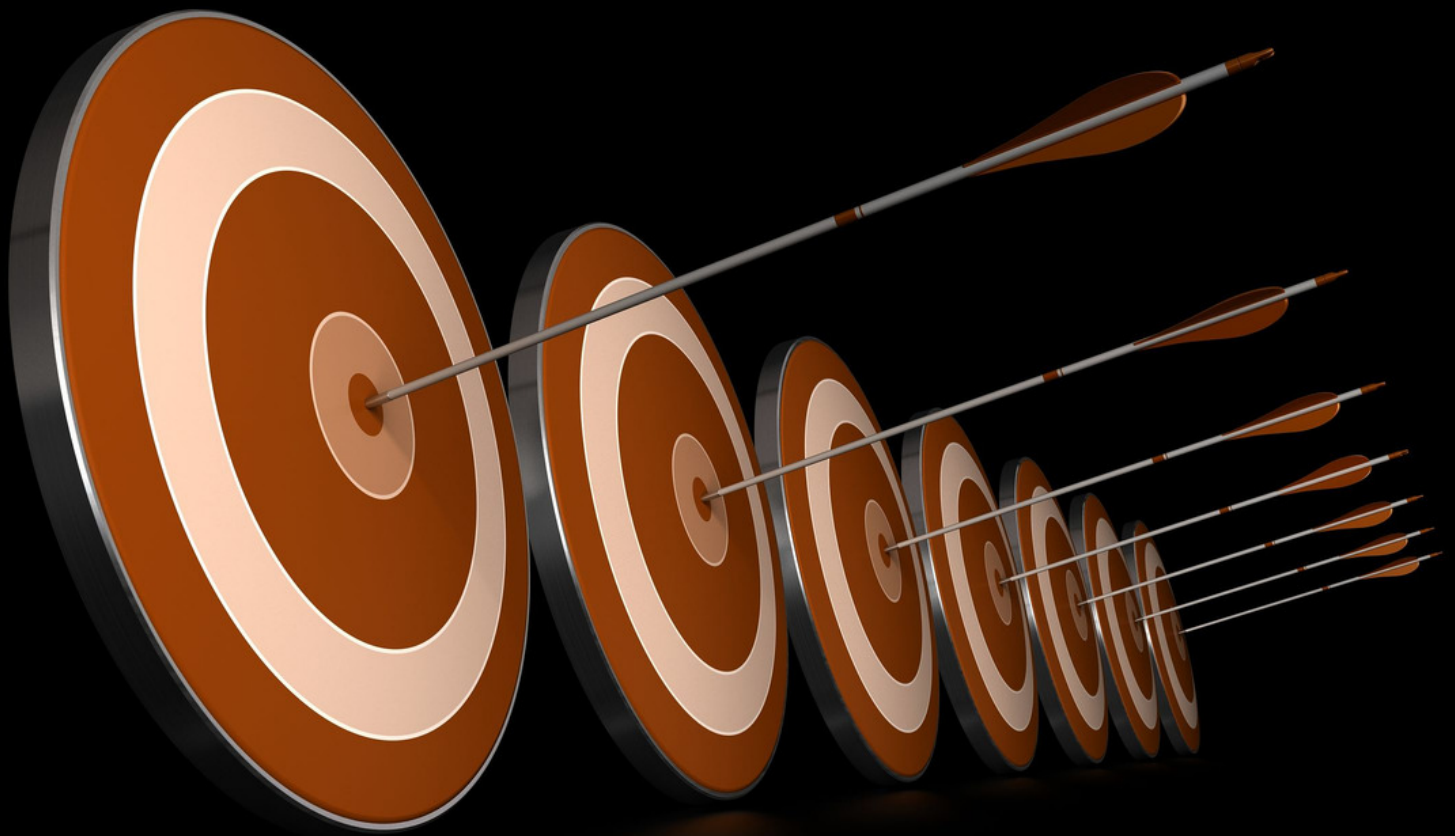


STRATEGIC LIFE COACHING

130 PAGE WORKBOOK

# DYNAMIC

GOAL SETTING & LIFE PLANNING



## DEFINE YOUR GOALS

"WHY WAIT FOR LIFE TO HAPPEN WHEN YOU CAN TAKE COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE PROCESS?"

## CREATE A VISION

DESINE THE GREATEST VISION YOU HAVE FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT AREAS IN YOUR LIFE

## DESIGN YOUR FUTURE

CRAFT A FULL AND DETAILED ACTION PLAN FOR EACH OF YOUR SEVEN PRIMARY LIFE AREAS

*Kain Ramsay*  
STRATEGIC LIFE & CAREER COACHING

# **DESIGN FOR LIFE: Life Planning & Goal Setting Workbook**



**Created by Kain Ramsay**

**"Why wait for life to happen when you can  
take complete control of the process?"**

# GOAL SETTING & LIFE PLANNING

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**"Always plan ahead. It wasn't raining when  
Noah built the ark." - Richard Cushing**

“

**IT'S NOT THE  
PLAN THAT'S  
IMPORTANT,  
IT'S THE  
PLANNING.**

”

**DR. GRAHAM EDWARDS**

# **Section 1: Introducing Goal Setting & Life Planning**



**1**

"If we gave the same amount of reflection to what we want from life, as what we give to the question of where to go on our next vacation, we would be startled at our false standards and the pointless procession of our busy days." - Dorothy Canfield Fisher

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# SECTION 1: INTRODUCING LIFE PLANNING & GOAL SETTING

**Life planning is about creating a vision of your ideal future and defining the steps you need to take that will get you there. It's a process that aligns your short-term decisions with your long-term goals & answers the 3 big questions:**

- Where am I in life today?
- Where do I want to be in the future?
- What must I focus on today to get to where I want to be in the future?

**At the end of this Section, you will understand:**

- What Life Planning is all about.
- Why Life Planning is critical to the success of your future.
- Why many people fail at Life Planning.
- Why you might not have achieved all of the goals that you've set yourself to date.

This Section mainly focuses on understanding what Life Planning is, what it involves, and why it's a crucial exercise that we should all complete (at least once in life).

