

FOCUS COURSE

10-Year Anniversary
One-Day Workshop to Design Your Life

This very important workbook belongs to: _____

thefocuscourse.com

focus | fo•cus

NOUN Maximum clarity.

VERB Bring something into alignment.
Direct one's attention on something.

Focus is a valuable skill in life and a competitive advantage in your career.

When you possess the skill of focus you have a superpower!

- ✓ You are able to manage yourself.
- ✓ You can set clear goals.
- ✓ You can achieve your goals.
- ✓ Your calendar aligns with your core values.
- ✓ You follow through on your commitments.
- ✓ You have clarity about when to say "yes" and when to say "no".
- ✓ You have a reliable system for getting "unstuck" and back on track.
- ✓ And so much more...

After Focus Course in a Day, you will have the skills and tools necessary to live a focused life.

Before you begin...

1. Why did you join Focus Course in a Day? What are you most looking to get out of today?

2. What will you do for yourself as a reward to celebrate completing today's program?

Some ideas and suggestions for ways you may choose to celebrate (with no comment or judgment toward practicality or legality): Go out for a meal; have a celebratory cigar or drink; invite friends over for pao de queijo (Brazilian cheese bread); watch a favorite movie; get a high five from a friend or family member; call or text a friend; write a congratulatory note to yourself in your journal; order 50 balloons to be delivered to your house; share your progress on social media; buy yourself a pair of silly socks; skip leg day; play your favorite song from high school at full blast while dancing around in your underwear; go get donuts; cozy up with a good book; hire a babysitter; go on a quick weekend getaway; light up the backyard fire pit; mail yourself a postcard; go on an adventurous backpacking trip and sleep under the stars; buy those random new flavors of Oreo; ask your neighbors to all drive by your house in a parade while honking and waving.

Program Overview

Module One: Vision

Sections 1 & 2: We will go through The five components of your Life Design System plus the 4-Focus Method; you will identify two core values; and you will write a draft of your Life's Mission and Vision.

Outcome: Write the draft of your Life Vision using the template provided.

Module Two: Strategy

Sections 3 & 4: Goal Setting and more. You will identify life goals for each area of your life and discover how small actions tie in to the larger desired outcomes you have.

Outcome: Write the goals and desired outcomes for the most-important area of your life..

Module Three: Habits

Sections 5 & 6: You will brainstorm and identify habits that can move you forward in each area of your life (from section 4), you will also learn about calendar and task management.

Outcome: Design your ideal schedule that will allow time for your habits and to focus on the most important roles and responsibilities of your life.

Module Four: Margin

Sections 7 & 8: We will learn more about resistance and distractions, margin, the importance of having boundaries in our life, and how to use the 4-Focus Method to keep things on track.

Outcome: Craft and share your Focus Declaration.

.....

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Focus Declaration

VISION

Sections 1 & 2

- ✓ The 5 Components of your Life Design System
- ✓ The 4-Focus Method
- ✓ Identify your core values
- ✓ Write a draft of your Life's Mission and Vision

Success for this Module: Write a draft of your Life's Mission and Vision using the template provided at the end of Section 2.

SECTION 1

Foundations

There are a few important skills that help you to live a focused life. We will be referencing these throughout the program.

Personal Integrity

Your internal muscle that gives you the ability to keep commitments to yourself and follow through with your goals and routines.

Focus

Day-to-day focus provides you with the clarity to know *what* to do and the skill to persevere with the task at hand.

Creative Imagination

Your creative imagination and mental toughness both help you stay focused on difficult tasks, find solutions to challenges and problems, and do your best creative work.

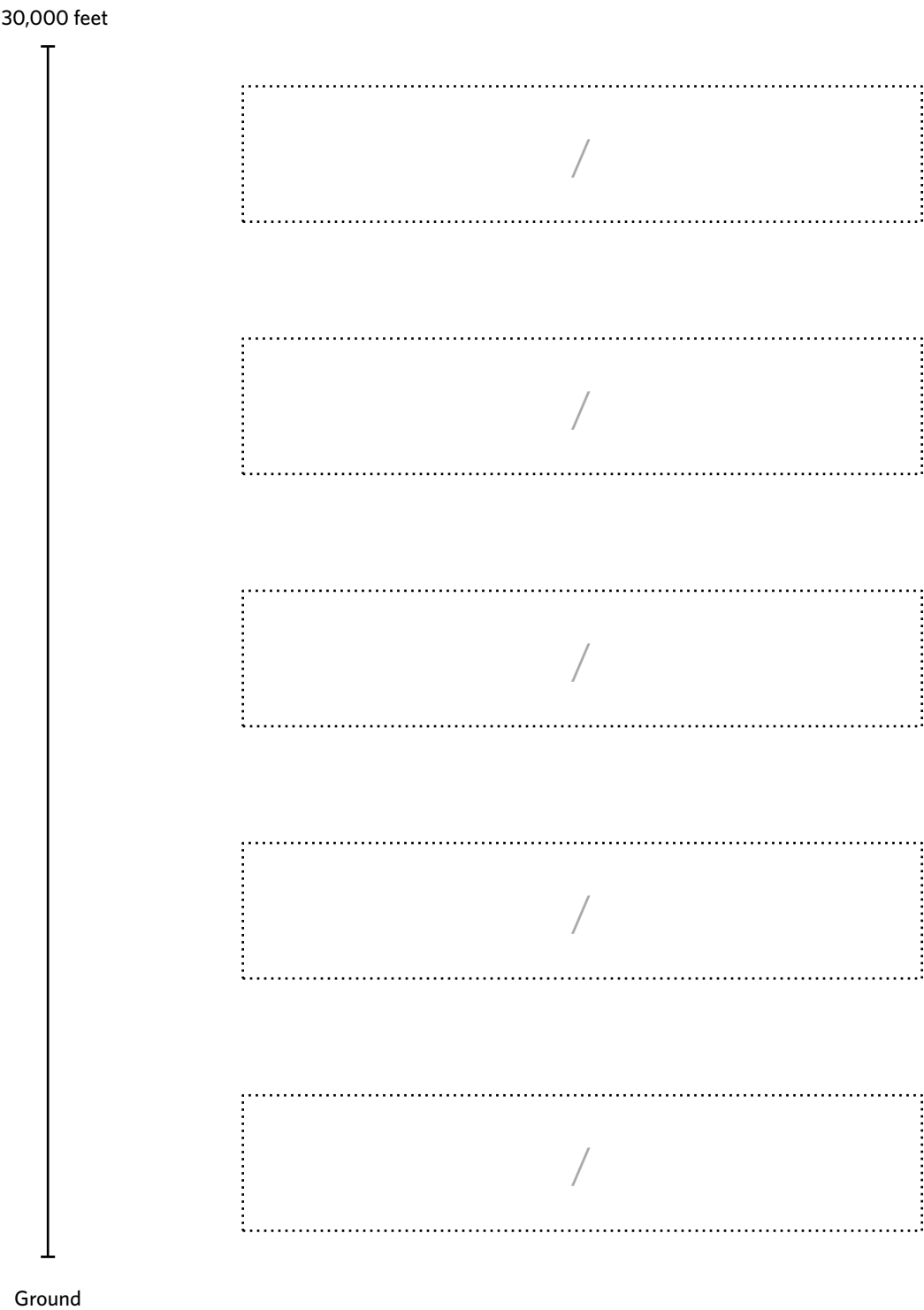
The Progress Principle

Your productivity, motivation, and morale are all improved when you are able to see that you are making progress on meaningful work.

**To strengthen your creative imagination, create a list of
10 things you are thankful for right now...**

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

The Life Design System



Which of the 5 Components of the Life Design System feels strongest to you right now?

Circle the one area that feels the strongest.

Vision & Values

Goals

Action Plan

Schedule

**Habits &
Routines**

Why do you think that is? _____

Which of the 5 Components of the Life Design System feels the weakest to you right now?

Circle the one area that feels the weakest.

Vision & Values

Goals

Action Plan

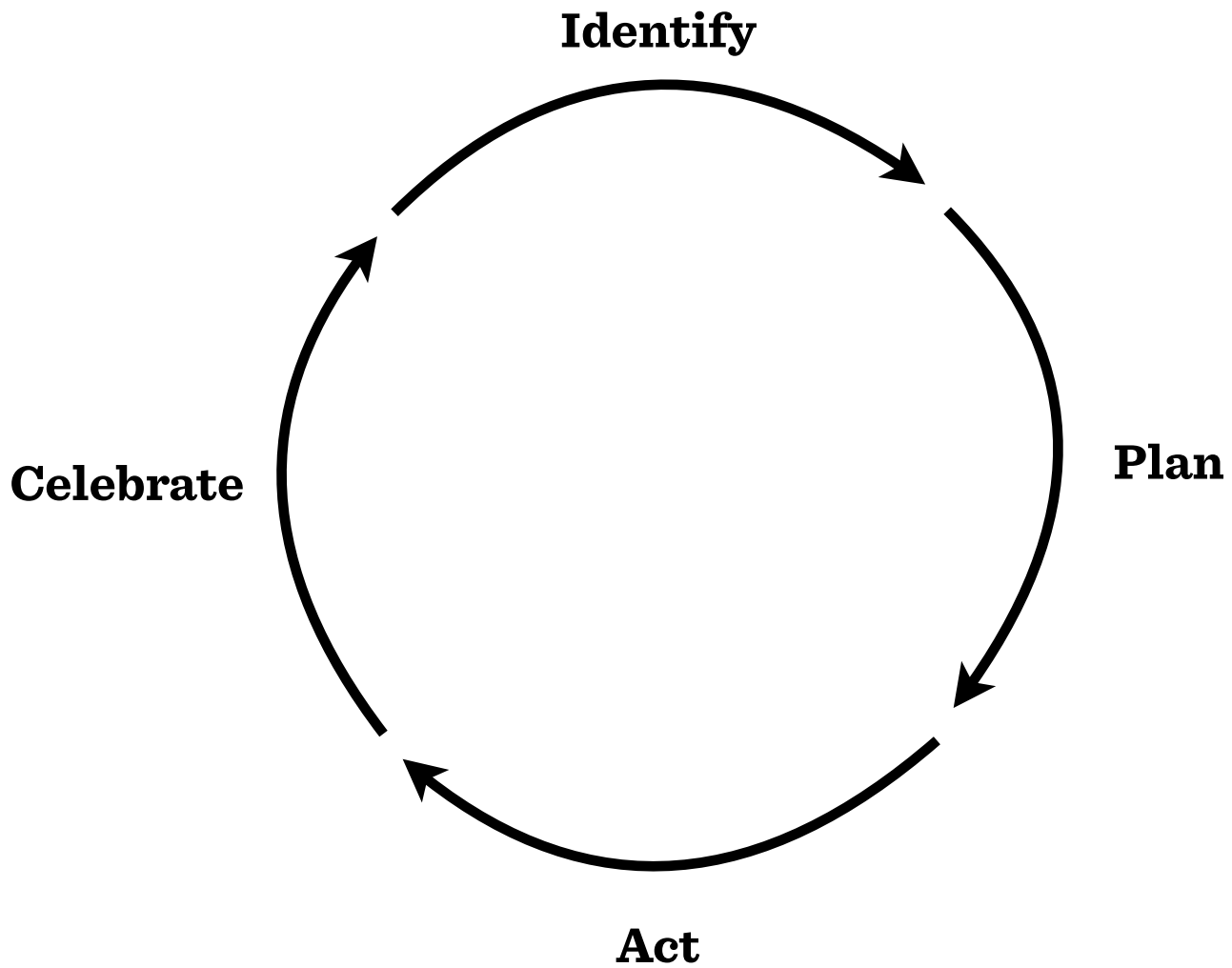
Schedule

**Habits &
Routines**

Why do you think that is? _____

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's cause for celebration! Reinforce your positive actions and recognize that you've just done something that matters.

.....

Which, if any, of the 4 steps in the flywheel are your strongest or favorite?

Identify

Plan

Act

Celebrate

.....

Which, if any, of the 4 steps in the flywheel do you most often skip or ignore?

