

THE FOCUS COURSE

May you wake up on January 1st and go to bed on December 31st, and in between do what is in your heart to do.

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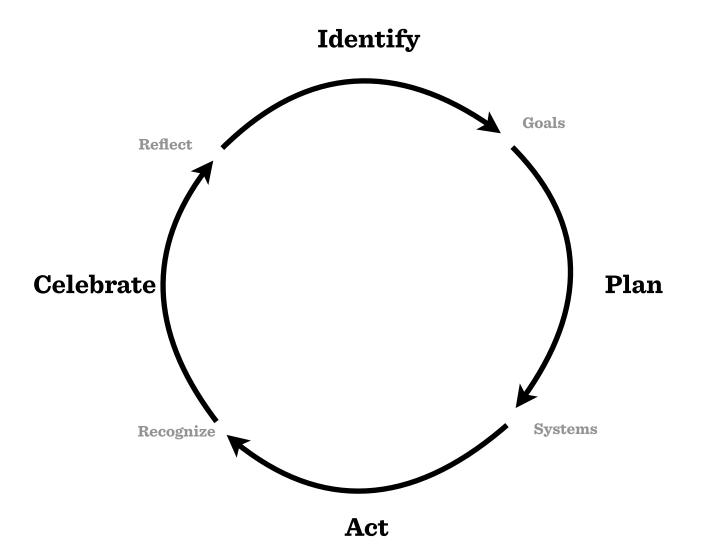
How to win the next year

Shawn Blanc Founder, The Focus Course

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The 4-Focus Method

A Flywheel for Living a Focused Life



1: Identify

Many people struggle to identify that which matters because they lack clarity about the bigger picture of their life's mission and vision. ("People perish with lack of vision.")

2: Plan

When you have identified what is important, you must set aside time for it. Otherwise all you have is a wish or a hope that gets no traction in your life.

3: Act

This is where you do that which you said you would do. It will naturally include your tasks and actions, but it also includes things such as meaningful moments with your family, resting and recharging, and more.

4: Celebrate

When you've done that which you set out to do, that is cause for celebration! Reinforce your positive actions and recognize that you've just done something that matters.

The Plan Your Year Workbook takes you through with the flywheel steps 4, 1, and 2. You will be **Celebrating** what you did last year, and then **identifying** and **planning** for what you want to do in the upcoming year.

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The Focus Course Digital Planner helps you with step 3: Act.

Note: I (Shawn) have a workshop that walks through all the details of our 4-Focus Method. If you're interested, you can get the replay of that Productivity Power Hour on our training page if you go to thesweetsetup.com/training.

How to Plan Your Year

The process in this workbook will guide you through part of our 4-Focus Method.

You will **reflect and celebrate** upon last year, **identify** themes and goals for this upcoming year, and **plan** ways to accomplish your goals and walk out your theme for 2023.

1: Everyone gets their own copy of the workbook

This workbook is something you can do on your own or with your spouse / partner / family / group of friends. We suggest printing a copy for everyone. (I like to get a spiral-bound version from a local office supply store.) Alternatively, loading the PDF up on your iPad or computer is totally fine as well.

2: What you'll need...

- 1. Somewhere comfortable to sit.
- 2. Your copy of the workbook. (You're reading it now! So: check!)
- 3. The accompanying walkthrough videos on our website.
- 4. Access to your calendar of events from last year (if possible).
- 5. Access to a calendar of events for this upcoming year (if possible).
- 6. Your copy of last year's Plan Your Year workbook (if you have it).
- 7. Some background music to lighten the atmosphere and bring the vibes.
- 8. Your drinks and snacks of choice to make it fun!

3: The Process

The Plan Your Year process takes about 3 hours. Some folks do it a bit quicker, others a bit slower. You may also just need a break, which is great. We find that most folks like to set aside one or two evenings to go through it. But, if you can't get large chunks of time then don't worry — you can do each section on its own and in your own time.

There is no right or wrong time or way to go through this workbook. While it is clearly targeted with the New Year in mind, you can go through it any time you want. We know of folks who have waited to go through it in the summer, or who have even gone through it again in the summer to re-align their year.

Now, do you have that drink of choice? (It doesn't matter if its hot tea, water, fussy whiskey, or a glass of wine.)

Before you begin, please raise your glass...

Cheers! To you and a wonderful 2023!