## 1.1 Life Planners and Goal Setters

Life Planning isn't a new concept. Since the dawn of time, men and women, young and old have used Life Planning to plan and prepare for incredible feats of engineering, exploration, self-discovery and even war.

Imagine if Captain Cook or Christopher Columbus hadn't made plans to go and explore the new world? Where would we be if the late Steve Jobs hadn't planned to develop his unique brand of modern Apple technology?

The great achievements of past civilizations would not exist without the driving force of a focused visionary with a goal to design and build them. We could consider some of the most famous wars in history, which were also won by a strategy that derived from an initial vision or simple goal.

In the world today, there are countless men and women who've made a huge mark on the world through effective life planning and goal setting

In the British Army, there is a famous saying of which many active squadrons and battalions have implemented for decades: Perfect planning prevents a particularly poor performance (The 6 P's).

This life-planning workbook will allow you to document a detailed description of your greatest intentions and hopes for your future. It can be used as an assignment to integrate into your ongoing education, or as a personal development program of your initiative.

Educational pursuits, career aspirations, recreational interests, relationships, family and your end-of-life preferences are just some of the subjects that we'll address throughout this life planning and goal setting project. A detailed life plan is instructive for creating greater clarity regarding your most major life priorities and the practical next steps you need to take.

Albert Einstein, as a 12-year old boy displayed some uncommon behavioural traits, his school teachers showed concern as he wasn't the same as the other children. His school headmaster rejected him, and his parents even suggested that he had 'special needs'.

As a newly graduated design student, Walt Disney was employed by a local newspaper as a cartoonist. In an early stage of his career, he was rejected by his editor for lacking creativity and new ideas - not even his parents believed in him or encouraged him to pursue his passions.

Beethoven, a music student in Western Germany, was born virtually deaf, but had such a profound passion for music and composing.

His music teacher at the time told him that he had no real musical ability and that he should give up the ghost, he'd be unlikely ever to make it in the field of music.

While Einstein, Walt Disney and Beethoven all experienced rejection at the early stages of their lives, these men all went on to design lives for themselves at the heights that few of us could even imagine. Was it luck or family upbringing that influenced the success of these men, or did they just invest time in carefully planning out how they wanted the rest of their lives to go?

We all want to be 'successful' in life, and we have all met at least one other person who we have either envied or admired. Assigning the public good fortune of others to 'luck' often degrades the years of planning and preparation that most successful people do in private.

Although 'luck' can influence the results we experience in some areas of life, it is neither a sustainable enough nor reliable enough foundation to build the rest of our lives on.

So, strategically plan to succeed in your relationships, your career, your finances, your health and in every task or endeavour that you turn your hand towards. As a wise man once claimed:

'He who fails to plan plans to fail'. This is perhaps one of the main messages to take from this section of the workbook. To reinforce this message, write it down in BIG LETTERS in the space for notes that is provided for you at the end of this section.

As you're reading these words, you might already consider yourself to be an experienced life planner (or an accomplished goal setter). In which case, this workbook and the exercises herein will simply reinforce your current understanding with a structured format to further support all of your future goal setting and life-planning endeavours.

Or you may consider yourself to be an experienced 'New Years Resolution' goal setter, with the greatest intentions of meeting your goals, but, unfortunately, they are seldom fulfilled due to quitting too soon. We'll explore this idea in more detail over the pages that follow.

Note: A full MP4 video course (and MP3 audio course) is available to accompany this workbook, which provides complete instruction, to assist you further in getting the most from your life planning and goal setting.

For more details visit:  
[www.kainramsay.com](http://www.kainramsay.com)

**"HE WHO FAILS TO PLAN,  
PLANS TO FAIL"**

- Jim Rohn







**1.2 What exactly is Life Planning?**

Life planning is a very personal process that'll allow you to define and achieve more of the things which motivate you in life.

Throughout history, there has always been a very transparent connection between those who set goals and those who accomplish great things in life. Because people who set goals (and who create life plans) determine a clear direction for their future, and actionable steps to follow that will lead them closer towards reaching their ideal destinations.

**In short, Life Planning will help you to:**

- Establish a clear vision of what you want to achieve with your life.
- Develop a plan for achieving this vision (as it's pointless having ambitions if you don't know how to reach them).
- Stay motivated by putting your plan into action (as the goals you set are personal and meaningful to you, based on what you want).
- Monitor your progress, take appropriate action steps and stay focused on your end goal/s (as it's easy to get distracted by life's everyday challenges).

Goals are just well-defined targets that give you the direction and motivation needed for making effective progress in life. The goals you set within will become your roadmap to personal success (that is, what YOU consider being a success), and a personal guide to your ideal future.

**“Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.”** - Peter Drucker

**The goals you set might focus on:**

- **Developing a new skill:**

Perhaps you have always wanted to learn something new, how to master the art of communications or learn to play a musical instrument?

- **Improving your current skills:**

These goals might focus on increasing your present value to others by becoming the expert in your chosen field.

- **Overcoming bad habits:**

Such as stopping smoking, exercising more often or even eating healthier (to set an example for your kids).

- **Achieving a particular outcome:**

To perhaps achieve healthier relationships with colleagues or friends, to become financially free or achieve a specific career goal.

It's important to note that the targets you set should be unique to you alone. A common mistake that people make when setting goals is that they attempt to achieve what 'everyone else' is trying to achieve, and get what 'everyone else' is also trying to get.

In this workbook lies the opportunity to design the rest of your life with complete disregard to what anyone else thinks, feels or has to say about the matter.

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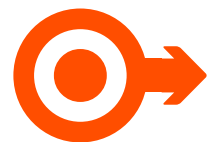
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**Q. But how do I know what I want from my life?**

At this stage, you might not be clear about what you want to accomplish in life. But fear not, as the later sections of this workbook have been designed to help you clearly establish what is most important to you, and also what your greatest priorities are.

**Why life planning & goal setting is good!**

A life plan is (kind of) like a map that people use, which shows them where they are, and where they're going (with the all important instructions about how to get there).

Individuals who design their lives by intent are more likely to achieve the things they want than those who do nothing, while naively just hoping for the best.

The goals that you set later in the workbook will point towards your final destination. And the action plans you'll subsequently produce, will act as a compass to help you to 'get there' as quickly and efficiently as possible.