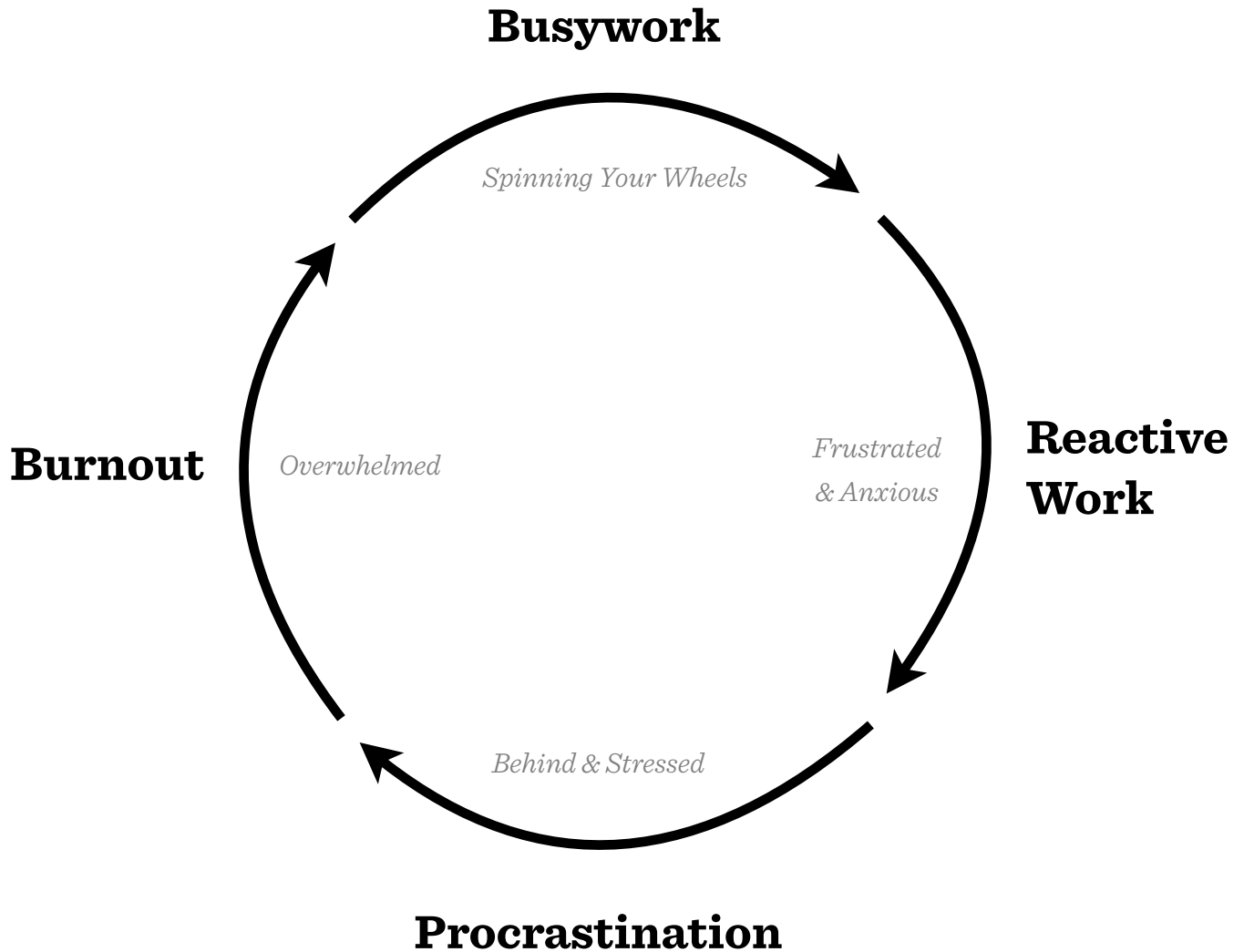
Identify

Plan

Act

Celebrate

Four Symptoms of a Busted Productivity System



1: Busywork (Spinning Your Wheels)

Doing tasks and activities that are not rewarding, they don't add up, they don't compound into anything substantial over time, and they don't really move things forward. Simply put, they're not the best use of your time. This happens when you lack clarity.

2: Reactive Work (Feeling Frustrated & Anxious)

When you find yourself reacting to the needs of others and unable to follow through with your own priorities. There is always something else coming your way that you have to react to, and you're not able to proactively focus on the things that you know you should be doing. This happens when you have no system for reliably planning and scheduling how to spend your time.

3: Procrastination (Feeling Behind)

When you and/or your team have a hard time following through on your commitments. Tasks get put off to the last minute or skipped altogether. This happens when you lack personal integrity and/or a system of execution.

4: Burnout (Feeling Overwhelmed)

When you feel like you are on the hamster-wheel of hustle. You are feeling burnt out, unmotivated, and can't see how your current activities lead toward your desired outcomes. This happens when you do not regularly recognize your progress and celebrate those small wins.

.....

Which, if any, of the 4 symptoms in the flywheel do you most relate to?

Busywork

Reactive Work

Procrastination

Burnout

SECTION 2

Honesty

Meaningful Productivity

Meaningful Productivity is the state of consistently giving your time and attention to the things that are most important.

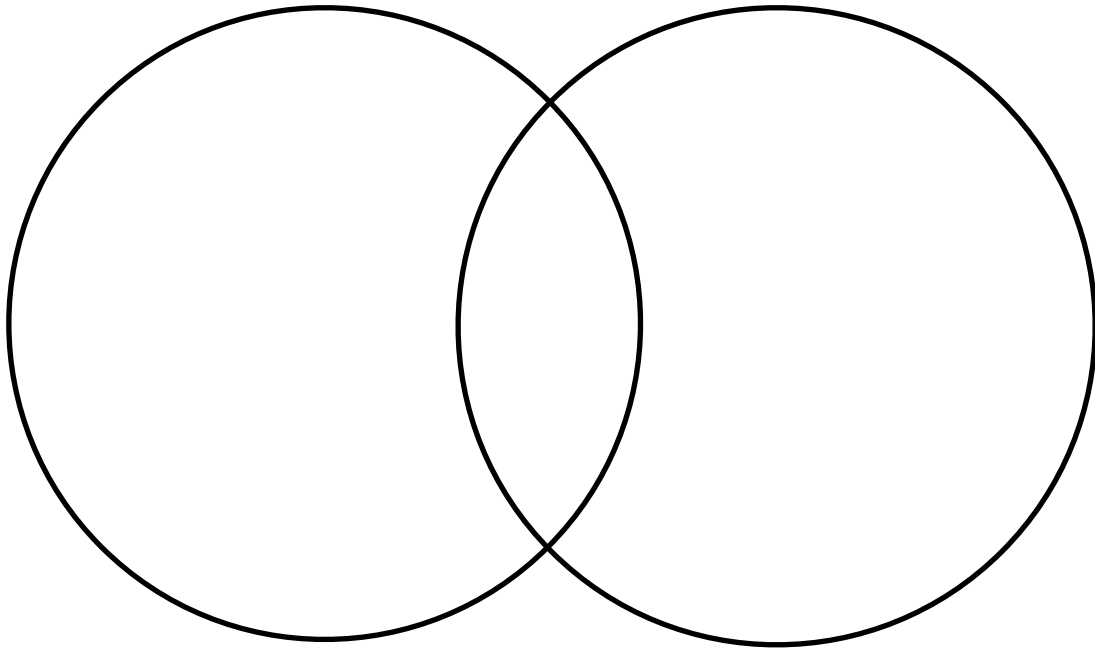
1. True productivity and time management are not based on efficiency, but rather on vision and values.

This is why you must start with your life vision and goals before seeking to define what it looks like to be intentional and productive (not just busy) in each area of your life.

2. Productivity “tricks” that promise lasting change apart from a foundation of personal values, vision, and integrity are merely skin deep and will not last.

It is important to identify *what matters to YOU* before you set goals, change your schedule, or start new habits and routines. Life can be tedious, hectic, and full of challenges. If you are spending your time on things that don’t matter to you, it will be nearly impossible to maintain motivation and joy through the midst of life’s tensions.

3. The starting line for focus, productivity, and time ownership is to have clarity on your values.



***Meaningful Productivity means bringing your
calendar into alignment with your values.***

What are some of your most important relationships?

In the list below, write down the names of the most important relationships in your life, along with who you are to that person. **For example:** Under *Person's Name* I would put "Larry" (my dad), and under *Who are you to them*, I would put "I am a son".

Person's Name	Who are <u>you</u> to them?

What are some of your most important responsibilities?

In the list below, write down your role within your most important areas of responsibility. **For example:** student, boss, parent, breadwinner, teacher, spouse, etc. Also, don't forget to put down some of your personal responsibilities to yourself: consider writing down "self-development," "learning," "exercising," and/or anything else that is a responsibility.

Where are areas you make a contribution?

For example: being a spouse and/or parent in your home, doing community service, neighborhood chairman, HOA board member, mentor, volunteer at church, a website where you write to entertain or teach, a podcast you produce, a book club you host, a mastermind you attend.

Your Roles

Review the three lists you just created (pages 22 – 24) and see if you can consolidate all of your relationships, responsibilities, and areas of contribution down into **7 or fewer roles**:

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

Your MOB

Without Margin, Ownership, and Boundaries (MOB) then it will be difficult to lean into, and show up for, your most important roles. You will discover more about the MOB throughout the course.

Margin

Do you have the breathing room, health, and strength you need in order to lean into each area of your life? Margin exists for relationships and thus it enables you to be present for your most important roles in life.

Ownership (is a mindset)

Are you taking personal ownership over the things that you can control? Without ownership and personal integrity you may find yourself ignoring activities and roles that only you can do.

Boundaries

Do you have clear and healthy boundaries around what is yours to manage (and what is *not* yours to manage)? Without boundaries you may take on more than you can handle.

Journal: Ask yourself the following questions about your roles

How often do I find that I am consumed by one or two roles in my life, and that the others do not receive the time and attention I'd like to give them?

.....

If so... what are the roles which currently consume most of my time and attention and which are the roles that I would prefer to give more time and attention to instead?

.....

If I were to list out the tasks and goals that matter most to me in my life right now, how many of them are aligned with the roles that are currently receiving most of my time and attention?

What difference would it make in the quality of my life to consider these roles on a regular basis and to ensure that my activities are balanced?

.....

Do I believe that it is within my control and ability to change which roles receive and require the majority of my time and attention?

Find and Check 10 Core Values

From the list below, check about 10 values and virtues that stand out to you as those which you consider most important in your life right now.

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| ☐ Action-Oriented | ☐ Adaptability | ☐ Adventurous | ☐ Ambitious |
| ☐ Assertive | ☐ Authentic | ☐ Belonging | ☐ Caring |
| ☐ Cheerfulness | ☐ Communication | ☐ Community | ☐ Compassionate |
| ☐ Consistency | ☐ Confidence | ☐ Conviction | ☐ Courageousness |
| ☐ Courteous | ☐ Curiosity | ☐ Decisiveness | ☐ Diligence |
| ☐ Empathy | ☐ Excellence | ☐ Excitement | ☐ Faith |
| ☐ Focused | ☐ Forgiveness | ☐ Friendliness | ☐ Full of Integrity |
| ☐ Generosity | ☐ Grace | ☐ Gusto | ☐ Happiness |
| ☐ Hope | ☐ Humility | ☐ Independence | ☐ Joyfulness |
| ☐ Justice | ☐ Kindness | ☐ Knowledge | ☐ Leadership |
| ☐ Listener | ☐ Loving | ☐ Loyalty | ☐ Mannerly |
| ☐ Open-Mindedness | ☐ Organized | ☐ Parenting | ☐ Passionate |
| ☐ Patience | ☐ Personable | ☐ Promptness | ☐ Respectfulness |
| ☐ Rest | ☐ Self-Sufficiency | ☐ Sober-Mindedness | ☐ Sound Judgment |
| ☐ Stewardship | ☐ Studious | ☐ Sympathetic | ☐ Teachable |
| ☐ Tidiness | ☐ Trustworthiness | ☐ Uniqueness | ☐ Unity |
| ☐ Unselfishness | ☐ Usefulness | ☐ Vision | ☐ Vulnerability |
| ☐ Wealth | ☐ Wholeheartedness | ☐ Wisdom | ☐ Wonder |

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Write your own, unique values in the spaces provided if you don't see some of your core values already listed.

Your Legacy

Look back at your list of roles on page 25.

Identify a few relationships that fit within those roles.

Now... imagine that each of those people are speaking at your funeral...

Using the spots on the following pages (32 – 33), for each of those few people from your roles, write:

3. Their name (Jane Smith) OR their anonymous role (co-worker).
4. A character trait, value, or legacy you hope you'll have passed on to that person.
5. What is something related to that character trait, value, or legacy that you would want them to say about you at the end of your life?