CELEBRATE & REFLECT

This is an opportunity to look back and celebrate how far you've come this year and to be grateful.

EXAMPLES

- Completed a semester or two of school.
- Took a course to learn a new hobby.
- Paid off student loans.
- My spouse started a new job.
- My oldest daughter began third grade.

- Read some fiction and non-fiction books.
- Went on a family vacation.
- Made some new business relationships.
- Celebrated our anniversary.
- Began exercising regularly and eating healthier.

Use the following prompts to reflect on everything you and your friends / family did.

Tip: You don't need to feel pressure to fill in every single box and every single prompt.

In 2022, I learned	
······································	
A highlight from the year was	
:	i
	i
	i
	i
	i
	i
In 2022, I celebrated	·····
	:

A relationship that meant the most to me in 2022 w	as with
l	
A special meal I got to share in 2022 was	
1	
Something new I tried in 2022 was	
Last year, I was able to travel to	
Last year, I was able to travel to	
Last year, I was able to travel to	
Last year, I was able to travel to	
Last year, I was able to travel to	
Last year, I was able to travel to	
Last year, I was able to travel to	

I made progress in	
A new habit or routine that I started in 2022	······
:	
	:
:	
Something I changed in 2022 was	·····
A theme or two that seemed to repeat itself all throughout 2022 was	
A theme of two that seemed to repeat itsen an tin oughout 2022 washing.	
·	

Identifying your disappointments and frustrations is helpful because you can learn from them.

By giving yourself an opportunity to reflect and acknowledge the setbacks and frustrations from the past year, you can learn and use that wisdom as an opportunity to grow.

Use the prompts below to reflect on the previous year and make note of the challenges you faced.

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- 2	
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During 2022 I wish I would have ...

A disappointment from 2022 was...

I wish I would have started doing	
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
I wish I would have spent LESS time	2
I wish I would have spent more tim	a
I wish I would have spent more tim	3
I wish I would have spent more tim	3
I wish I would have spent more tim	2
I wish I would have spent more tim	3
I wish I would have spent more tim	2
I wish I would have spent more tim	2
I wish I would have spent more tim	3
I wish I would have spent more tim	2
I wish I would have spent more tim	2
	2
I wish I would have spent more tim	3
	3
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You have six primary areas of life. For this section we're now going to take a brief look at each of those areas.

1: Career

The trajectory and legacy of your life's work; your vocation. Naturally, the specifics of your job description will change throughout your career; you may have more than one job active right now; and/or you may also have a side-hustle or other type of vocational hobby.

2: Relationships

For relationships, this also can be subdivided into additional areas: your spouse / significant other; your children; your family; your friends; et al. This is the social domain of your life. We also know that different relationships are stronger than others or more important that others.

3: Physical Health

This is your physical body: your health, your strength, your physical energy.

4: Inner Personal Life

The part of you that is connected to a higher power, a sense of purpose and destiny. This area of your life can also be subdivided into: (1) your emotional health; (2) your mental health; and (3) your spiritual life. Each of these stands on its own as being important, and each of them play a critical role in who we are.

5: Finances

This area of life is more than just your budget, your bank accounts, etc. It also makes up the items and things which you own and /or the things you are responsible for maintaining.

6: Rest & Recreation

This is perhaps one of the most neglected areas of our lives. There is much overlap here with how rest impacts our physical health, our inner-personal life, our relationships, and more. True rest is something that leaves us feeling recharged and rejuvenated. And, thus, it is often something which requires a bit of energy (believe it or not). Similarly to how you spend time on, in, and thinking about your vocation so too should you spend time on, in, and thinking about rest and recreation.

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On the following page, for each area listed, circle the "score" or "rating" that you would self-assess for that area of your life.

- A low score of 1 indicates that you're in a crisis in that area and things are not going well at all.
- A high score of 5 reflects that you're doing the best you can (all things considered) with a clear focus and successful results in that area.
- **Tip:** Try to move through quickly and trust your gut reaction for each score . Don't overthink or over-analyze.

NOT GOOD ...

NOT GOOD

NOT GOOD ...

NOT GOOD

AMAZING!

AMAZING!

AMAZING!