**Goal setting and life planning are also good, because:**

- The process will allow you to define meaningful personal targets that are important to you.
- It helps you focus your time and energy on achieving your goals (Instead of your efforts being wasted on meaningless/mundane tasks. Your action plan will allow you to fulfil your top priorities).
- The process will help you find a genuine passion for living (as the goals you set will be meaningful to you, therefore will naturally motivate you).

**"As for the future, your task is not to foresee it, but to enable it."**

- Antoine de Saint Exupery

Life planning will only serve you well if you commit to the process and follow it fully (without skipping through the challenging sections).

There are always pitfalls, and you will most likely encounter setbacks while on this journey. But remember, Thomas Edison didn't invent the light bulb on his first attempt either; it took him over 1000 attempts to come up with his perfected model!

By now you will hopefully be 100% convinced that life planning and goal setting will help you. This workbook has been created to arm you with all the skills and processes you need for defining your goals and designing your life.

Upon doing this, you'll be a whole lot clearer about how to achieve these goals, and in turn, set yourself up for a far greater degree of success and accomplishment throughout all the most important areas of your life.

**EXERCISE 1.2**

Take 5 – 10 minutes to consider your life as a whole, where you currently are, where you want to be, what you want and what you don't want.

**Q)** Why do you need to set goals and create a life plan for yourself? (Complete the following sentence):

I need to create a plan for my life because:

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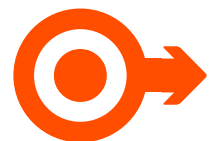
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### 1.3 Where Life Planning goes wrong

Life Planning sounds simple although it can go wrong, and many people fail miserably at it. There are two main reasons why people fail at life planning and in goal setting:

- They won't follow the process through to completion
- They commit one of the seven deadly sins of life planning

It's important to be aware of where life planning can go wrong so that you don't fall into a similar trap.

**Note:** Make sure that you read and understand the following section on where life planning can go wrong. As you read through each point, be honest with yourself as to whether you're at risk from falling into that particular trap.

#### Why People Don't Follow Life Planning To Completion

Most people don't see life planning as necessary (mostly, due to not knowing where to start), so you've officially got a head start over most other people by just reading this!

Of the many people that do commit to planning their lives, those who fail, usually do so because:

- a) They don't have a strong reason for planning their life.

Perhaps they haven't figured out what they want or maybe just aren't convinced that life planning can be useful.

Life planning allows those who want more from life, to establish an ideal final destination with the actionable steps for how to get there. While we can never determine our outcomes in life, we are all able to influence them!

The decisions we've made in the past express themselves in the quality of life we have today. In turn, the decisions we make today will determine the quality of life we experience in 20 years from now.

So, what better reason is there to begin designing your ideal life and influencing more of the results you'll experience in your future?

- b) They don't have a process, or know where to start!

An accurate map will allow you to reach any destination that you want to achieve in life. The life planning and goal setting process merely provide you with a detailed map that directs you towards your ideal future. Remember: 'He who fails to plan, plans to fail!'

- c) They refuse to invest the time.

Life planning is mainly focused on helping you to live and work smarter, not towards working harder or making yourself busier!

Initially, creating this life plan will demand some time, effort and energy, but the final result will be worth your effort. Committing one day of your life to planning out the direction you'll take for the rest of it could only ever be a profitable investment!

It's easy to procrastinate and put off life's most important tasks, but, unfortunately, some people delay their lives away and fail to achieve anything of any real significance. Don't be one of those people.

If you can visualise what your life will be like after achieving your desired life goals, this vision becomes the driving force behind the actions you take which projects you towards achieving these things.

**"Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe."**

— Abraham Lincoln

d) They find the life planning process too demanding.

Although it might require some time for you to do some authentic and honest soul searching, this will allow you to determine how you want the rest of your life to work out. Complete honesty shouldn't be difficult; it's just honesty!

Q. How do you eat an elephant?

A. One bite at a time!

This principle is the same when planning out your ideal life. This workbook (and accompanying videos) will guide you through the process one step at a time; all that you have to be is entirely honest.

Life planning and goal setting are skills which take time and effort to master. By following this workbook, you won't be able to 'bite off more than you can chew', as we focus on establishing your primary life goals first, then build things up from there.

Before long, you'll be an expert planner of your own life!

e) They get scared at the thought of failing in their goals.

Fear is just: 'False Expectations Appearing Real'. We could interpret this as meaning what you're frightened of, probably isn't real and will be highly unlikely to happen in any case.

Fear of failure is real, but the outcome that many people fear if they do fail is often unrealistic. It is important to acknowledge this, as fear of failure can result in a lack of action, and a lack of action will often result in failing to achieve anything of any value.

Learn to grow in understanding from failure (just like Thomas Edison), rather than fear it. **There is no such thing as failure; there are only great lessons to be learned.**

f) They don't take Life Planning seriously.

Without taking Life Planning seriously, it'll be unlikely to serve you in an efficient manner. If you've ever tried honouring a New Year's Resolution that you've made, did you take this goal seriously? And if so, did you succeed?

If you didn't succeed, what were the reasons for this?

For a moment, consider everything that has been covered so far, and establish for yourself if you're committed to the Life Planning process. If you're not yet convinced, find someone you know who is experiencing negative results in their life that you don't want to experience (such as bankruptcy, divorce, depression or even imprisonment).

Ask them if they have ever designed a life plan?

Then, based on whatever answer they give you, make a well informed decision as to whether life planning is now appropriate for you.

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**"A goal without a plan is just a wish."**

- Antoine de Saint Exupery





## 1.4 The 'Seven Deadly Sins' of Goal Setting

Congratulations thus far, you've committed to seeing the life-planning journey through, but there are some pitfalls to be aware of as you begin moving forward. These are the seven deadly sins of life planning:

### Sin 1. Not Writing Goals Down

The old concept, 'Out of sight, out of mind' explains why goals and supporting action plans should be documented and stored somewhere visible. The most efficient way to reinforce a new key concept you learn and a long-term commitment to your goals is to write them down and position them somewhere where you will be reminded of them daily.

### Sin 2. Having Unclear Motivations

It's crucial that our goals are personal and meaningful; otherwise, we'd have no reason to work towards them.