Sample Legacy Statement

Person: Giovanni (my son)
Character trait, value, or legacy I passed along
Generosity
Their statement about me
My dad was a generous man, and he taught me that you can never give too much. I love how he always modeled generosity to me and my brothers, and was always so happy to give to people in need. He taught us from an early age to be intentional with our money so we could be generous as well. And he wasn't just generous with his money. He was always so willing to give his time to our family and to people who needed his help.

Person:
Character trait, value, or legacy I passed along
Their statement about me

Person:
Character trait, value, or legacy I passed along
Their statement about me

Person:
Character trait, value, or legacy I passed along
Their statement about me

Person:
Character trait, value, or legacy I passed along
Their statement about me

Person:
Character trait, value, or legacy I passed along
Their statement about me

Person:
Character trait, value, or legacy I passed along
Their statement about me

Choosing Your Top 2 Core Values

Looking back at the previous pages and the values you circled (pg. 28), and the values you identified for your most important roles (pgs. 30 & 31)...

Pick the two values that mean the most to you.

First, list the two values which you feel are the most important in your life and the most influential toward your decisions and actions. Write them in the blank spaces below.





Now, assign a priority ranking of 1st and 2nd for the values listed above (with #1 being the value that you consider to be MOST important to your life right now).

Choosing your top 2 values may feel impossible! But rest easy. By identifying these top values does not mean you are ignoring all other values that you consider important. You are simply recognizing that these 2 values play the most critical role in your life right now. Your values can (and probably will) change. Different seasons of our life, we often hold different values to be more or less important.

Also, consider if there is a value that serves as a larger “umbrella” value — one which encompasses or includes several other values that are important to you.

How Do You Express Your Top 2 Core Values?

*Describe how you express your core values as if you already live each value out **exactly** as you would want to. Many of us see our faults all too well, or we are still maturing in our ability to express our values; that's okay. In this spot, I want you to describe it as if you do it perfectly all the time.*

Value (example): Loving

Description (example)

I am a loving person. I love myself well by taking care of my health, learning, staying motivated, and not being too hard on the shortcomings I see in myself. I love others well by putting their needs ahead of my own and being patient, kind, joyful, hopeful, and thoughtful towards them.

Value # 1:

Description

Value # 2:

Description

Your Life Vision and Mission

Using your answers from the previous worksheets, plug them into the template below.

This will get you started with a first draft of your life's mission statement. You can always edit and rewrite it or completely start over from scratch with something else entirely.

In my roles as a [your roles from [page 25](#)], ***I want to express, impart, and exemplify the values of*** [values from [page 33](#)], by paraphrasing those value descriptions.

Write your life vision and mission in the space below:

Your life vision and mission is something you can do no matter what season of life you are in. It should not matter what your job is, where you live, what your financial situation is, or what relationships you have, etc. You should be able to walk out this vision and mission in any situation and under any circumstance.

Notes

STRATEGY

Section 3

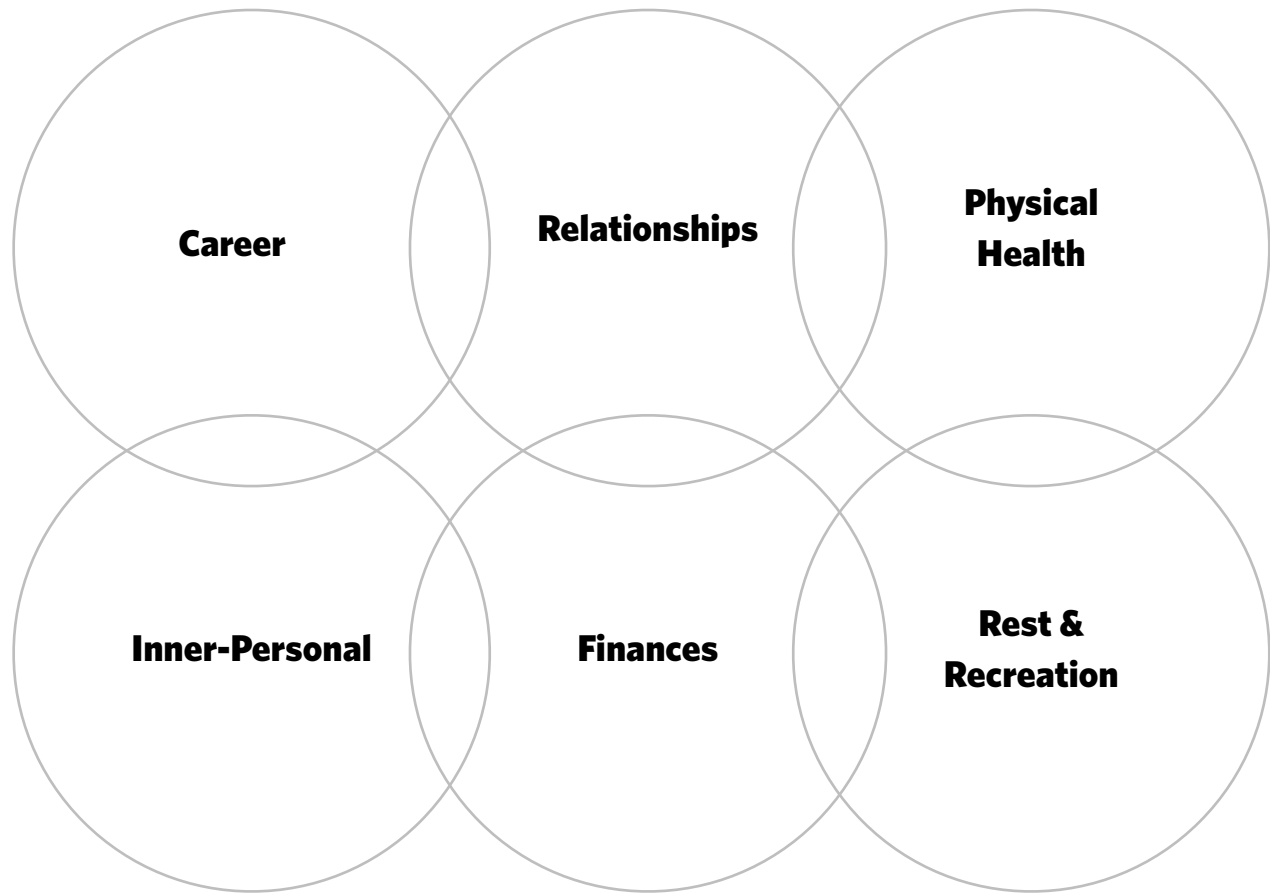
- ✓ The Laws of Focus
- ✓ The Six Areas of Life
- ✓ Goal Setting

Success for this module: Complete a goal setting worksheet for *at least* two areas of your life, but ideally for every area.

SECTION 3

Life Goals

The Six Areas of Your Life



All six areas of your life overlap with one another; they impact and affect one another.

When you are healthy and thriving in one area, it contributes to living healthy in the other areas...

... conversely, when you are unhealthy and struggling in one area, it can have a negative impact on the other areas.

Consider how The 8 Laws of Focus apply to each area of your life. Have you noticed how you can only ever give your full focus to one or two areas at a time? And yet there are many areas of our life that we want to maintain in a healthy state! (This is where habits and routines help.)

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 than others.

3: Physical Health

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

4: Inner-Personal Life

Your inner-personal life can be subdivided down into three separate areas: your emotional health; your mental health; and your spiritual life. Each of these areas of our inner-personal life stand on their own 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.

TODAY'S DATE:

**MY INNER PERSONAL &
SPIRITUAL LIFE**

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

MY EMOTIONAL STATE

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

MY MENTAL STATE

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

MY PHYSICAL HEALTH

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY
SPOUSE / SIGNIFICANT OTHER**

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**MY RELATIONSHIP
WITH MY KIDS**

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**MY RELATIONSHIPS WITH
FRIENDS & FAMILY**

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**MY REST TIME, DOWN
TIME, AND "PLAY" TIME**

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**MY HOBBIES &
SIDE-INTERESTS**

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

MY JOB / CAREER

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

MY FINANCES

NOT GOOD...

AMAZING!

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**MY INNER PERSONAL &
SPIRITUAL LIFE**

What's going well?

What could be better?

MY EMOTIONAL STATE

What's going well?

What could be better?

MY MENTAL STATE

What's going well?

What could be better?

MY PHYSICAL HEALTH

What's going well?

What could be better?

**RELATIONSHIP WITH MY
SIGNIFICANT OTHER**

What's going well?

What could be better?

**MY RELATIONSHIP
WITH MY KIDS**

What's going well?

What could be better?

**MY RELATIONSHIPS WITH
FRIENDS & FAMILY**

What's going well?

What could be better?

**MY REST TIME, DOWN
TIME, AND "PLAY" TIME**

What's going well?

What could be better?

**MY HOBBIES &
SIDE-INTERESTS**

What's going well?

What could be better?

MY JOB / CAREER

What's going well?

What could be better?

MY FINANCES

What's going well?

What could be better?

The Power of Goal Setting For Your Life

Do you ever feel stuck? Not sure what to do next? Just totally bored and lacking motivation?

Goals give you a direction and help you make progress.

When you can get clear about your goals, you can get clear about the action you need to take.

Your actions matter more than your outcomes

Over the next several pages, you are going to define your long-term desired outcomes and then begin to break those down into medium- and short-term goals, and then ultimately into small daily actions.

***You cannot control your outcomes.
But you can control your actions and your effort.***

Thus, the aim of this goal-setting section and the habits section that will follow is to **connect your daily actions to your long-term desired outcomes**. This is the Law of Sowing and Reaping in action.

Two Types of Goals

1: Attainment Goals

An Attainment Goal is something that you achieve or accomplish.

Attainment Goals have a clear definition of completion.

Examples include things such as buying a new home, graduating college, getting married, losing 5 pounds, refinishing the bathroom, running a 5k race, getting a new job, writing a book, paying off debt, etc.

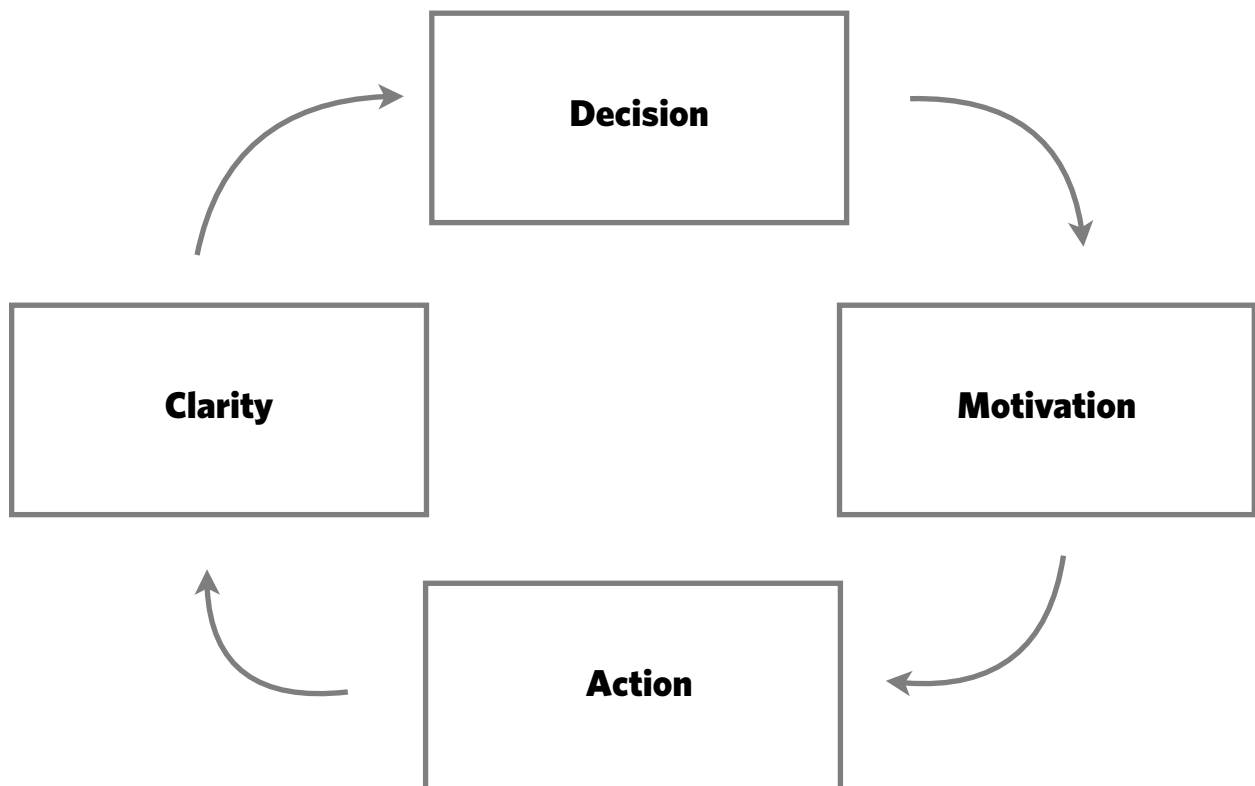
2: Lifestyle Goals

A Lifestyle Goal is something that you “install” into part of your life.