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5	
My job and career is in l	bad shape. I have little or		I am in my "zone	of genius" and have much t	
no energy to show up, and I definitely am not			offer the work-place, as well as our customers and		
able to bring my best to work. I feel stuck, lost,			clients. I am excited about work, yet it does no		
and have no clear path forward to grow in my			dominate my entire life; there are health		
career and do my best work.			boundaries so that I d	lo not constantly bring wor	
				home with me	

RELATIONSHIPS

CAREER

	1	2	3	4	5	
Ιh	ave veru little time or ene	ray for the	1	I am clear about the	e most important roles and	l

relationships in my life. I don't know how or what to do in order to improve the relationships in my life, nor am I building new relationships.

relationships in my life. I am able to show up for $those \ people-giving \ my \ best \ to \ serve \ and \ love$ them. Moreover, there is a clear reciprocity with my most important relationships and we are growing together.

INNER PERSONAL LIFE

	NOT GOOD				AMAZING!
	1	2	3	4	5
Ih	ave not spent any time rec	ently engaging my		I regularly	spend time practicing and

inner life, and have no sense of being connected to something greater than myself. I feel emotionally drained, overwhelmed, and mentally foggy.

developing my spiritual life. I feel a daily and moment by moment connection to my purpose and place in the world. My mind and emotions feel strong and positive.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

	1	2	3	4	5	
In	recent weeks I have giver	n no regard to caring for	•	I have ritualized and opt	imized ways of consistent	y

my physical body. I eat whatever is most convenient in the moment, and do not physically exert myself more than is needed day to day. Sleep is necessary but not prioritized.

I have ritualized and optimized ways oj taking care of my body in my eating habits, exercise routines, and sleep hygiene. I am constantly finding ways to improve my physical well being and others often seek me out for my input on the matter.

REST, RECREATION, & RECOVERY TIME

FINANCES

	1	2	3	4	5	
I have little interest in any hobbies or down time. I find that I am overwhelmed with work and other					e hard work to prioritize m interests, and keep health	·

health, foster my interests, and keep healthy boundaries around my personal time so I can be rested. I regularly carve out time for the actives that I love and energize me.

NOT GOOD				AMAZING!
1	2	3	4	5

I have a significant amount of debt. I struggle to live within my means, and I tend to make irrational financial decisions.

outside expectations and urgent issues. Sleep is a

luxury that I simply don't have time for.

I have a budget that I keep, and I live within my means. I am on track with my financial goals and do not stress or worry about money.

The area of my life I gave the **highest score** to was: _____

Why do I think that is?

The area of my life I gave the **lowest score** to was: _____

.....

Why do I think that is?

.....

IDENTIFY

SECTION 4: Known Events and Milestones Happening in 2023

In the spaces below, list out anything significant that you know is going to happen and when. We start with this because it's easiest to begin with what we already know. (Note that on page 19 there is a spot for you to list *known events* that still have *unknown dates*.)

EXAMPLES				
Birthdays	Holidays			School Breaks
Graduations	Business Trips			Special Occasions
Anniversaries	Family Trips / V	acation	IS	Weddings
JANUARY 2023			FEBRUARY	
MARCH			APRIL	

MAY	JL	UNE
	:	
:	:	:
JULY	A	NUGUST
	:	
ii	i	
SEPTEMBER	~	
JEF I EMIDER	0	CTOBER
JEFTEMDER	Ū	CIUBER
SEFTEMDER	U	CIOBER
SEFTEMDER	U	CIOBER
SEFTEMDER		CIOBER
SEFTEMDER		CIOBER
SEFTEMBER	U	ICTOBER
SEFTEMBER	U	CTOBER
NOVEMBER		ECEMBER

KNOWN EVENTS, BUT WITH UNKNOWN DATES	

EXAMPLES

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Visiting family in Colorado sometime in the summer. Landscaping the backyard before it gets too hot. Family camping trip in the spring or fall. Garage sale.

SECTION 5: Dream Big! Events and projects you may want to do in 2023.

15 MINUTES

Let's dream! Imagine. Do some blue sky thinking. What vacations, trips, home projects, work projects, classes, and/or family events do you may want to do in the upcoming year?

Focus only on *events* and *projects* — things with a start/stop date and a budget. You will get to goals in the next section.

Don't worry about keeping this list "reasonable". Just list out every event and project that comes to mind. Dream big!

