

# The art of imperfect action

A live winter masterclass on letting go of overwhelm  
and finally getting around to what counts,  
with Oliver Burkeman, author of *Four Thousand Weeks*

Session one: Saturday January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 4-6pm UK time (11am-1pm ET)

Session two: Sunday January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 4-6pm UK time (11am-1pm ET)

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Welcome! You've been gifted a ticket to my masterclass, *The Art of Imperfect Action*. You can learn more about the masterclass on the following pages.

To register for this event, please go to **[imperfection.ist/register](https://imperfection.ist/register)**

You can do this anytime from now until the start of the first session (although I'd love it if you did it sooner rather than later – that'll help me keep track of things). You need only register once, for both sessions. And you do need to register even if you only intend to access the recordings of the sessions.

If you run into any problems with this process, just email [custserv@oliverburkeman.com](mailto:custserv@oliverburkeman.com).

Thanks again – I'm really looking forward to joining you for this masterclass.

With all best wishes,

Oliver Burkeman

Discover a toolbox of practices for finding focus in the midst of infinite demands, making satisfying progress on what really matters, and giving up the fight against time.

- How to **pay yourself first with time**, instead of waiting for the mythical moment when the decks are clear
- Plunge into the meaningful projects you've been avoiding by radically **lowering the stakes of action**
- Harness the **power of sequentialism** and **the 'done list'** to replace the sense of endless amounts left to do with getting real progress under your belt
- Cultivate the art of **active patience** to rediscover the pleasures of creative work
- Replace the stressful pursuit of 'optimization' with the liberating understanding that **time is something you are**

The trouble with all our plans and good intentions for getting the really important stuff done — and for cultivating a saner, more joyful relationship with time — is that plans and good intentions aren't enough. The challenge is moving from how we want our days to be to actually doing it: crossing what's been labelled "the knowing-doing gap."

And if you're anywhere near as much of a productivity obsessive as I used to be, you'll know that a lot of conventional advice on using time just makes things worse. Shiny new goal-setting systems turn almost immediately into a lifeless slog — and work or creative pursuits that were supposed to be fulfilling become a matter of yelling internally at yourself to do more, faster, and for longer.

I'd love to be able to tell you that there's One True Secret of Genuinely Meaningful Productivity, imparted to me by a wizened old man during a pilgrimage to the Himalayas in the 1970s. But there isn't. In fact, that sort of perfectionistic quest for mastery over your finite time is a big part of the problem.

What there are, though, are concrete, doable practices for implementing the philosophy I call "imperfectionism", rejecting idealistic fantasies about the future, or self-punishing mantras about Punching Resistance in the Face, in favor of taking flawed but real action on things that matter — now.

In this live four-hour online workshop, over two days at the start of the New Year, you'll learn why the key to doing what matters isn't forcing yourself to act, but understanding that in the most fundamental sense, you don't *need* to act at all — which transforms meaningful productivity from a source of anxiety and anguish into a pleasure.

You'll discover how to build rules and systems for creative living that serve you rather than imprison you, avoiding the counterproductive anguish of “self-coercive productivity”; and I'll explain the nuts and bolts of “decision-hunting”, the best tactic I've ever discovered for getting out of a motivational rut and making concrete progress on your projects.

This will be a rigorously practical workshop, designed to get you taking focused action on what counts before the sessions are even over, and with Q&A segments to help you get specific. But it'll also be a chance to explore directly the perspective shift at the heart of *Four Thousand Weeks* — replacing the ceaseless and futile struggle to master your finite time with the freeing and energizing experience of plunging more deeply and wholeheartedly into it.

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**OLIVER BURKEMAN** is the author of the *New York Times* and UK *Sunday Times* bestseller *Four Thousand Weeks: Time Management for Mortals*, which Adam Grant has described as “the most important book ever written about time management” (and which Jeff Bridges has described as “kind of cool”). For many years he wrote a popular weekly column on psychology, productivity and happiness for *The Guardian*, “This Column Will Change Your Life”, and more than 40,000 people now subscribe to his email newsletter *The Imperfectionist*, where he writes about productivity, mortality, the power of limits, and building a meaningful life in an age of distraction and bewilderment.