Lifestyle Goals are systems, habits, or routines that you work to incorporate into your everyday lifestyle.

Examples include things such as working out for 15 minutes each day, having a quiet time of reading and reflection in the morning, going to bed at a certain time, eating a certain diet, keeping a budget, etc.

Action Brings Clarity



(Sample) Life Goal: Spiritual / Inner Personal Life

For my spiritual / inner personal life, what is one thing I want to do, be, or have someday?

To live a less stressed and less anxious life.

Based on my someday goal, what is one thing I could do 5 years from now that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Be more informed about emotional and mental health, and also have more personal insight into how I am built and how I respond emotionally to different situations and circumstances. Knowing more about what is good for my emotions and what is difficult for me.

Based on my 5-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next year that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Collect some quantitative data and information about how my mood is impacted (positively and/or negatively) by my activities.

Based on my 1-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next month that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Begin a new journaling structure to track my moods, my stress, and emotions.

Based on my one-month goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next week that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Begin to research this approach to how actions, circumstances, and situations can impact emotions. Try to find some research, templates, and other ideas so that I can get started on the right foot.

Based on my one-week goal, what is the one thing I could do today that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Spend 5 minutes journaling and reflecting about my day today and what my emotions are.

What other areas of my life would see significant benefits from the actions and milestones listed here?

☐ Inner Personal

☒ Relationships

☐ Physical

☒ Rest & Recreation

☐ Financial

☒ Career

(Sample) Life Goal: Physical Health

For my physical health, what is one thing I want to do, be, or have someday?

I want to be in excellent health and physical condition so that I can have energy and vibrancy to enjoy my days and my life and be present and engaged with all of my most valuable relationships.

Based on my someday goal, what is one thing I could do 5 years from now that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Have a healthy diet that is best for my body, and doing regular workouts and movement as part of my normal daily lifestyle.

Based on my 5-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next year that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Learn more about healthy eating and work with a personal trainer who can help me discover the right workouts for my fitness needs.

Based on my 1-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next month that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Decide upon and be working with a dietitian and trainer.

Based on my one-month goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next week that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Research dietitians and trainers in my local area (or find ones that can work with me remotely online).

Based on my one-week goal, what is the one thing I could do today that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Plan a time within the next week that I will do the research for a trainer.

What other areas of my life would benefit or be impacted by the actions and milestones listed here?

☒ Inner Personal

☐ Physical

☐ Financial

☒ Relationships

☒ Rest & Recreation

☐ Career

Spiritual / Inner Personal Life: Prompts and help for goal setting

- Your inner personal life can be sub-divided into 3 smaller areas: Your mental health, your emotional health, and your spiritual life.
- Looking at the roles you listed on page 25, do any of those relate to your spiritual / inner personal life? If so, do you already have a short- or long-term goal for that role?
- What other short- or long-term spiritual goals do you have?
- What makes life special and meaningful?
- What do you want to do?
- Who do you want to be? (Use your vision statement as a plumb line and apply it to your spiritual / inner personal life -- how can your life vision complement your spiritual / inner personal life, and vice versa?)
- Are you pleased with where you are right now in your spiritual / inner personal life?
- If you keep doing for the next year, 5 years, and 20 years what you have been doing for the past 1, 5, and 20 years, will you be pleased with who you are, where you are, and what you have?
- As you consider your someday goals, do they lead to a life that is exemplifying the values you listed on page 34?
- What spiritual / mental / emotional activities will give you strength for the other areas of your life?

Spiritual / Inner Personal Life (Life Goal)

For my spiritual / inner personal life, what is one thing I want to do, be, or have someday?

Based on my someday goal, what is one thing I can do 5 years from now that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 5-year goal, what is the one thing I can do in the next year that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 1-year goal, what is the one thing I can do in the next month that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-month goal, what is the one thing I can do in the next week that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-week goal, what is the one thing I could do today that will put me on track to accomplish it?

What other areas of my life would see significant benefits from the actions and milestones listed here?

☐ Inner Personal
☐ Relationships

☐ Physical
☐ Rest & Recreation

☐ Financial
☐ Career

Physical Health: Prompts and help for goal setting

- Is there a physical goal that, if attained, would bring joy and some level of ease to the other areas of your life?
- What makes life special and meaningful?
- As you consider your someday goal, does it lead to and align with the values you listed on page 34?
- What do you want to do?
- Looking back at the roles you listed on page 25, do any of them relate to your physical life and/or physical health? If so, do you already have a short- or long-term goal for that role?
- What other short- or long-term physical goals do you have?
- Can you use your vision statement as a plumb line and apply it to your physical life?
- Are you pleased with where you are right now with your physical health and state?
- If you keep doing for the next year, 5 years, and 20 years what you have been doing for the past 1, 5, and 20 years, will you be pleased with who you are, where you are, and what you have?

Physical Health (Life Goal)

For my physical life, what is one thing I want to do, be, or have someday?

Based on my someday goal, what is one thing I can do 5 years from now that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 5-year goal, what is the one thing I can do in the next year that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 1-year goal, what is the one thing I can do in the next month that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-month goal, what is the one thing I can do in the next week that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-week goal, what is the one thing I could do today that will put me on track to accomplish it?

What other areas of my life would see significant benefits from the actions and milestones listed here?

☐ Inner Personal

☐ Relationships

☐ Physical

☐ Rest & Recreation

☐ Financial

☐ Career

Relationships: Prompts and help for goal setting

- What are some of your most important relationships?
- Do you already have a short- or long-term goal for any of them?
- If you keep doing for the next year, 5 years, and 20 years what you have been doing for the past 1, 5, and 20 years, will you be pleased with the state of those most important relationships?
- What makes life special and meaningful?
- What are some of your most precious memories with people?
- What sort of person do you want to be to others? (Use your vision statement as a plumb line and apply it to your relationships — how can your life vision complement your relationships, and vice versa?)
- Do you feel that you're able to give 100% to your most important relationships without feeling burnt-out and overspent?
- Are you pleased with where you are right now in your most important relationships?
- As you consider your someday goals, do they lead to stronger relationships, generosity, kindness, serving others, and providing value?
- Your Relationships can be further broken down into important sub-groups of relationships, including your marriage and significant other, your children, your parents, your close friends, your family, those you work with, etc.

Relationships (Life Goal)

For my relationships, what is one thing I want to do, be, or have someday?

Based on my someday goal, what is one thing I could do 5 years from now that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 5-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next year that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 1-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next month that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-month goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next week that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-week goal, what is the one thing I could do today that will put me on track to accomplish it?

What other areas of my life would see significant benefits from the actions and milestones listed here?

☐ Inner Personal
Relationships

☐ Physical
☐ Rest & Recreation

☐ Financial
☐ Career

Rest & Recreation: Prompts and help for goal setting

- What makes life special and meaningful? Can you incorporate that into your goal for rest and recreation?
- What does “rest” mean to you?
- Do you think you might be spending too much time in Counterfeit Rest? If so, what would things look like for you if you were resting differently and in a more healthy manner? (For more info on Counterfeit Rest, see Section 7.)
- Do you already have any short- or long-term goals related to rest & recreation?
- As you consider your someday goals for rest & recreation, do any of them help you become more generous and kind? To better serve others and provide value?
- Looking at your values from page 34, what ways can you rest that will give you the strength and opportunity to walk out and exemplify those values?
- If you keep your same habits of rest & recreation for the next year, 5 years, and 20 years that you have had for the past 1, 5, and 20 years, will you be pleased with who you are, where you are, and what you have?
- As you look back at how you have spent your time on rest & recreation over the past few months, are you proud of that time or do you wish you would you have spent it differently? Why?

Rest & Recreation (Life Goal)

In the area of rest & recreation, what is one thing I want to do, be, or have someday?

Based on my someday goal, what is one thing I could do 5 years from now that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 5-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next year that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 1-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next month that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-month goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next week that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-week goal, what is the one thing I could do today that will put me on track to accomplish it?

What other areas of my life would see significant benefits from the actions and milestones listed here?

☐ Inner Personal

☐ Relationships

☐ Physical

Rest & Recreation

☐ Financial

☐ Career

Job & Career: Prompts and help for goal setting

- Who are some people whom you look up to in your field of interest?
- What does “meaningful work” look like to you?
- Of the roles you listed on page 25, do any of them relate to your career?
- What do you want to do? What skill do you want to learn?
- Does the idea of craftsmanship and mastery applied to your current vocation sound exciting to you?
- Who do you want to be?
- Are you pleased with where you are right now in your career?
- If you keep doing for the next year, 5 years, and 20 years what you have been doing for the past 1, 5, and 20 years, will you be pleased with who you are, where you are, and what you have?
- As you consider your someday goal for your career, does it lead to a life of exemplifying the values you listed on page 34?
- How can your vocation empower your other goals (spiritual, physical, relational, rest, etc.)?

Job / Career (Life Goal)

For my job / career, what is one thing I want to do, be, or have someday?

Based on my someday goal, what is one thing I could do 5 years from now that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 5-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next year that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 1-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next month that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-month goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next week that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-week goal, what is the one thing I could do today that will put me on track to accomplish it?

What other areas of my life would see significant benefits from the actions and milestones listed here?

☐ Inner Personal

☐ Relationships

☐ Physical

☐ Rest & Recreation

☐ Financial

Career

Finances: Prompts and help for goal setting

- Are you pleased with where you are right now as it relates to finances?
- Do you have a budget and are you living within your means?
- If you keep doing for the next year, 5 years, and 20 years what you have been doing for the past 1, 5, and 20 years, will you be pleased with the state of your finances?
- Do you want to give money away and serve / help others with your finances?
- As you consider your someday goals, do they lead to generosity, kindness, serving others, and providing value?
- Do you already have a short- or long-term goal for your finances and economics?
- What makes life special and meaningful? How can your finances help make that a reality?
- Use your vision statement as a plumb line and apply it to your finances — how can your life vision complement your finances, and vice versa?
- Consider what the circumstances of your life will be in 5 years from now for the obvious things. Such as:
 - How old will your car be in 5 years?
 - Will your house be paid off?
 - What grade will your kids be in?
 - At your current rate of saving / investing / debt elimination, what will your finances look like?
 - How old will you and your spouse both be? What year of marriage will you be on?
 - How old will your parents be?

Finances (Life Goal)

For my finances, what is one thing I want to do, be, or have someday?

Based on my someday goal, what is one thing I could do 5 years from now that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 5-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next year that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 1-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next month that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-month goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next week that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-week goal, what is the one thing I could do today that will put me on track to accomplish it?

What other areas of my life would see significant benefits from the actions and milestones listed here?

☐ Inner Personal

☐ Relationships

☐ Physical

☐ Rest & Recreation

Financial

☐ Career

Life Goal: _____

For this area of my life, what is one thing I want to do, be, or have someday?

Based on my someday goal, what is one thing I could do 5 years from now that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 5-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next year that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 1-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next month that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-month goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next week that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-week goal, what is the one thing I could do today that will put me on track to accomplish it?

What other areas of my life would see significant benefits from the actions and milestones listed here?

☐ Inner Personal

☐ Relationships

☐ Physical

☐ Rest & Recreation

☐ Financial

☐ Career

Life Goal: _____

For this area of my life, what is one thing I want to do, be, or have someday?

Based on my someday goal, what is one thing I could do 5 years from now that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 5-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next year that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my 1-year goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next month that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-month goal, what is the one thing I could do in the next week that will put me on track to accomplish it?

Based on my one-week goal, what is the one thing I could do today that will put me on track to accomplish it?

What other areas of my life would see significant benefits from the actions and milestones listed here?

☐ Inner Personal

☐ Relationships

☐ Physical

☐ Rest & Recreation

☐ Financial

☐ Career

HABITS

Sections 4 & 5

- ✓ How to use habits to change your life
- ✓ How to set priorities and boundaries
- ✓ Lifestyle habits toward your goals
- ✓ Building an ideal schedule

Success for this module: Identify some lifestyle habits you would want as part of your life and which would move you toward your goals and desired outcomes from the previous module.