In other words, the reasons 'why' we want to reach our goals are always going to be more important than 'what' we ever want to achieve.

Consider the big goal of 'getting rich'. This goal will be completely meaningless to you unless there's a strong enough reason for wanting to get rich in the first place, reinforced by your personal wants and needs.

If your reason for making more money is just to buy more things or to fuel your spending habits, you might find it difficult to be authentically motivated by this.

**However**, if your primary reason is to pay off a family members mortgage, give more to charity, or start a new social project, you'll most likely feel a lot more passionate about seeing this process through to completion.

Whatever your underlying reasons are for doing what you want to do, they will all be important reasons, as they're directly personal to you.

In a later section, we'll look at what your core values and deepest motivations are so that you can set meaningful goals that you're 100% passionate about fulfilling.

### Sin 3. Setting Unrealistic Goals

Writing a goal down doesn't mean that it will happen by itself, and even the greatest intentions are meaningless without actions to follow them through. It's only through taking practical measures that you will achieve your goals, and the only way you'll be able to action these goals is if you are genuinely passionate about them, to begin with.

Many people set unrealistic deadlines for achieving their goals. If you were to consider how long it takes to develop a new skill (like learning a new language), these things don't happen overnight!

Think about how long it can sometimes take to develop a new habit, or even break an old one (such as smoking or binge eating). Although this is discussed more in later sections, achieving goals that are meaningful, will often require more time than what we want to invest in them.

We are all limited by our predispositions and natural abilities. The secret is to focus on our natural abilities and motivations as a driving force for taking us forward. This principle is fundamental to successful life planning and will be discussed more in later sections.

**"Someone's sitting in the shade today  
because someone planted  
a tree a long time ago."**

— Warren Buffett



**Sin 4. Not Having An Effective Plan**

Perfect planning prevents a partially poor performance! Having a well-considered goal in writing is only the introduction section of your greater life story. It is a well-considered action plan that directs you towards arriving at the final scene or chapter.

The goals that you set throughout this life planning journey will become your final destination, and the action plans which you'll create will become the map that will allow you to get there. Every successful mission has had a well thought out plan attached to it.

Be patient and enjoy the process, as this is your life! Invest time into planning this journey so you can take the best route and get there in the best possible time. In a later section of this book, we'll look at how to prepare actionable plans for each of the goals that you develop.

**Sin 5. Not Taking Appropriate Action**

Having a perfect plan for your life will be useless if it doesn't get actioned. Although your plan will guide you and keep you right on what to do, you're still the one that has to action these things.

The action plan (and your life goals) will most likely seem dynamic. These aims and plans will also be prone to change as you move forward in life and come across roadblocks, challenges and detours.

Sometimes, your life will even change its course, and this is common for everyone, so don't be concerned if you need to make changes as you go or even start all over again.

Your life is a process, and your life plan is a work in progress.

**Sin 6. Losing Focus**

Successfully achieving your goals will require focus, commitment and persistence. Sometimes you might lose this focus, but it's important not to quit, as this is the only life that you will ever have.

To help keep you focused, try enlisting a trusted friend or personal mentor to support you throughout the process. You can share your successes and failures with them, and learn from the experiences you encounter along the way.

**Sin 7. No Follow-through**

Life planning and goal setting is a lifetime process. It is pointless having a personalised set of goals (even with the most actionable plans) if it just sits in your drawer gathering dust and doing nothing.

Your life plan is your map to a meaningful future, it's your guide for living and should frequently be referred to as this will ensure that you keep heading in the right direction.

Our priorities and goals change as we progress our way through life. When this happens, it's important that we stop, reflect and consider going through the whole life planning process again.

Doing this ensures that your goals still have relevant meaning attached to them as what they did when you first set them. And, as long as the meaning attached to your goals remain the same, they will continue to act as the driving force that powers your actions and behaviours.

**"Unless commitment is made, there're only promises and hopes; but no plans."**

— Peter F. Drucker







**1.5 Summary of The Life Planning & Goal Setting Process**

There are five main stages of the life planning and goal setting process (which we'll come onto after the next section). These five stages are:

- **Stage 1: Getting a Vision For Life**
- **Stage 2: Knowing What You Want**
- **Stage 3: Defining Your Future Goals**
- **Stage 4: Preparing An Action Plan**
- **Stage 5: Review, Adapt & Adjust**

The first two stages are the foundation of your life planning process. They set the direction for the rest of the stages, so it's important to invest time in completing them fully.

These first two stages are also what you'll likely find to be the most challenging stages and, therefore, demand some soul-searching and deep reflection to find honest answers.

The answers you find will all be 100% unique to you, which is why only you are the person that can plan out your life.

Life planning is, of course, an ongoing and dynamic process. Your priorities and, therefore, your goals will change from time to time (for example if you start a family). So, if (or when) this happens, it's important to stop, sit down and go through this life planning process again.

As you grow in maturity and wisdom, your motivations and priorities in life will change (often dramatically), so an ongoing review is crucial to ensure that the goals you set in a later section are still relevant to you. **(What you want when you're in your 20's will most likely be extremely different from what you want once you're in your 50's!)**

**Being armed with this workbook is a strategic tool for life – regardless of what stage you're at in life today.**

This 5-stage process forms the basis for the rest of this workbook. Through which, you'll be guided through each of these stages and supported with all the tools, templates, and examples needed for applying to all of the goals that you eventually set.

By the end of this workbook, you'll have a set of life goals that are meaningful to you, with an action plan that sets out how to achieve them.

Now, once you fully understand this section and are committed to the life planning process, continue into Section 2.

**Notes:**

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**"It is far better to foresee even without certainty than not to foresee at all."** — Henri Poincare





“

**A MAN WHO  
DOESN'T PLAN  
LONG AHEAD WILL  
ALWAYS FIND  
TROUBLE AT HIS  
DOOR.**

”

**CONFUCIUS**

# **SECTION 2: Getting Your Own House In Order**



**2**

**"Let us endeavor so to live that when we come to die even the undertaker will be sorry" - Mark Twain**

## SECTION 2: GETTING YOUR OWN HOUSE IN ORDER

Before we begin section 2, take a minute to review the section outcomes from Section 1 and revisit your responses to the activities to ensure that you fully understand what life planning is all about.

