

The idea is to do the activity despite the level of discomfort and notice our responses and growth: How have we adjusted in terms of our discomfort? What new narratives might be emerging? What new possibilities are we now open to? By intentionally engaging and noticing, we can adjust our approaches.

Be patient with the results though.



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Step 4

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Gradually Increase Our Exposure to Discomfort:

At this stage, create new practices that will challenge us to level up our capacity.

Increasing the intensity of the practices can also be an alternative.

For example, I started practicing swimming underwater and holding my breath for as long as I can. The aim is to put my body under stress and systematically build resilience. I gradually went from 25metres to 30m to 40m. The result was interesting. I found my body being more able to absorb discomfort and that allowed me to respond rather than react under stress.



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Step 5

Find Accountability Partners:

Put a support system in place. As a coach, I engaged my own coach to keep me accountable.

I also create my own trusted circle of friends who know about my goals and can provide support or challenge me when needed.

In all kinds of performances and growth, accountability is a powerful component. Harness the power of accountability and deepen your relationship with others!



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Systematically Building Your Capacity for Personal Growth

There are so much we can learn about ourselves to grow and mature.

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