***“We do not rise to the level of our goals,
we fall to the level of our systems.”***

James Clear

SECTION 4

Lifestyle Practices & Habits

Using Habits and Routines to Your Advantage

With so many areas of responsibility with our life, it can feel impossible to get it all done.

Habits and routines are like *bowling alley bumpers* that help us to keep moving forward in every area of our life even when we are busy, tired, and can only focus on one big thing at a time.

Habits and routines are valuable because goals don't complete themselves.

Goals give you a direction to go. Your habits and routines will keep you moving toward progress and results

By focusing on your habits, you're able to focus on incremental improvement. And slowly, over time, your habits and disciplines become a source of joy and delight.

People are Lazy

- ✓ We run out of energy
- ✓ We take the path of least resistance
- ✓ We make emotional decisions
- ✓ We don't follow through

Habits are Smart

- ✓ They automate the inconsequential
- ✓ They help us stay healthy
- ✓ They save us energy
- ✓ They compound over time

List Any Current Habits or Routines (Positive or Negative)

Are there any areas of your life which already have positive or negative habits? If so, list below any that come to mind. (See page 25 for your roles and page 43 for your areas of life.)

[illegible]

On the following pages, brainstorm habits for each area of your life.

These habits / routines / systems should serve two purposes:

1. They should provide you with regular space and momentum in your life to make progress toward your goals.
2. They should be something that in and of themselves would be a healthy and enjoyable thing to do — something that flows from your values and your vision.
3. You can include any of the current habits you already listed above.

SPIRITUAL / INNER PERSONAL	
Habit / Routine / System / Activity	Frequency
Journaling	5 minutes every day

PHYSICAL HEALTH	
Habit / Routine / System / Activity	Frequency
Do a 30-minute workout	3x weekly

RELATIONSHIPS	
Habit / Routine / System / Activity	Frequency
Date Night	6 hours every week

REST & RECREATION	
Habit / Routine / System / Activity	Frequency
Read a book	15 minutes every day

JOB / CAREER	
Habit / Routine / System / Activity	Frequency
Write for 20 minutes	Every day

FINANCES	
Habit / Routine / System / Activity	Frequency
Gratitude journal	Write one thing I'm thankful for each day

Why pick a habit for each area of your life?

Consider each of the following areas of your life, and what they may look like 5 years from now.

1. Emotional and Spiritual Life
2. Physical Health
3. Relationships
4. Career
5. Finances
6. Rest & Recreation (personal interests and down time)

A singular, small action will not produce significant results in the short term. But, over time, small actions lead to big change.

- Smoking one cigarette will not degrade your health overnight.
- Going on a walk will not improve your health in one day.
- Skipping dessert one time will not impact your weight.
- Writing for 30 minutes will not produce any body of work.

But...

- What if you were to smoke a cigarette every day for the next 3 years?
- What if you went on a brisk walk every day for the next 3 years?
- What if you wrote for half an hour every day for the next 3 years?

“We do not decide our futures, we decide our habits.

And our habits decide our futures.”

F.M. Alexander

Choose A Habit to Change Your Life

On the following pages (72 & 73) you are going to identify a single lifestyle practice or habit that you would like to incorporate into your life.

Pick one idea from the list of habit ideas you listed on the previous pages (68 - 69).

For each activity list the time commitment it will require or that you want to give it, and also list the frequency (since some lifestyle practices do not occur daily).

Then, fill in the value statement for that activity, giving the bigger context for why this activity is valuable to you and your desired outcomes in that area of your life.

(Sample) Physical

Engage in vigorous exercise that builds my strength and cardio	15 minutes	Daily
Habit / Routine / Lifestyle Practice	Time Commitment	Frequency

This activity will move me toward my physical health goal of being in excellent health and physical condition so that I can have energy and vibrancy to enjoy my days and be present for relationships.

because one of the most important factors to physical health and energy is regular movement and exercise. And so, if I can build a regular habit of exercise — even just 15 minutes a day — that is something that will serve me and help me for years to come.

Continue, by filling out the charts on the following pages...

Spiritual / Inner Personal

Habit / Routine / Lifestyle Practice	Time Commitment	Frequency

This activity will move me toward my inner personal goal of _____

because _____

_____.

Physical

Habit / Routine / Lifestyle Practice	Time Commitment	Frequency

This activity will move me toward my physical health goal of _____

because _____

_____.

Relationships

Habit / Routine / Lifestyle Practice	Time Commitment	Frequency

This activity will move me toward my relationships goal of _____

because _____

_____.

Rest & Recreation

Habit / Routine / Lifestyle Practice	Time Commitment	Frequency

This activity will move me toward my rest & recreational goal of _____

because _____

_____.

Career

Habit / Routine / Lifestyle Practice	Time Commitment	Frequency

This activity will move me toward my career goal of _____

because _____

_____.

Finances

Habit / Routine / Lifestyle Practice	Time Commitment	Frequency

This activity will move me toward my financial goal of _____

because _____

_____.

“Starting small does not mean thinking small.”

Marie Forleo

SECTION 5

Time Management

Consider your current schedule and break it up into categories and activities.

You will start by filling out the Time Commitment Chart on the following page (77) and listing all the individual activities and responsibilities you do on a regular basis. Below are a few examples of things your Time Commitment Chart may include, along with some prompts and questions to help ensure that you cover everything in your current weekly schedule.

When filling out your own chart, try to be as comprehensive as you can.

Activity	Time Commitment	Frequency	Notes
Morning Commute	30 minutes	Daily (M-F)	
Church	2 hours	Weekly (Sunday)	
Gym	45 min	M, W, F	
Lunch	30 minutes	Every Day	
Household admin	90 minutes	Once a week	
Work	8 hours	Daily (M-F)	
Date night	4 hours	Thursday evenings	
Reading a book	15 minutes	Mon - Fri	Before bed
Family Day	24 hours	Every Sat	
Mow the Lawn	2 hours	Every Saturday	

- What activities do you do in the morning before going to work?
- What activities do you do in the evenings before going to bed?
- Do you have any regular meetings during the week?
- Are you and/or your family involved in any extracurricular activities (sports, etc.)?
- What chores are you responsible for at home?
- What do you do for leisure?
- Are you a part of a book club, men's group, women's group, etc?
- Do you volunteer anywhere?
- Do you have any routines already in place for your health?
- Do you have any routines already in place for your work life?
- Do you have any routines already in place for your inner personal life?
- Do you have a regular time when you connect with your family?
- Do you go to the gym or have another time set aside for exercise?

Focusing on the Most Important (The Ownership Matrix)

Looking at your list of weekly activities and commitments from the previous page (77), place as many of those activities as you can into the Ownership Matrix below.

I LOVE doing this		
I DISLIKE doing this		
	ANYBODY can do this for me	ONLY I can do this for myself

Notes

Now, consider your normal, current weekly schedule. You can also look at your list of activities and commitments from page 77... With that in mind are you allowing time to focus and grow in each of the six areas of your life?

Are you currently allowing time to focus and grow in each area of your life?

My Job / Career	Yes	No
My Hobbies and Side-Interests	Yes	No
Relationship with my spouse / significant other	Yes	No
Relationship with my kids	Yes	No
Relationships with my friends	Yes	No
Relationships with my family	Yes	No
My Inner Personal / Spiritual Life	Yes	No
My Emotional Health	Yes	No
My Mental Health	Yes	No
My Physical Health	Yes	No
My Rest Time, Down Time, and "Play" Time	Yes	No
My Finances	Yes	No

For any of the areas of your life that you are currently NOT giving regular time to focus and grow, why do you think that is?

Create Your Ideal Schedule

On the previous pages you have:

- Assessed your current schedule (see page 77)
- Listed your current areas of responsibility (see page 23)
- Come up with six preferred Lifestyle Practices (see pages 72 - 73)
- Identified things you can automate, eliminate, or delegate (see page 78)

Taking all of that information, **use the schedule template on the following page(s) to fill out what your ideal weekly schedule would look like.**

Tips

- Try to create space for breathing room (margin) in your day.
- Be sure to allow the time you need to do what is important.
- Make a time for each of the habits and lifestyle practices you chose for the six major areas of your life on pages 72 and 73.

Remember

- **This is an *ideal* schedule.** It may not be realistic or feasible right now, and that's okay.
- **The Law of Tradeoffs** means you will not be able to do *everything*.

Fear not! Your schedule isn't meant to be set in cement. If you can keep 75- 80% of your weekly schedule, then we consider that to be an A+!

A schedule is meant to be a framework for how you intend to spend your time. It's for helping you make sure you're spending meaningful and consistent energy on the things of your work, life, relationships, and health that matter most to you.

Without a financial budget, how can you know if you're spending too much money on entertainment and not enough set aside for the future? You shouldn't let your lack in one area be the signal that you're spending too much time in another. Be proactive, not reactive.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
First Thing							
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							
Nighttime							

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
First Thing							
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							
Nighttime							

MARGIN

Sections 6 & 7

- ✓ How to overcome the most common areas of resistance
- ✓ The 4-Focus Method (review)
- ✓ Understanding and restoring margin
- ✓ Your Focus Declaration

Success for this module and the whole of Focus Course:

Crafting your Focus Declaration!

SECTION 6

Resistance

High-Level Areas of Resistance

Whenever you set out to make change, or to embark on a bold venture, there will always be resistance. Here are the seven most common things that come against us in our efforts to live a focused life.

1. Inbox Addiction

This is the urge to continuously check our news feeds, social feeds, and inboxes despite a desire to stop. Overcome Inbox Addiction by removing external distractions from your devices and having a clear plan for how to spend your time.

2. Urgency Mindset

If you only spend time on the things that are *urgent*, you may never spend it on things that are *essential*. Overcome an Urgency Mindset by identifying what matters, setting aside the time for that which matters, following through on your plan, and celebrating your actions.

3. Distractions

The small and big things that pull our attention away from what we are focusing on. From a child interrupting us in our home office, to a large side-project at work pulling us away from our primary responsibilities. To deal with distractions, do all that you can to circumvent them before they even get to you. If you find yourself in the middle of a distraction, get out.

4. Lack of Planning

Without an intention of how you will implement that which matters, you are not likely to follow through. Overcome a lack of planning by deciding when and where you will do an important task or follow through on a critical responsibility.

5. Counterfeit Rest

True rest will leave you recharged with more energy. Find restful activities that give you energy rather than draining it. We like to say that if you work with your head you should rest with your hands (i.e. cooking, woodworking, landscape, etc.)

6. Busywork

Busywork consists of the non-essential actions we do that fill up our time in order to escape more meaningful activities. Busywork also includes the shallow tasks we do when we don't know what else to do. We believe that clarity cures busywork.

7. Perfectionism

With a perfectionist mindset we place too much emphasis on things having to be just perfect and just right. This applies to projects and tasks as well as to relationships, experiences, and other areas of responsibility. Overcome perfectionism by limiting the scope of how much time you are willing to spend on something; or by making the best choice you can with the information you have and then enjoying and appreciating what comes as a result.

Inbox Addiction Assessment Quiz

The Inbox Addiction Assessment is meant to be a simple questionnaire to help give you a better understanding into your usage of your smartphone and the frequency at which you check email, social media, and other incoming messages / analytics.

There are many different Internet addiction tests that are used to assess and measure addictive use of the Internet from mild to severe levels of Internet Addiction. The inbox addiction assessment used in The Focus Course is based on the IAT developed by Dr. Kimberly Young.

For each question, circle the number that best represents your association with that question.

The scale is as such:

1: Rarely

2: Occasionally

3: Frequently

4: Often

5: Always

How often do you find that you stay on your smartphone longer than you intended?

1 2 3 4 5

1: Rarely 2: Occasionally 3: Frequently 4: Often 5: Always

How often do you neglect or procrastinate minor responsibilities to spend more time on your smartphone?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you check your email or social media timeline before doing something else that you need to do on your smartphone?

1 2 3 4 5

How often does your job performance, school work, and/or personal productivity suffer because of distractions on the Internet / usage of your smartphone?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you find yourself anticipating when you will check your social / news feed next?

1 2 3 4 5

When at your computer, how often do you have your email / Twitter / Facebook app or website open (even if in the background)?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you snap or act annoyed if someone bothers you or interrupts you while you are online or checking something on your smartphone?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you stay up late due to using your smartphone in bed?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you feel preoccupied with social media and email when you're "off-line?"