At the end of this Section, you will be able to:

- Understand how your personality will influence your life planning and goal setting endeavours.
- Describe YOUR natural intelligence 'aptitude' and how to use this in your life planning.
- Recognise what motivates you and how to use this to your advantage when life planning or goal setting.

Section 2 mainly focuses on helping you to develop a deeper understanding of yourself and 'getting your house in order'.

Life planning can be a hugely exciting journey. So, to begin with, it's crucial to get clear on exactly who you are, what makes you unique and what it is that makes you tick.

Understanding yourself can be a complex subject, so invest as much time as you need to understand this section fully. Life planning is a unique and personal journey, so to ensure you go on the 'right' journey for you, it's important that you fully understand yourself.

Although this might come across as unusual, understanding ourselves is vital as the most important relationship we can ever have in life is the one that we have with ourselves. When we don't have a good relationship with ourselves, we stand at risk of experiencing all sorts of mental and emotional difficulties as we progress throughout the rest of our lives.

There is no psychologist, therapist, mental health specialist, or spiritual teacher that could ever be the expert of your life. Although they can advise you on what to do with your life, no one else can ever tell you who you are. Only you (and you alone) are the expert of yourself.

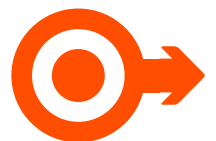
The exercises throughout this section have been designed to help you grasp a better understanding of your natural personality traits and natural characteristics. You will grow to understand what influences your behaviour, your interests and how your values determine every single decision that you make.

How well you succeed at just being yourself will, therefore, determine the success of designing and ultimately implementing your life plan.

Your mental attitude is your real 'boss' in life. While your time and labour may be subject to the demands of your employer or other people, your mind is the only thing that cannot be controlled by anyone else but you.

Your attitude is your only master in life and is entirely within your control. When you take control of your attitude towards the rest of your life, you literally take control of your life.

Your attitude towards planning and goal setting will ultimately determine the outcomes you achieve for the rest of your life.



## 2.1 Personality Profiling

Your personality is a highly complex thing that is unique to you, and only you will ever understand what makes you tick. Personality profiling will help you to understand how your natural behaviour and personal tendencies influence everything to do with your life.

Think of someone you know that you consider successful:

- How do they act or behave?
- What are their personal traits?
- What makes them different from you?
- Has this difference helped them to succeed?
- How does your personality compare with theirs?

### Your Successful Future Depends On Your Personality

Does your success in life depend on your personality type or makeup? What if it was possible for you to get more out of every task you complete, every relationship you have, and every effort that you put into securing a successful future for yourself and those you love? Surely this is the path that leads to ultimate success and it begins with understanding yourself.

The characteristics, strengths, weaknesses, and tendencies that you have are all finer points of your overall personality and how you get the most out of your days. If you are even only slightly unsure about how your personality affects your future, then you will certainly benefit from growing in this area and learning from other people.

Some personality traits are more in tune with success and achievement than others, but this does not mean that we are unable to change – it actually means quite the opposite. We only truly come alive when we are growing in authenticity and true alignment with our authentic selves.

It's useful to understand which of our personal characteristics we can use to our advantage in helping us achieve more in life. In contrast to this, it's also helpful to know what characteristics can hold us back!

It's through recognising and accepting our imperfections that we can identify areas of our personality and character to improve upon. And it's by developing our weak areas that we grow as human beings.

We don't need to be psychologists to recognise that our personality is a very complex part of us. However, there are some popular psychological theories that can be used to help us understand ourselves better and make greater progress in our life planning. Throughout this section, we'll explore some of these theories which will give us further insight into our:

**Behaviour Preferences:** We all respond differently to various life experiences, and this is a natural behaviour that is unique to each of us and affects how we view success and failure. If we invest time into understanding our natural behaviour tendency, we will then discover how this can influence our life planning.

**Intelligence Preferences:** We are all naturally gifted at, and, are passionate about different things. Understanding what it is that naturally interests you in alignment with what your 'natural' intelligence or aptitude is will influence the goals you set in life.

**Personal Motivations:** Different things motivate us all; some of our unique motivations are inherent to our personality while others are driven by our life situations and circumstances. Discover what motivates you, find out what you're passionate about, and you've just identified your life purpose!



The exercises that follow in this section will allow you to define your behaviour profile, intelligence preferences and personal values and how to use this knowledge to your advantage when setting goals.

**2.2 Your Personality Profile**

Personality profiling began in the late 1920's as a result of psychologist Dr William Marston's theory that there are four basic personality types:

- D for Dominant Personality
- I for Influencer Personality
- S for Steady Personality
- C for Compliant Personality

We all fit into at least one basic personality type, which defines and explains the way we interact with others and the way we go about our daily lives.

We'll often relate better to people who have a similar behaviour profile to our own, and find other behaviour patterns irritating and maybe even a little intimidating. However, more importantly, these behaviours have a significant impact on how we progress through life (as previously mentioned) and also how we approach the rest of this Life Plan.

DISC is one of the world's leading personal assessment tools that is used by over 1 million people every year to improve their productivity, teamwork and communications with others.

The DISC model provides a common language that allows people to understand themselves better and to adapt their behaviours towards others. These behaviours can be within a family, a work environment, a leadership position, or even in social relationships.

Take time to refer to the DISC chart on the next page and reflect upon which personality types relate most to you. There are also several DISC profiling exercises available online which you can use to help you better understand yourself and the way in which you behave. You'll be asked to complete a series of questions that produce a detailed report on your personality and behavioural preferences.

**Notes:**

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**"The very least you can do in your life is to figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance, but live right in it, under its roof"**

- Shannon L. Alder



## DOMINANCE

**Achieves success through taking decisive actions towards their goal.**

**Strengths:** Problem solver, can make tough decisions, a natural leader, confronts issues, views change as a challenge, focused on the mission.

