

The Placement Diaries: Week 14 - The End of Term

17th December 2021

The end is finally in sight, but it's so close, yet so far away. I've just finished up on everything and I've submitted it all, so now comes that bittersweet feeling of freedom, of not knowing what to do after spending the last couple of months just working on something and seeing it come to life, mainly when you look back on it, not so much when you're in the middle of doing it, though. It isn't much, but it's honest work. I haven't done as much as I would have liked to have done, and it feels as though I've wasted this first term on just researching and thinking about ideas, but not really doing much with them, but at least it's a start, and at least it's something, which is always better than nothing.

I think what I did a lot over these past couple of months was to compare myself to others on the cohort, and they seem miles ahead of me, creating their products, making their first sales, and being invited to give talks as well as other interesting opportunities, whereas I'm just there with a seed of an idea, trying to make it grow, and getting frustrated at not knowing what I should be doing, as well as trying to get used to the idea of being my own boss, not to mention the dilemma between the two ideas I had, which mainly boiled down to doing what's easy vs doing what's interesting.

Whilst I shouldn't be too hard on myself and comparing myself to others, I need to focus on what I've actually done this term, which wasn't as much as I would have hoped to have done by this time, but seeing what I've managed to achieve as well as how far I've come, and whilst I'm miles behind everyone else, I need to realise that this isn't a race, and that I have to go at my own pace, even if it means taking more time and ending up going down a winding road as well as going around in circles (and this is where the spiral concept comes into play, because although I keep ending up at the same places, I'm a slightly different person as I get more experience and knowledge about things, no matter how small it is, and accepting the fact that this journey is far from linear, it's an iterative process). In short, I've done as much as I possibly can, mainly by researching and planning (in general) as well as writing the business plan, working all the time, so I think it's time I cut myself some slack and take a break over the holidays, so that I can come back, hopefully feeling more refreshed.

I am tired, I am on the verge of burnout, and I need a break, mainly from all of the thinking that I've been doing, because that actually does take up a lot of headspace, which can potentially zap your energy as well, also because I've been at it for over 3 months (basically working 7 days a week, by doing this during the week, and of course,

working my part time job on the weekends, which means that I haven't had a full day to myself, also because I feel guilty when I relax since it feels as though I'm wasting my time by not being productive enough, but I have to remember that I'm a human with feelings, and I'm bound to need down time, even the machines need down time for their maintenance), so it's no wonder why I'm so damn tired, waiting for the end to come just so that I can have a break. I genuinely need and deserve a break, although it sounds really entitled, but at this moment in time, I need to have one.

Going forward, I definitely need to have roadmaps, to do lists, and schedules (probably not super strict, but making them so that there's a bit of room to move around) because that's the only way that I can get things done. I've tried going with the flow, but I've realised that it's done more harm than good, and is the biggest reason why I'm miles behind everyone else, mainly due to a lack of focus and not knowing what it is that I should actually be doing, which in turn, causes me to just drift through life. I also think that having some sense of structure will help me to be more productive and will stop me from drifting off, as well as putting off doing things for as long as possible, along with feeling guilty for not being as productive as I'd originally hoped to be. I did have that structure at the start of this term (as you do, when it's the start of something new), but I found it too stifling and had this idea that the structure was holding me back, when really I needed it to be able to work for me.

So, that's the end of the first term. A bit less than I had expected and hoped for, but at least I've done something, which is better than not doing anything at all. At least I've made a start, as well as having plenty of time to think things through. Now, it's time to actually make things (or prototypes at least), although this will probably happen in the new year since I barely have the energy, motivation, or focus to do it now, so that I can at least have something tangible which I can show to others, as well as getting my idea out of the ideas stage and into the development stage, because I've held onto the ideas for long enough, too long that they're starting to do my head in, so I have no choice but to actually develop those ideas into something real.

As for doing what's easy vs doing what's interesting, I've chosen to do what's interesting, going back to my original idea because it is interesting, far more interesting than the easy option, which would get really boring really quick, and it's something that I actually want to develop further. I want to make this idea as real and as tangible as possible, and the only way to do that is to actually do it, even if it's uncomfortable at first, which will only be temporary, because I will get used to it over time, and soon it will become normal to me, but it can only be done if I actually do the thing. Playing around with ideas, and reading too much into it doesn't count as doing, I need to actually physically do it, no messing around. But first, rest. I need to rest to be able to do it.