1 2 3 4 5

1: Rarely 2: Occasionally 3: Frequently 4: Often 5: Always

How often do you find yourself saying "just a minute" to someone else when you are online?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you get your smartphone out to check email or social media when waiting in line at a store, at a stoplight, or other place?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you use your smartphone when going to the bathroom?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you check email and/or social media as the first things when you wake up, before you've even gotten out of bed?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you check email, social media, and other stats as the first thing when you begin your work day?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you interrupt a conversation you're having in order to check the buzz from an incoming notification on your phone?

1 2 3 4 5

Total Score: _____

The higher your score from page 95, the greater your level of addiction and draw to your inboxes. Here's a scale to measure your score:

15 – 39 points: You are an average online user. You may surf the web a bit too long at times and check your phone a bit more often than you'd like, but you have control over your usage.

40 – 59 points: You are experiencing occasional problems because of your smartphone and your inboxes. You should consider their full impact on your life and how you can seek to gain better control over your usage.

60 – 75 points: Your device usage is causing significant problems in your life. You should evaluate the impact of your smartphone and your inboxes and address the problems directly caused by your usage and behavior.

What is Inbox Addiction?

Inbox Addiction is an urge to continuously check our news feeds, social feeds, and message inboxes despite undesirable and even negative consequences or a desire to stop.

Fortunately, inbox addiction isn't as destructive as urgency addiction (which we will discuss next), nor is it as harmful and dangerous as problem gambling or alcoholism. However, it is still a very real issue that can derail us from living a focused life.

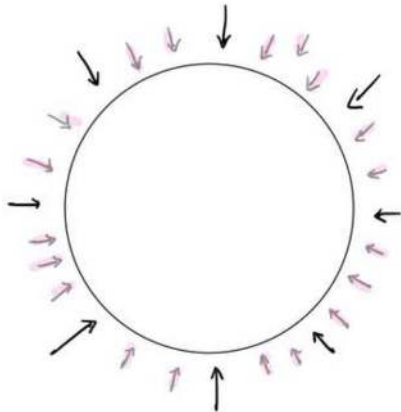
Inbox addiction poses a serious threat to doing our best creative work and staying focused on our essential tasks.

Here is a brief list of "inboxes" we have available to us to check in on: website stats, sales stats, Facebook likes, Instagram likes, Twitter @replies, Facebook messages, new emails, new articles in our favorite RSS feeds, updates in our Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest streams, incoming push and text message notifications, news headlines, stock market prices, and so much more.

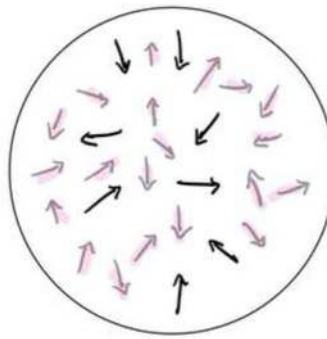
Reduce Your Inputs to Create More Focus

You need input, advice, and inspiration in order to make decisions, come up with new ideas, or take action on something.

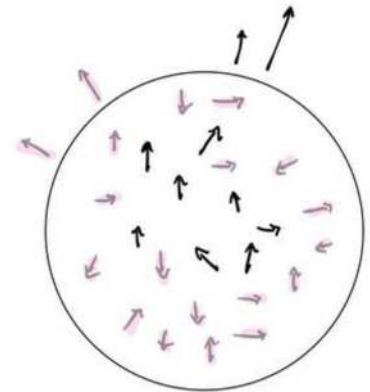
But with too many non-essential inputs then your ability to think clearly and make decisions is hindered. It uses up a lot your energy to manage all the incoming. Thus reducing the amount of energy you have to make clear decisions and take focused action. It leads to less progress, dual focus, and, ultimately, very little traction.



A plethora of inputs, opinions, and opportunities coming your way.

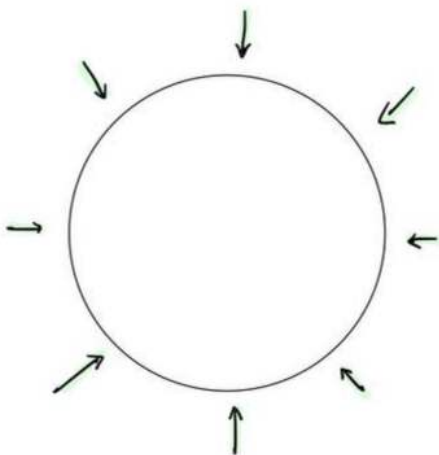


As they all mingle together, there is too much noise and not enough margin to think clearly and get focused.

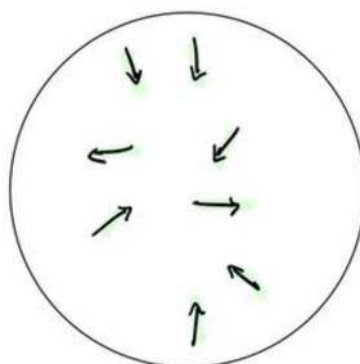


As a result, you end up with dual focus, competing actions, mixed motivations, and busywork.

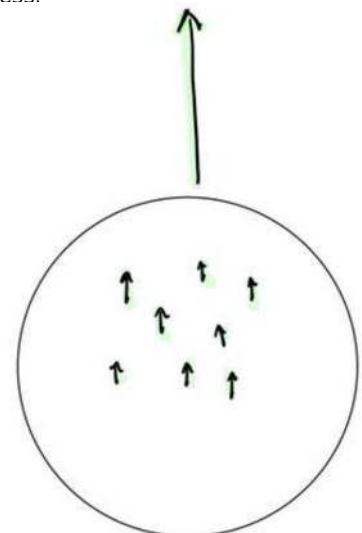
However... When you remove non-essential inputs, you give yourself more space and energy to think, find clarity, and organize your thoughts. Thus enabling you to take focused action and see progress.



Reduce to only the intentional, essential inputs



You now have space to think, decide, and find connections



Clear thoughts lead to focused action and the removal of busywork.

Ways To Deal with Inbox Addiction

The continual activity of checking your inbox can rob you of your ability to focus and to do substantial, meaningful work.

It can lead to a decrease in margin (Section 8) due to a sense of solitude deprivation, and it can reduce your ability to think clearly due to an overwhelming amount of inputs .

Here are some ways we have seen a reduction in inbox addiction, and an improvement in focus.

1. Reduce External Distractions

Turn off notifications for social media, email, news, etc.
Only have the absolute most critical options.

2. Eliminate Options

Remove email and social media from your smart phone.

3. Planning Ahead

This helps avoid decision fatigue, and can keep you focused throughout your day.

4. Establishing Better Default Habits

Create better options to fall back on when you are tired, overwhelmed, bored, or simply unsure of what to do with yourself.

Urgency Mindset: Assessment Quiz

The aim of this questionnaire is to give you a sense of your current urgency mindset.

You have spent time during The Focus Course to discover how meaningful productivity relates to consistently spending your time on things that matter.

But are there things getting in your way? If you are consistently spending time on the things that are *urgent*, you may never get to the things that are *essential*.

In your pursuit of doing work that matters and keeping a healthy balance between your work and personal life, it is helpful to know how prone you are to giving in to the urgent without fighting for the important.

For each question, circle the number that best represents your association with that question.

The scale is as such:

1: Rarely

2: Occasionally

3: Frequently

4: Often

5: Always

Do you seem to do your best work when you're under pressure?

1 2 3 4 5

1: Rarely 2: Occasionally 3: Frequently 4: Often 5: Always

How often do you have to deal with issues that should have been taken care of by others?

1 2 3 4 5

How often is your day spent reacting and moving from one unexpected or pressing event to the next?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you wait until due dates to get important things done because you are overwhelmed with many competing and pressing events?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you feel frustrated at the end of the day because your most important tasks are still not done?

1 2 3 4 5

Do you keep thinking that someday you'll be able to do what you really want to do?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you feel frustrated by the slowness of people and things around you?

1 2 3 4 5

Do you feel guilty when you take time off work?

1 2 3 4 5

Do you assume people will naturally understand if you have to disappoint them or let things go in order to handle a crisis?

1 2 3 4 5

1: Rarely 2: Occasionally 3: Frequently 4: Often 5: Always

How often do you blame the rush and press of external things for your failure to spend time alone to think, plan, and reflect?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you find yourself rushing between places and events?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you find yourself giving up quality time with important people so that you can finish a project or respond to a crisis?

1 2 3 4 5

How often do you eat lunch or other meals while you work?

1 2 3 4 5

Do you feel anxious when you're out of touch with your work?

1 2 3 4 5

When you go on vacation or take time off from work, does it take you several days to stop feeling anxious about the work you have to do?

1 2 3 4 5

Total Score: _____

The higher your score, the greater your urgency mindset. Here's a scale to measure your score:

15 – 39 points: Low urgency mindset — urgency likely does not control your life.

40 – 59 points: Strong urgency mindset — there's a good chance urgency is your fundamental operational paradigm.

60 – 75 points: Urgency addiction.

Understanding and Avoiding a Strong Urgency Mindset

Stephen Covey defines Urgency Addiction as this:

Urgency addiction is a self-destructive behavior that temporarily fills the void created by unmet needs. And instead of meeting these needs, the tools and approaches of time management often feed the addiction. They keep us focused on daily prioritization of the urgent. [...]

It's important to realize that urgency itself is not the problem. The problem is that when urgency is the dominant factor in our lives, importance isn't.

If urgency is a dominant factor in your life, and the basis for which you prioritize your day, then what is at stake?

An Urgency Mindset is at direct odds with focus and meaningful productivity because it relies on external factors to dictate importance rather than internal values.

Urgency will destroy your goals.

Urgency will keep you from spending time on the essential activities that matter and which move things forward — instead you will spend your time constantly responding to the urgent issues of the day.

How to Tell What is Urgent vs What is Essential

Urgency is usually defined by *external factors*.

Things that are essential are fundamentally important, *regardless* of external factors.

Urgency, therefore is *relative* while essential is *absolute*.

With a clear understanding of what your essential activities and tasks are, then you can have clarity on what urgent matters you should give your attention to and which ones you should ignore. This liberates you to spend the vast majority of your day on only the essential activities of life, rather than giving way to the tyranny of urgent issues that are not truly important.

How to Overcome an Urgency Mindset

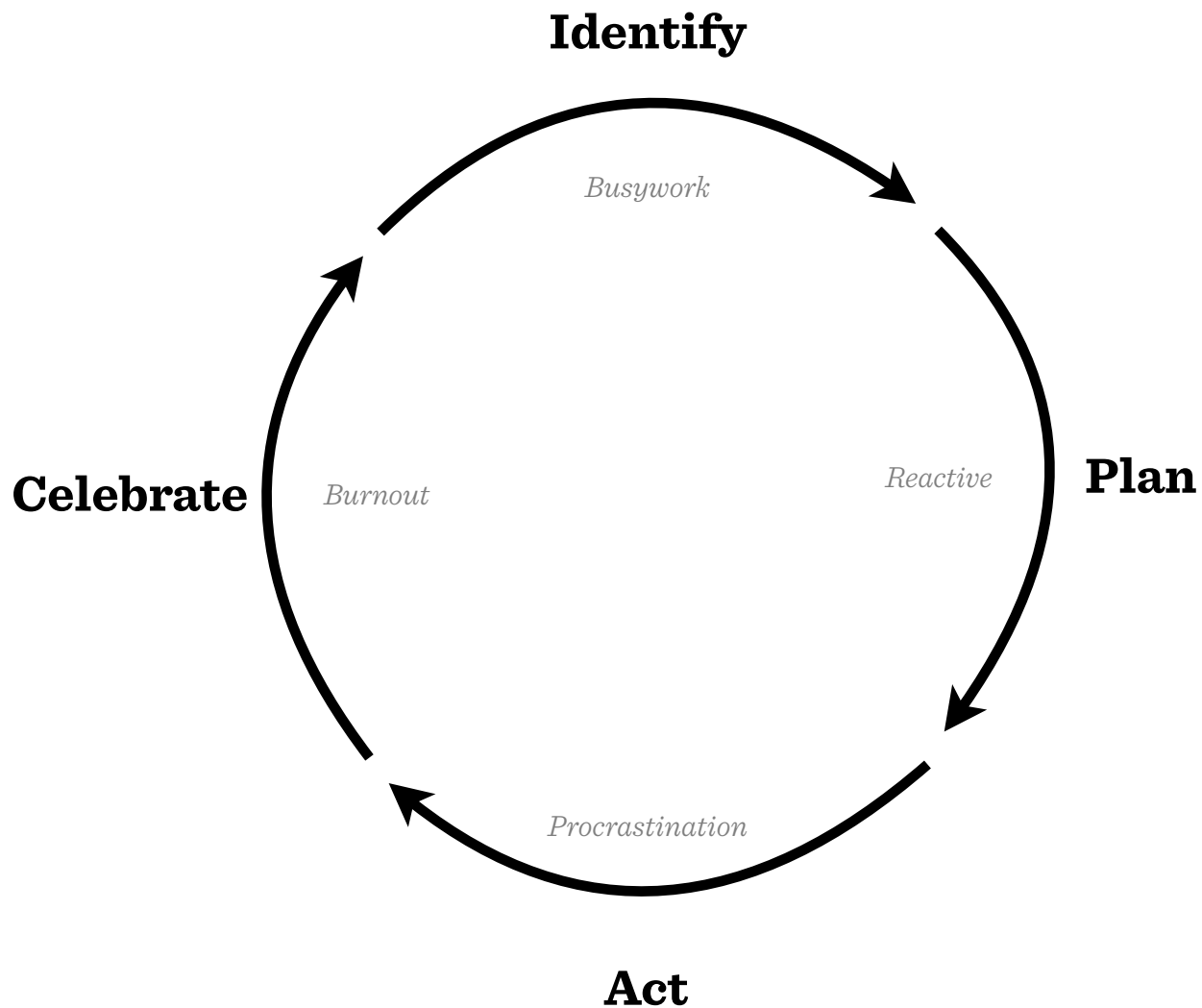
1. Identify what is essential
2. Set aside time for the essential
3. Follow through with your commitments
4. Celebrate your progress

By using the 4-Focus Method and creating a flywheel of focus in your life, you will naturally overcome an urgency mindset.