**Limitations** (Others may see): impatient, intimidating, unapproachable, insensitive, brusque and intolerant.

**Examples:** Margaret Thatcher, Vince Lombardi, Norman Schwarzkopf, George Patton.

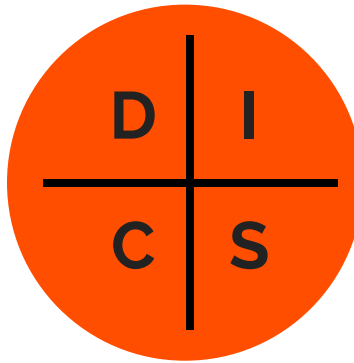
## INFLUENCE

**Achieves success by persuading other people to work with them towards their goal.**

**Strengths:** Inspiring to be around, always available for others, spreads positive attitude, praises others.

**Limitations** (Others may see): tasks fall through the cracks, projects don't get finished, lacks organisation.

**Examples:** Bill Clinton, Willard Scott, Muhammad Ali, Tracy Ullman, Magic Johnson, Katie Couric.



## COMPLIANCE

**Works within procedures and rules to ensure success.**

**Strengths:** Thorough, conscientious, follows standards accurately, diplomatic, fair, accurate (because following the rules does that).

**Limitations** (Others may see): "fussy about minor issues", overly concerned with perfection, aloof, delays decisions, wants more data.

**Examples:** Jackie Kennedy Onassis, Colin Powell, Mr Spock, Joe Friday, Bill Gates.

## STEADINESS

**Works well with others as part of a team to achieve success.**

**Strengths:** Empathetic to others' needs, good team player, methodical, easy to get along with, good listener, praises, appreciative of others.

**Limitations** (Others may see): resistant to change, indecisive, indirect, sometimes worn down by other people's problems.

**Examples:** Pope John Paul, Mother Teresa, Mr Rogers, John Denver, Charlie Gibson.



**EXERCISE 2.2**

There are many different personality tests available online. However, one of the most accurate and user-friendly assessments is the Visual DNA Personality Quiz which is an online picture based Personality Test that will help you:

- Get a better understanding of how you operate as a person.
- Discover and learn about your unique personality type.
- Understand more about your habits and why you do the things that you do.
- Establish greater clarity in your priorities and preferences.

To get free access to the quiz, simply enter the following link into your web browser:

<https://personality.visualdna.com/?c=uk#quiz>

This Personality Quiz has been created by an experienced team of creative developers and expert psychologists and is built using the latest research into personality and behaviour. Follow the instructions and answer the questions honestly (it's quick and easy to use without any future obligations).

Upon completion of the quiz, you will receive a full report about your unique personality type. You might want to print this report off and keep it with any additional notes that you make throughout this workbook. Take some time to write down your most significant findings in the note section below:

**Notes:**

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**“A clear vision, backed by definite plans, gives you a tremendous feeling of confidence and personal power.”**  
 — Brian Tracy



### 2.3 Your Personal Aptitude and Intelligence

Our degree of mental aptitude and perceived intelligence is what our early educational experience drilled into us (whether we believe we are smart or stupid!). The education system's scholars, intellects and teachers will often place certain types of intelligence on a pedestal while ignoring other types (which is what the greatest percentage of us actually fit into).

Although you may never have been passionate about maths, the sciences or studying a language, there's a pretty good chance that you have always been naturally gifted in other areas, except back in your school days, your passion was not defined as intelligence.

In 1983, Dr Howard Gardner first published his book: Frames of Mind. He revolutionised the worlds of education and psychology by suggesting that rather than only having a single type of intelligence; we have numerous types of intelligence (most of which are completely neglected by standard testing and today's most common educational methods).

What many scientists thought were just soft-skills, such as interpersonal skills, communication skills and musical ability, Howard Gardener realised were distinct types of intelligence.

So, the question isn't 'Are You Intelligent?' ... But it is 'How Are You Intelligent?'

#### Q) What do you think?

Your aptitude or intelligence preference is different from your behaviour preference as it describes what you are really interested in, rather than how you may behave, and helps you define what you really want out of your personal life and career. We are most fulfilled and most successful in life when we learn, develop, and work in ways that make the best use of our natural makeup.

As you read through the 9 Intelligences detailed below, take some time to reflect on your own preferences, skills, abilities and interests and see which intelligence (or more) applies best to you:

#### 1. Naturalistic Intelligence:

Have you ever wondered why some people can connect with animals just like that? Have you ever encountered someone with a "green thumb"? Well, these individuals are great examples of "nature smart" people. Naturalistic intelligence refers to a person's sensitivity to the natural world - the ability to distinguish between nature's different features such as plants, animals, cloud formations etc.

In years gone by, naturalist intelligence was undoubtedly of great importance to a person's survival. Hunting and farming were clearly among the activities that relied fully on this type of intelligence.

#### 2. Musical Intelligence

While some people gravitate more towards nature, others are drawn to the musical arts. These "musical smart" individuals are usually more sensitive to sounds that most people aren't even aware of. Musical Intelligence involves the ability to recognise tone, pitch, rhythm, and timbre.

With this type of intelligence, individuals can create, reproduce, and contemplate music and this is clearly exhibited by attuned listeners, vocalists, musicians, composers, and conductors.



### 3. Logical-Mathematical Intelligence:

Who will ever forget that classmate in high school who knew the answer to every single mathematical equation the teacher asked? Who will also fail to remember that peer who could reason their way to winning every argument? These individuals are the perfect embodiment of logical-mathematical intelligence.

This type of intelligence equips a person with the ability to carry out mathematical operations as well as mull over hypotheses and propositions. Those who are "number or reasoning smart" quickly recognise relationships, patterns and generate and use abstract thoughts. When logical intelligence is dominant in a person, you'll see them especially attracted to logic puzzles, strategy games, and arithmetic problems.

### 4. Existential Intelligence:

Although some people go about their daily lives without giving much thought to their existence, individuals with existential intelligence tend to contemplate "deep" thoughts - these might include the why's and how's of life and death.

While most people shake these kinds of thoughts away, individuals who are particularly interested in their own existence are drawn to exploring questions such as why are we born, how do we get here, and why do we die. Such people have the capacity and sensitivity to tackle thoughts about what lies beyond life and death.

### 5. Interpersonal Intelligence:

You might have recognised that some people possess the unique ability to interact superbly with others. These "people smart" individuals interact with others in such a way that they are able to understand and communicate well.