EXAMPLES

i

- Ski trip to the mountains
- Anniversary weekend getaway
- Paint the basement
- Clean and organize the garage
- Road trip to the beach

- Volunteer for a day at a non-profit
- Attend work conference in Austin
- $\bullet \ Host a \, neighborhood \, cookout$
- Visit friends in Atlanta
- Moving to new city / house

Use the prompts below to help you think about any events or projects you may want to do this year.

Something fun that I'd like to do in 2023	
Something I really enjoyed last year that I we	uld like to do again
Something I really enjoyed last year, that I wo	uiu iike to uo agaiii

.....

For my home compating the Ma important to me is	
For my home, something that's important to me is	
:	
All the people I would love to go visit / get together with	
÷	
:	
What are some enocial milestance this year? How will I calebrate?	
What are some special milestones this year? How will I celebrate?	
In 2023, a place I would love to visit is	
An upcoming life transition happening in 2023?	
1 · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	

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Do you have any overarching themes, critical projects, or other single, most-important areas of responsibility that emerge during different seasons? For our family, the themes in Spring and Fall are usually "Soccer". The theme of Summer is usually "Travel," and the theme of winter is usually "Rest."

SPRING THEME	SUMMER THEME	
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	:	÷
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	:	÷
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		•
		•
FALL THEME	WINTER THEME	
	WINTER THEME	
	WINTER THEME	
	WINTER THEME	
	WINTER THEME	
	WINTER THEME	

For any additional goals and projects, fill out the sections below to help you get clear on the project scope.

Project / Event:		
Budget	Timeframe	Length
\$\$\$\$\$\$	Jan-Mar Apr-Jun Jul-Sep Oct-Dec	one day one week one month

Project / Event:					
Budget		Time	frame		Length
\$\$\$\$\$\$	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	one day one week one month

Project / Event:					
Budget		Time	frame		Length
\$ \$\$ \$\$\$	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	one day one week one month

Project / Event:		
Budget	Timeframe	Length
\$ \$\$ \$\$\$	Jan-Mar Apr-Jun Jul-Sep Oct-Dec	one day one week one month

Project / Event:		
Budget	Timeframe	Length
\$ \$\$ \$\$\$	Jan-Mar Apr-Jun Jul-Sep Oct-Dec	one day one week one month

Project / Event:		
Budget	Timeframe	Length
\$ \$\$ \$\$\$	Jan-Mar Apr-Jun Jul-Sep Oct-Dec	one day one week one month

Project / Event:		
Budget	Timeframe	Length
\$ \$\$ \$\$\$	Jan-Mar Apr-Jun Jul-Sep Oct-Dec	one day one week one month

Project / Event:		
Budget	Timeframe	Length
\$ \$\$ \$\$\$	Jan-Mar Apr-Jun Jul-Sep Oct-Dec	one day one week one month

Project / Event:					
Budget		Time	frame		Length
\$ \$\$ \$\$\$	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	one day one week one month

Project / Event:					
Budget		Time	frame		Length
\$\$\$\$\$\$	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	one day one week one month

SECTION 6: Dream Big! Goals and Desired Outcomes for Next Year.

25 MINUTES

On the following pages, list out all the goals, hopes, and desired outcomes you have for 2023.

- $\bullet \ Do \ you \ want \ to \ increase \ your \ financial \ investing?$
- Do you want to build a new habit?
- Do you want to learn a new skill?
- *Etc...*

Basically: What change do you want to see in your life in 2023?

The aim of this section is to get everything on the table. Later in the workbook you will cut down your list of goals to something more manageable and decide which ones you will actually do. For now, start by listing out where you'd like to see progress or change.