The flywheel reminds you to identify and focus on that which matters most — not simply that which is urgent in the moment. And, by both planning and celebrating your actions, you continue to prioritize and reinforce the positive actions and habits you wish to be doing.

The 4-Focus Method

A Flywheel for *Living a Focused Life*



The 4-Focus Method

1: Identify

Step one is to get clear about what is truly essential. This goes beyond just knowing what tasks are important. It also means knowing which roles of your life matter most to you. What values you prioritize. Which lead measures have the greatest impact toward your desired outcomes. Etc...

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.

For some people, planning feels like a trap ... they fear scheduling their day because they know that there will be things which mess up the plan. And so they'd rather wing it in the moment and allow their schedule to stay open and spontaneous.

3: Act

This is where you actually 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. This is the part of the flywheel where you are actually spending your time *doing and living life*.

4: Celebrate

When you've done that which you set out to do, that's cause for celebration! You want to reinforce that positive actions and recognize the fact that you've just done something that matters. That way, you can continue and repeat the healthy productivity cycle.

Four Symptoms of a Busted Productivity System

1: Busywork (Spinning Your Wheels)

Doing tasks and activities that are not rewarding, they don't add up nor do they compound into anything substantial over time, and they don't really move things forward. Simply put, they're not the best use of your time. This happens when you lack clarity.

2: Reactive Work (Feeling Frustrated & Anxious)

When you find yourself reacting to the needs of others and unable to follow through with your own priorities. There is always something else coming your way that you have to react to, and you're not able to proactively focus on the things that you know you should be doing. This happens when you have no system for reliably planning and scheduling how to spend your time.

3: Procrastination (Feeling Behind)

When you and/or your team have a hard time following through on your commitments. Tasks get put off to the last minute or skipped altogether. This happens when you lack personal integrity and/or a system of execution.

4: Burnout (Feeling Overwhelmed)

When you feel like your just on the hamster-wheel of hustle. You are feeling burnt out, unmotivated, and can't see how your current activities lead toward your desired outcomes. This happens when you do not regularly recognize your progress and celebrate those small wins.

SECTION 7

Margin

Margin as a Necessary Component of a Focused Life

Margin is breathing room

Having breathing room in your schedule, your finances, physical body, emotional energy, and your mental energy is paramount.

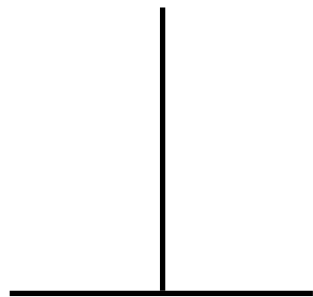
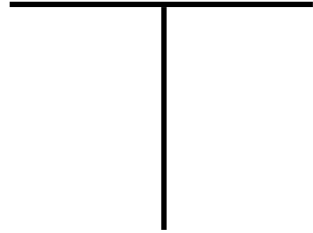
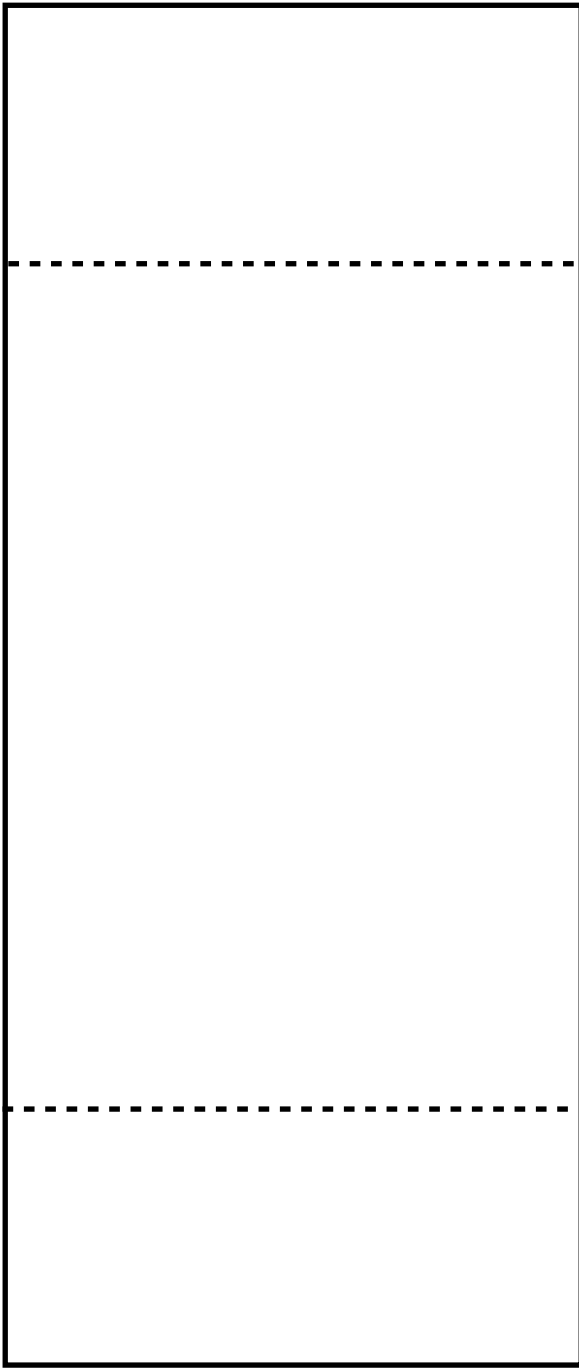
It's the opposite of overload

When you are at capacity, there is no room for anything else. But when there is space left over — when there is margin — that space enables you to breath.

Margin enables you to do your best creative work.

Margin enables intentional living.

Margin helps with stress and anxiety.



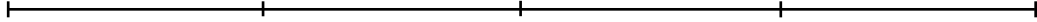
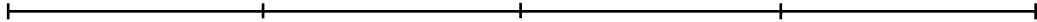
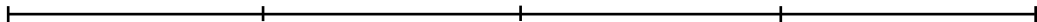
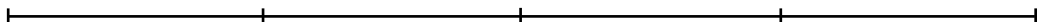
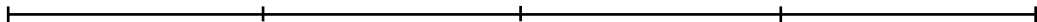
The Five Areas We Need Margin in Our Life

The diagram consists of five identical rectangular boxes arranged in a cross pattern. Each box is defined by a solid black outer border and a dashed black inner border, leaving a white space in the center. The boxes are arranged with one at the top, two in the middle row, and two at the bottom.

In a general sense, health in one area of margin leads to health in others.
And conversely, crisis in one area leads to crisis in others.

Personal Margin Assessment

How much margin do you feel that you have in each area? How much space is there between your load and your limit? **Circle the amount of margin you currently have in each area.**

	Negative margin	Little to no margin	Okay, but not okay	Enough margin	Plenty of margin
Time					
	<i>My schedule is out of control. I am burning the candle at both ends. I have no time for things that matter most.</i>			<i>My days are spent on the things I need and want to do. I have time for resting and recharging. I am flexible.</i>	
Finances					
	<i>I have a significant amount of debt, I struggle to live within my means, and I tend to make irrational financial decisions.</i>			<i>I have a healthy emergency fund, I am debt free, I live within my means, and I am planning for the future.</i>	
Emotions					
	<i>I have very little margin for dealing with anyone's issues. I feel frustrated, exhausted, and burnt out.</i>			<i>I am emotionally present and engaged. I am able to engage people and circumstances with my heart intact.</i>	
Creative					
	<i>I can't seem to focus on anything these days. I am lacking inspiration.</i>			<i>I am excited to work on challenging problems or to dream up new ideas.. I know what inspires me. I am always learning.</i>	
Health					
	<i>I don't sleep well. I don't feel well. There is no consistency to my exercise or diet. I need coffee and stimulants to get me through the day.</i>			<i>I consistently get a full-night sleep. I eat well and incorporate exercise into my week. I have the energy I need to tackle life.</i>	

Margin Must be Normalized In Your Life

You must see margin as the true definition of normal for your total capacity — not some luxurious, unnecessary, extravagant thing.

As Dr. Richard Swenson writes, *"margin is what you have in reserve for contingencies, emergencies, and unanticipated situations. Margin is the gap you maintain between rest and exhaustion, the space between breathing freely and suffocating."*

Margin is countercultural.

Margin requires tradeoffs.

Margin is a moving target.

Margin Misconceptions

- “Margin is only for the financially independent”
- “Embracing margin is to embrace laziness”
- “A life with margin is the easy life”
- “Margin is a destination”

Trade-offs

Margin is about living within our limitations and recognizing we have a finite capacity.

We cannot do it all. Embracing trade-offs is to acknowledge our limitations.

Making hard decisions is about owning the outcome. When we refuse to make a decision, we’re allowing someone else to make the decision for us.

Margin Enables Living at a Sustainable Pace

Would you be able to sustain your current efforts for the next 10 years? More importantly, what would it cost you?

Redlining is a recipe for burnout. What margin do you need in order to thrive?

Liberating Truth: Margin is for _____.

Margin Exists for Relationships

Margin enables living into your values.

As such, Margin is about more than just YOU and your own healthy living.

As you are able to live a life with margin, you will be able to better serve those around you. Margin enables healthier relationships and deeper interactions with our friends and family.

To fight for margin is to fight for your values.

As you get clear about margin as an enabler of your values and goals, that mindset will give you motivation to fight for margin and keep it — even when it feels inconvenient and frustrating to do so.

Margin helps remove the unnecessary stress and pressures of life. It allows you to be more generous, present, and available to those around you. Which, in short, means that margin enables you to live out your values toward others.