Interpersonal intelligence makes it possible for people to communicate effectively through verbal and nonverbal means, to sense the moods of people, and to consider various points of view. You'll usually find this type of intelligence manifested by politicians, social workers, actors, and teachers.

### 6. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence:

While some people have the tendency to be awkward in all things physical (such as dancing with two left feet or being useless at sports), "body smart" individuals possess the ability to stay coordinated and graceful when using a variety of physical skills and manipulating objects.

Those with bodily-kinesthetic intelligence have an almost perfect sense of timing, and their mind-body coordination is nearly faultless. Individuals who possess this type of intelligence usually grow up to become dancers, craftspeople, athletes, surgeons and other careers involving exceptional mind-body union.

### 7. Linguistic Intelligence:

Linguistic intelligence refers to the human ability to think in words and use these to make oneself understood. It is this type of intelligence that enables people to appoint complex meanings and express these through the use of language.

Though this competence is widely used, it is recognised in the way that competent public speakers, journalists, novelists and poets make use of their meta-linguistic skills. In the early stages of life, linguistic intelligence is exhibited in a person's enjoyment of crossword puzzles, storytelling, reading, and writing.



**8. Intra-personal Intelligence:**

Individuals who have the exceptional ability to understand themselves, their thoughts, and their emotions and who can then use this knowledge to plan their lives possess intra-personal intelligence.

As young adults, "self-smart" individuals exhibit a profound awareness of their own emotions, are self-motivated, and are often shy. Typical examples of those with intra-personal intelligence include philosophers, writers, spiritual leaders, and psychologists.

**9. Spatial intelligence**

Spatial Intelligence is recognised in those who consider things in three dimensions. This kind of intelligence involves the following key capacities: a powerful imagination, mental imagery, image manipulation, spatial reasoning and artistic and graphic skills.

Individuals with spatial intelligence are usually highly creative, which is often demonstrated by those who take on roles such as architects, painters, sculptors and pilots.

These sum up the nine domains of intelligence according to Dr Howard Gardner. Remember that this is just a model for intelligence and many individuals score high in more than one category.

As you consider the intelligence(s) that apply best to you, make a few notes in the space provided below:

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**"If you don't know exactly where you're going, how will you know when you get there?"**

— Steve Maraboli,





- I like forming rational explanations of events.
- I play sports or have hobbies that involve only me.
- I often see things from a different perspective.
- Biology and natural sciences like geography interest me.
- I am sensitive to colour and aesthetics.
- At school, I found English easier than Maths and Science.
- I fidget and can't sit still for long.
- I have good hand/eye co-ordination.
- I always read the instructions first.
- I am good at resolving disputes.
- I find that music affects my mood.
- Big questions like 'what is the meaning of life' fascinate me.
- I'm good at using my hands and enjoy being creative.
- I listen to grammar/word choice when talking to someone.
- I'm a diligent recycler/strive to reduce energy where I can.
- I enjoy and appreciate art.
- I often reflect on events and question what they mean.
- I like to learn more about myself and understand my feelings.
- I enjoy creative writing.
- I invest regular time into self-reflection.
- I have a broad collection of music that I value.
- I can empathise when other people are upset.
- I like watching science/nature documentaries.
- I enjoy jigsaws and other visual puzzles.
- I have a library of books that I wouldn't want to part with.
- I enjoy a good mental or physical challenge.
- I like to spend spare time outdoors doing something.
- I enjoy spending time computing.
- I am a natural leader and can easily influence others.
- I play one or more musical instruments.
- I have lots of pictures and photographs in my house.
- Sciences like astronomy/creation/evolution interest me.
- I am comfortable spending time alone.
- I can easily do maths in my head.
- I am realistic about my abilities and limitations.
- I can read and interpret maps with ease.

Sub Totals

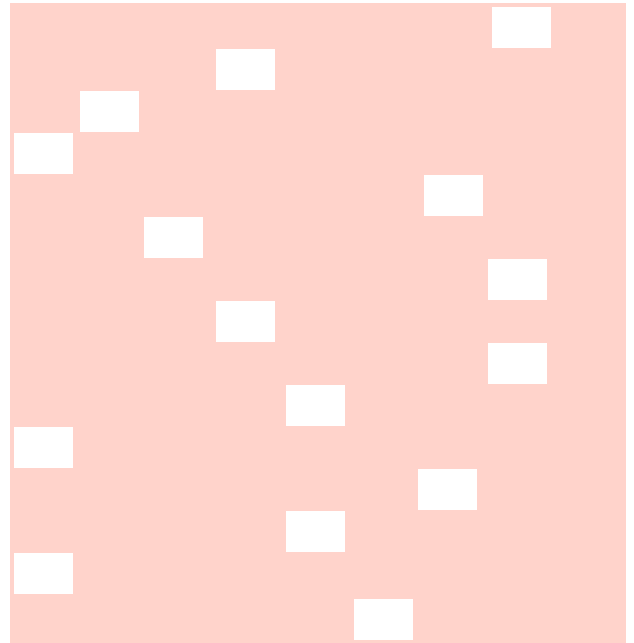
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I am a very social person.  
 I easily remember quotes and can use them in conversations.  
 I can easily read people's feelings and body language.  
 When listening to music, I can tell if a note is off-key.  
 My friends think I am a bit of a green thumb.  
 As a child, I used to hold 'concerts' for my family.  
 My friends think I over-analyze things too much.  
 I love physical activity and sport.  
 I am good at word puzzles: scrabble, crosswords, etc  
 It is easy for me to make up stories.  
 I am self-aware and can manage my own emotions.  
 I can manage a budget easily.  
 I appreciate a beautiful landscape or a well-designed garden.  
 I find value in close relationships.  
 I can visualise things with ease when I close my eyes.  
 I understand how science is part of everyday life.  
 I work better alone than as part of a team.  
 I enjoy a wide range of music and appreciate different styles.  
 I like watching documentaries on philosophical debates.  
 Sometimes I am a bit of a loner.  
 I'm good at puzzles that require logic such as Chess/Sudoku.  
 At school, I was good at Physics and Maths.  
 I think a lot about life and my future.  
 I often use logic and maths to solve routine problems.  
 I am fascinated by wildlife, small animals and insects.  
 I enjoy finding out new ways to understand myself better.  
 I can't understand people who can't think rationally/logically.  
 I prefer team sports to individual ones.  
 At school, I enjoyed geometry and art subjects.  
 I regularly write in a journal or personal diary.  
 I like to know how things work.  
 I crave attention and enjoy being the centre of attention.  
 I don't go anywhere without my iPod.  
 I often have music in my head.