Something I feel anxious about for next year is _____

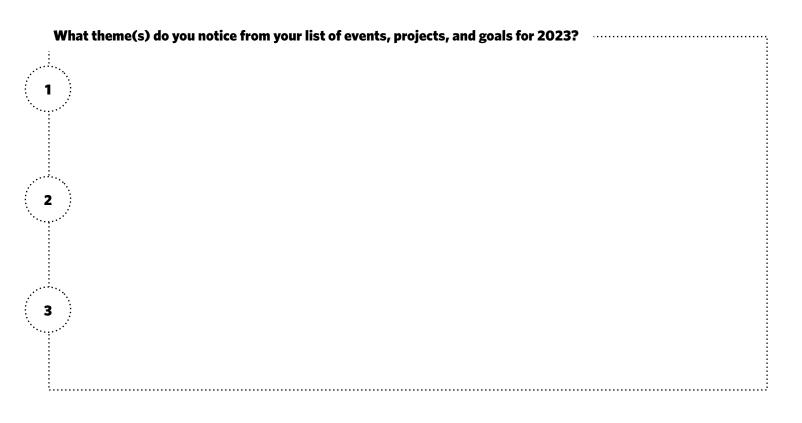
I want to _____

In 2023, _______ is very important to me. So I am going to ______

Something that is important to my spouse / significant other ϵ	is
Something that is important to my kid(s) is	
At the end of 2023, I will consider it a win for my	(area of life)
At the end of 2023, I will consider it a win for my if I have	(area of life)
At the end of 2023, I will consider it a win for my	(area of life)
<i>if I have</i> Any additional hopes, dreams, goals, or desired outcomes?	



Looking back on sections 5 and 6, do you notice any themes or areas of your life that you seem to have lots of goals in?



Next, of the areas of life, **circle one or two** that are standing out to you right now.

JOB / CAREER	EMOTIONAL STATE	HOBBIES AND SIDE INTERESTS
RELATIONSHIP WITH MY SPOUSE / SIGNIFICANT OTHER	INNER PERSONAL / SPIRITUAL LIFE	REST TIME, DOWN TIME, AND "PLAY" TIME
RELATIONSHIP WITH MY KIDS	FINANCES	MENTAL STATE
RELATIONSHIPS WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY	PHYSICAL HEALTH	SIDE HUSTLE

When you think of focusing on one or two of the above areas of life, which one feels the most exciting? Which do you have the most energy toward? Which do you have ideas about?

Using the areas of your life that you just circled, and with the context of any recurring themes you are noticing: **pick two areas of your life that you most want to focus on in 2023.**

It will not be easy, but otherwise you are diluting your energy. If you try do everything, you will do nothing; too many areas of focus will not allow you the time or energy to make meaningful progress.

As much as you may want to, you cannot focus on *every* area of your life at the same time.

(Note: If you are completing this workbook with your spouse or partner, you will each have your own answers to this section. Dialog with one another about what you want your answers to be, so you can commit to them in unity and support one another.)

Tn 2022	I want to focus prime	milu on
111 2023	and	urity on
because		•

Over the past several sections you have written down the highlights and challenges from the previous year. You've listed all the events, projects, and goals you have for your life. You've identified what main areas of your life you want to focus on. You've identified some common themes for the year ahead...

With all that information, simplify it down to one sentence (or one word if you like).

Why? Because the more clear you are, the more focused you can be with your time and energy.

If you want to have a few different sentences (perhaps one for yourself and another sentence for your family as a whole) that is fine.

(Note: As with Section 7, if you are doing this workbook with your spouse / partner, you will each have a different answer here. But dialog with one another about what you want your answers to be.)

Examples:

"This year I am focusing on scaling my small business."

"This year is all about simplifying my commitments and being more present."

"This year I want to continue building a healthy work life while making time to exercise regularly and building thriving relationships in both my personal life and my work life."

"My theme for 2023 is generosity!"

"For the upcoming year, I am committed to maintain margin and breathing room in my life, so I can have more availability for the inner-circle relationships that need my full attention right now." Write down your 2023 Focus Statement and One Sentence. It was hard work to get to this point of clarity. Don't let that clarity drift out of sight and mind... **Cut these out and put them somewhere you will see them regularly.**

 In 2023, I want to focus primarily on	
 and	

2023 in One Sentence

.

SECTION 9: What goals, events, and projects will you keep?

Alas, you can't do it all. You can do just about anything you want, but you cannot do everything you want.

- 1. **Review:** Look over your goals, projects, and desired-events from Sections 5 and 6.
- 2. **Remove:** What goals, projects, and events don't align with your main themes and areas of focus from **Sections 7 and 8**?
- 3. **Rewrite and Refine:** In the boxes below, write down the events, projects, and goals you plan to do in 2023. Also, note that you will now have to get a bit more specific with each one. Fill in as much information as you can.

Note: If you are doing this worksheet with your significant other, keep in mind that you will have some goals which are unique to one or the other of you, some goals that are shared, and some goals that are for your family as a whole.

Goal Setting Best Practices

Set goals that can be measured and have a defined timeline.

With clear and measurable goals, you will be able to actually know (and celebrate) when you've achieved them. It will also help you to know what actions to take in order to make real progress.