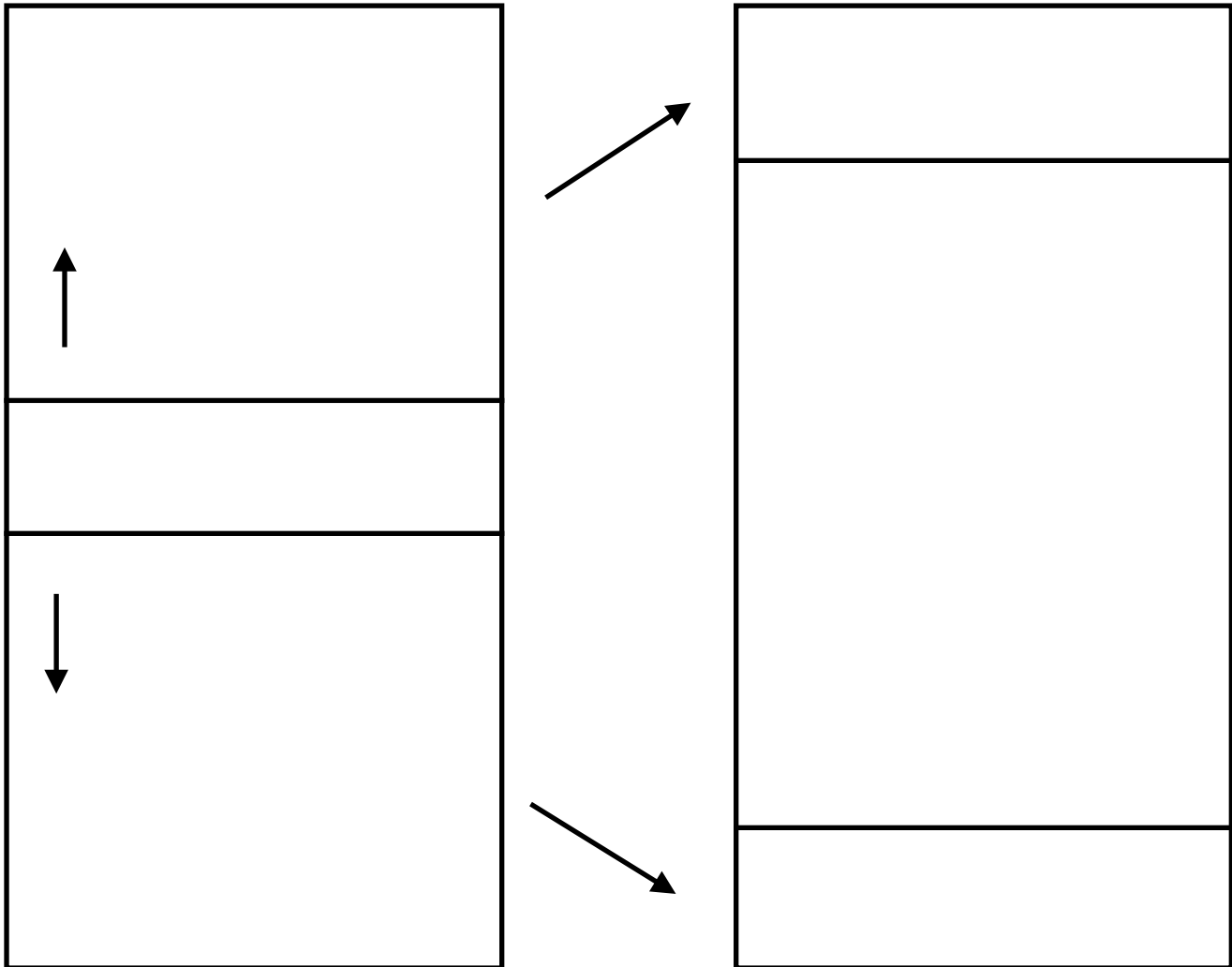
Now is a good time to revisit the two Core Values you chose earlier on page 32. They appear below for reference, and you can edit them if they have changed.

1. _____

2. _____

Do you currently have the margin you need in order to live out your values?

Restoring Margin Through Increase and/or Decrease



Ways to Increasing Your Capacity

- Intentional Practice
- Deep Work
- Routine & Discipline
- Saving
- Strengthening

Ways to Decrease Your Load

- Automate
- Eliminate
- Delegate
- Self-Control
- Boundaries (“no”)
- Focus

Ideas to Restore Your Margin

In the space below, come up with an idea for how you can restore margin through **increasing your capacity** and **decreasing your load** for each area of margin in your life.

TIME

(increase)

(decrease)

FINANCES

(increase)

(decrease)

EMOTIONS

(increase)

(decrease)

CREATIVE

(increase)

(decrease)

HEALTH

(increase)

(decrease)

Notes

CONCLUSION

Yay!

- ✓ You made it!
- ✓ Your next steps
- ✓ Your Focus Declaration (the very last page)

Congratulations!

Here is what you have accomplished during Focus Course in a Day:

- ✓ You have figured out who you are, what relationships are important to you, what values you hold most dear, and what your vision for life is.
- ✓ You have looked at all the areas of your life to identify one thing you want to accomplish for each of those areas, as well as a plan for how to tie your small actions to those larger, desired outcomes.
- ✓ You brainstormed ideas for new lifestyle practices and habits that you could implement into your day-to-day life that will help you stay on track, thrive in the midst of the chaos and messiness of life, and find joy in the journey.
- ✓ You've learned about what Focus really means, and the importance of Meaningful Productivity.
- ✓ You've created an ideal schedule that includes the breathing room you need to thrive and which gives you the space to spend your time focusing on all the areas of your life.
- ✓ You've identified ways to restore margin and breathing room to your life.
- ✓ **In short, you have given yourself a blueprint for how to manage yourself.**

You are now able to get clear on what matters, set goals, achieve those goals, follow through on your commitments, and celebrate your progress.

Whenever you're ready, here are some ways we can help you.

Business Owners: Grow your business by focusing on what works

Work with Shawn in a private, group program for small business owners looking to improve their leadership, bring calm to their business, and grow their revenues.

To get more details about Focus Like a Boss, email Shawn directly: **shawn@blancmedia.org**

Introducing Your All Access Pass: *Focus Club Membership*

The Focus Club Membership is our monthly membership that gives you an all access pass to our video training library. And it is the perfect next step after completing Focus Course.

With your Focus Club Membership, you get:

- All-access pass to every productivity course in our library.
- Monthly office hours, coaching calls, and more.
- Weekly check-ins for planning and celebrating your wins.
- Weekly "Focus Hour" deep-work co-working sessions with other members.
- Private, members-only community forum and dashboard.
- Upgrade to Focus Club Pro and get our business training library for owners and leaders.

Start Today

Scan the code (or [tap here](#)) to get your first month for just \$29.



How to Write Your Focus Declaration

Using all the assessments and worksheets from the Focus Course, you can now simplify it into a Focus Declaration that will help you know what to focus on next and how to take action.

(Tip: You can use this template to craft what to focus on next after you have seen progress in your first area of life. Or use this as a starting point to write a different focus declaration altogether.)

1. Get your top two core values (see page 32)
2. Get the area of life that matters most (see pages 42 - 43)
3. Get the goal you have for that area (see pages 48 - 61)
4. Get the lifestyle habit you thought mattered most (see pages 72 - 73)
5. Get the area of margin that mattered most (see page 108)
6. Get your two ideas for how to increase and decrease margin for the margin area that matters most to you right now (see page 114)

Putting it together, your Focus declaration will look like this:

*Because I value _____
and _____*

I want to focus on my [AREA OF LIFE] and begin moving toward my desired outcome of [LIFE SOMEDAY GOAL].

I know that small, consistent steps can result in big change. I will begin to make time in my schedule for [LIFESTYLE HABIT].

In order to protect my ability to focus, I will work to restore margin in my [AREA], by [IDEA FOR INCREASE] and [IDEA FOR DECREASE].

Components of Your Focus Declaration

Page 32: This is what you said your top two core values were:

_____ and _____

Pages 42 - 43: What area of life did you identify as most important to you right now?

Pages 48 - 61: For the above area of life, what did you write as the one thing you want to do, be, or have someday?

Pages 72 - 73: For the above area of life, what is the one lifestyle habit you listed as standing out as most important? (If this lifestyle habit is different than the most important area of your life, decide which area + habit you will focus on first.)

Page 108: What is the area of margin that you identified as the most important right now?

Page 114: For the above area of margin, how can you restore it through increase and decrease?

_____ and _____

Focus Declaration

In my life right now, I value _____
VALUE 1 - LISTED ON PAGE 32

and _____
VALUE 2 - LISTED ON PAGE 32

And I want to focus on my _____ *and begin moving*
AREA OF LIFE

toward my desired outcome of _____
SOMEDAY GOAL

I know that small, consistent steps can result in big change. Thus, I will begin to
make time for _____
LIFESTYLE HABIT

In order to protect my ability to focus, I will work to restore and maintain margin
in my _____ *, by* _____ *and*
AREA OF MARGIN MARGIN IDEA: "INCREASE"

MARGIN IDEA: "DECREASE"

Signed

Dated

APPENDIX

The 8 Laws of Focus

The 8 Laws of Focus

When defining what it means to “be focused” or to “have focus”, what are we seeking to clarify? What does it mean?

There are two primary expressions of focus in our life. One as a noun and the other as a verb.

1. There is the attainment of focus in the form of a clear vision and priorities.
2. There is the skill of focus in the form of our ability to direct our attention on to that which matters.

The former, big-picture, high-level clarity comes when we know who we are and what we value.

There is also the daily skill of being able to focus on the task at hand and give our attention to that which is happening in the moment for us — from dinner with friends, a conversation with a loved one, an evening reading a book, or a morning spent doing research for our job.

The power of living a focused life is found when we have clarity about what is deeply important to us and we are able to consistently spend our time each day on those things.

1: The Law of Clarity

The very definition of focus is *maximum clarity*. It is impossible to live a focused life without clarity.

This is true for the big-picture of your life, all the way down to the small tasks you do each day. You must be clear about what is most important.

Without clarity, it is impossible to set boundaries and priorities. Without priorities, it's impossible to plan and to walk out your life's mission. Without clarity, you will find yourself unable to focus on the things which deeply matter to you and your schedule will be filled with other people's priorities for your life.

2: The Law of Boundaries

Those without clarity will see boundaries as tedious restrictions that hold them back. Those who lack focus will try to embrace a life without boundaries — they will try to do it all. They will say yes to everything.

A lack of boundaries is a symptom of a lack of focus. And it leads to a lack of margin, which, in turn, leads to burnout. When you are living in burnout, you are unable to give your time and attention to that which matters. You are unable to walk out your values.

Boundaries liberate you to live a focused life! Proper boundaries protect the things which you care most deeply about. Boundaries empower you to stay focused on that which is most important and to avoid the pain of burnout and the frustrations of unfocused responsibilities.

3: The Law of Ownership

It is a personal choice to live a focused life. And you must take personal responsibility for walking out your vision and values. As such, your goals must flow from your values because your needs are your responsibility - it is your job to take care of yourself and to do the things that only you can do.

Without ownership and personal integrity, you may find yourself ignoring the activities and roles that only you can do, or placing wrong expectations onto others in your life.

4: The Law of Margin

Margin is necessary for a focused life. Margin in our life means we have breathing room. Without it, you will be unable to give your time and attention to that which you care deeply about.

Akin to the Law of Tradeoffs, to recognize the Law of Margin is to celebrate your limits. When you have Margin in your life, you will have strength to lean in to your values, accomplish your goals, and, ultimately, to be present for the relationships in your life.

5: The Law of Sowing and Reaping

While you cannot control your outcomes, you can control your input and your effort. There are many factors at play in the Law of Sowing and Reaping. You will only ever reap what you sow... but, at the same time, not all outcomes are guaranteed.

Additionally, over time, as you develop routines and habits, they compound into significant results. A singular action, done once, will not produce any significant results. Yet, over time, consistent action compounds into significant results.

6: The Law of Tradeoffs

As David Allen said, *you can do anything but you cannot do everything*. In order to give your perpetual devotion to any one thing it will require the perpetual neglect of many other things. Focus, therefore, requires tradeoffs.

You can only focus on so many things at a time. And you can only focus for so many hours during the day. Instead of ignoring the limitation on your energy, embrace it and find ways to routinize and automate the non-trivial areas of your life so that even when you are not giving them your full attention and devotion, they are not being fully neglected.

7: The Law of Action

A focused life is a life of action. It means engaging with your values, pursuing your goals, and following through with your commitments. It means proactively directing your attention on that which matters. There is no such thing as a passive life of focus.

If you find that you are coasting through life, then it means you are no longer taking action. If you are coasting then it means: (a) you are going downhill (rather than climbing upward); (b) you are living off the momentum of your past effort; or (c) you are being towed along by someone else.

There is one thing that all successful people have in common: they have a strong bias toward action. They don't let ideas sit around. They don't wait for their goals to just happen. They show up every day.

8: The Law of Attention

Where you direct your attention, that is the direction you will go. Our mind does not easily differentiate between “positive” or “negative” focus; we simply focus on that which we are giving our attention to.

For example, when driving in your car: If you stare at the lamp post and try not to hit it, you just might drift right toward it. Why? Because that was the direction you were focusing on and giving your attention to, and thus that is the direction you will naturally go.

The Law of Attention means what we direct our thoughts and focus on is what we will move toward. Thus, direct your thoughts and focus on the positive directions and desired outcomes you want rather than the negative directions and undesirable outcomes you wish to avoid. This is why the 4-Focus Method starts with Identifying that which matters.

Notes
