# Twitter Thread by Julien ■



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## 1/ there is this sense when you are young that your accomplishments need to be a list of things that seem impressive to others. A list of several items you did.

## This isn't actually right, so here is another suggestion.

2/ I remember being 26 and writing about reading 52 books a year. I wrote blog posts about it. They got copied. It became "a thing." Now it's in Twitter bios. It looks impressive but it's insanely useless and I shouldn't have done it.

3/ what I should have known at that time is that only young idiots like myself, with no accomplishments, find list of tiny achievements impressive. Anyone who has actually done anything of substance doesn't gaf

4/ what is actually difficult, and worthwhile, instead is to do ONE single thing for a very, very long time. It's much harder and much rarer and results in outlier outcomes much more often.

Of course you can find this out too late if you are chasing the dragon of Ted talks etc

5/ if I had only worked on a startup for a year, I would've gotten nowhere, the same way that if you lift for 3 months, it achieves nothing. Everything good in life comes from perseverance, but at the beginning, you're just like "I need to be somebody!!!"

If I had read one book 52 times - the right one - instead of racing through 52 books year after year, I think I would have been able to write Moby Dick by now. But the surface level stuff was too attractive, too shiny.

7/ all of this is because it's the nature of the mins and the body to give up once things are hard- it's why grit is so valuable. It's why Jeff Bezos is the richest guy and not the dude who did 10 startups for that same period. Compounding efforts produce outlier results.

I'm lucky that I am 39 now and have done enough to feel that my monkey ambition brain is satisfied (for now). I was meeting a dude the other day and he goes "why did you start your company, did you get sick of writing New York Times best sellers?"

Like ha ha, but he's right.

Now that I'm on the other side of it, I realize a ton of that time was wasted. Focus is what gets you places. Being deeply good at a single thing, or good enough at two things.

In case you're wondering, for me, that's a-product and b-getting people to believe in me + my thing.

10/ so conclusion- choose one thing and spend 5 years on it. At the end of one year you won't have a ton of signal that it's working.

Example - My gf is one year into her ceramic sculpting and she just did her first show. People like what she does but she wants it to go faster.

11/ if she quits now, it dies (and she proves herself right).

But year 2 is easier. Your network is wider. More people see your thing and recognize it. Your second set of pieces get seen enough to develop your reputation. Etc.

12/ so on with year 3, 4, 5, etc. Now you're really somewhere! And most people have quit. So you're now way ahead in a much less crowded pack!

PS this is her thing in case you're wondering.

https://t.co/9s2NagzZk6

13/ in startups, same issue. How credible is the guy who raised 100m$ vs the guy who raised 10.

Not 10 times more.

100x more.

14/ real conclusion now

When you feel like quitting, the thing you should really get out of it is not "I quit" but instead

"ah! Most people probably quit at this time. If I continue, good things will happen and it'll be less competition."

Have a good weekend, and get to work.