Examples of clear, measurable goals:

- Reduce credit card debt from \$7,000 to \$2,500 by June 15th.
- Increase physical activity from 30 minutes per week to 90 minutes per week, by March 1st, 2023.
- Write one new post each month during 2023.

Use Systems to Accomplish Goals

A system is simply the actions you can take which are predictive of achieving your goal; they are actions within your control.

Your goal is the direction you are going. A system is your way to focus on the actions that are going to get you there. These actions are your habits, routines, checklists, or small micro goals on a daily basis make great systems.

Examples of systems (i.e. routines) that correspond with the goal examples above

- Withdrawal cash once a week according to budget, and use cash for all transactions.
- Go for a 20 minute walk 5 days a week.
- Write for 30 minutes a day every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

1. Write down your focus area # 1 (from the two you listed on page 29):

2. Pick one goal (from sections 5 & 6) that aligns with the above focus area:

3. What is a single habit or system you can incorporate that will move you toward that goal?

Habit / Routine / System	Time Commitment	Frequency

.

4. This activity will move you toward your goal because _____

1. Write down your focus area # 2 (from the two you listed on page 29):

2. Pick a goal (from sections 5 & 6) that aligns with the above focus area:

3. What is a single habit or system you can incorporate that will move you toward that goal?

Habit / Routine / System	Time Commitment	Frequency

4. This activity will move you toward your goal because _____

20 MINUTES

Okay! Here you go...

- 1. Get out your list of known events from Section 4.
- 2. Get out your edited list of planned events, projects, and goals from Section 9.
- 3. Plan out the current and/or the next month...

4. Use the template provided at the end of this workbook, use the Focus Course Digital Planner, or a planner / notebook of your own.

A few things to keep in mind...

- Moving things from your list and putting it into a month will not be easy. That's okay. This is not your final draft. Just start putting things in place while trying to keep each month limited to just one major event.
- You are not creating a daily schedule for your entire month. Just the big picture for about what each month holds.
- Remember that your day-to-day lives will still be spent each day. Family life, work, school, and the like. So, as you plan out your month, the aim is to define success for each month and to give yourself a roadmap for the big things you want to do and what months you expect to do them.
- Don't overcommit your month. Give yourself margin and breathing room.
- You may not be ready to define your "life theme / focus" for every single month especially the latter months of the year. And that is okay. That's why we are only beginning with one month at a time.
- Again, you may not be ready to define success for every single month. That's why we are starting with one month at a time. The further away you get into planning the future, the more hazy it becomes. That's why we're focusing on the granular right now.
- You will want to revisit these monthly overview worksheets every month throughout the year. Set a reminder on your calendar or your phone.

This month's main goal:	
A task or routine that will help me work toward the above goal:	
This month's most important event or project:	
Defining success for this month:	
One way I can maintain margin this month is by:	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

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Notes

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What Next?

Congratulations! You have done a challenging thing: You took the time to get clear and focused on what matters to you for 2023. You are now set up for success because you have a clear picture of what your goals are for the year, what you want to focus on, and what matters most to you.

How to keep the momentum going:

- Schedule monthly and quarterly reviews to see if your goal systems are still on track.
- Print out your 2023 Focus Statement and put it somewhere prominent in your home.
- Print out and fill in your monthly planning pages to help you stay focused on each month's main goal, and the routine that will help you move toward it.
- Share your 2023 focus statements with friends, family members, and folks on the World Wide Web.

How to Stay Unstuck

Get your all-access pass to every on-demand course in our library, plus a community to help you get clear, take action, and keep going.

With a Focus Accelerator membership, you get:

- Unlimited access to every on-demand course in our library.
- Coaching calls and Office Hours every month
- Accountability and traction within the members-only Focus Community.

If you are a creator or leader who wants to uncomplicate things, get clear on what matters, and finally have the breathing room to focus...

thefocuscourse.com/accelerator

FOCUS LIKE A BOSS

Attention Business Owners and CEOs. Focus Like a Boss is our new, premium program for small business owners like you who are ready to reduce your working hours and grow your profits.

- ✓ Less Tasks: Delegate & eliminate the busywork from your week.
- ✓ More Time: Designing your business and enjoying your life.
- ✓ Better Ideas: Thanks to organization, prioritization, and systems.

For CEOs only...

thefocuscourse.com/boss