

3 on 13

3 things from EP
to make life
better.

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Emanuelson-Podas produces the **3on13 Newsletter** on the 13th of every month in the hopes of putting in your hands three things that will help make your life better. Entries may include quotes, reminders, jokes, random recipes, book recommendations, advice, or anything else that might make you think, make you smile, or make you a better, happier human being. **Got something worth sharing? Send it to 3on13@epinc.com**

1 | Beating Zero

EP Performance Coach Matt Groves shared a simple idea he uses in training: **Beat Zero**. Do something instead of nothing. Simple, steady progress. Move the needle a titch. Doesn't have to be big. Doesn't have to be perfect. Just has to be better than zero. It's based on a Jeff Olson concept from *The Slight Edge*: "The things that are easy to do are also easy *not* to do." Here are a few examples:

- **Make a five-minute check-in phone call to a client** instead of waiting (and waiting, and waiting) for the "right time" to reach out. Not a presentation, not an interview — just a human touch that keeps the relationship warm.
- **Fix one broken step** in a process instead of redesigning the whole system. Momentum beats perfection.
- **Document one lesson learned** from a project instead of waiting for all the dust to settle. Get better now, *and* later.

The goal is to show up, and do one productive thing, no matter the size. One beats zero all day long.



2 | When the World Goes Still



Picture a cold, snowy winter night. The clock slowly slips past 10 p.m., and a steady, quiet stillness emerges. The world sighs, slows down, and prepares for rest.

Such was the setting recently when, in the distance, a train whistle sounded. A long, lonely sound, carried by the wind and snow. Haunting and beautiful, it reminded us of Denis Johnson's slim novella *Train Dreams*, about the life of Robert Grainier, a fictional orphan shipped by train into the Idaho woods in 1893. This evocative passage from the book is especially nice:

"Now he slept soundly through the nights, and often he dreamed of trains, and often of one particular train: He was on it; he could smell the coal smoke; a world went by. And then he was standing in that world as the sound of the train died away. A frail familiarity in these scenes hinted to him that they came from his childhood. Sometimes he woke to hear the sound of the Spokane International fading up the valley and realized he'd been hearing the locomotive as he dreamed."

3 | We Just Invented This. Really.

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