Sub Totals

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I find it easy to identify different plants and animals.  
 I tend to doodle or draw.  
 I systematically work through problems.  
 I can easily pick up foreign languages.  
 I prefer working as part of a team than on my own.  
 At school, my favourite subject was Music or the Arts.  
 I am fascinated by understanding how things work.  
 I understand graphs and charts.  
 I would rather be outdoors, and ideally out of the city.  
 I never read instructions.  
 I have always enjoyed writing.  
 I enjoy spending time with other people.  
 I am very coordinated and am generally good at sports.  
 I sometimes talk to myself.  
 I would rather go somewhere quiet than go to a noisy pub.



**Sub Totals**

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Now, add up the total number of "Y" in each column:

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Now add up the total number of "N" in each column:

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Now take the number of "N" from the number of "Y":

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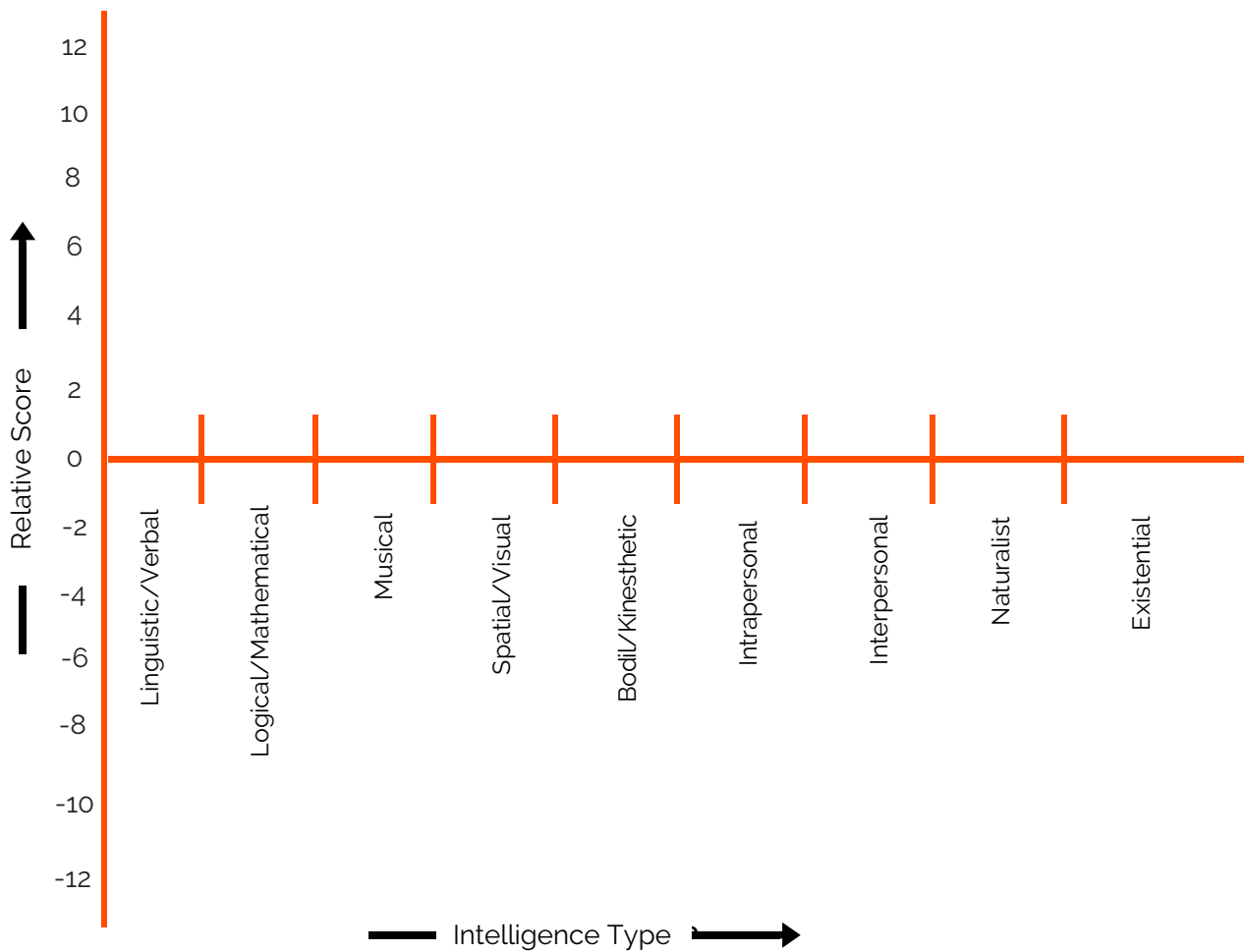
Now plot these results on the graph below:

(See the example on page 34)

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Linguistic/Verbal	Logical/Mathematical	Musical	Spatial/Visual	Bodil/Kinesthetic	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal	Naturalist	Existential







### Interpretation:

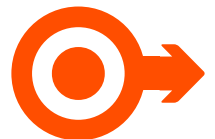
What intelligences sit above the line? What intelligences sit below the line? Are any intelligences above the line more prominent than others? Are they all about the same?

Intelligences above the line symbolise preferred intelligences, whereas intelligences below the line are the ones that you do not show any preference towards and would be regarded as 'uncharacteristic for you'.

It's not unusual to have 3 (or sometimes 4-5) intelligences at a similar level. This simply indicates that you are 'well balanced' with regards to intelligence and exhibit characteristics of several intelligence types.

Read the descriptions for each intelligence types - do you agree?

Don't agree with the outcome? Make sure you were totally honest and only said "Y" to the statements that DEFINITELY describe how you think/feel. If any were 'doubtful', change these to "N" and then recalculate.



EXAMPLE TEST

Now, add up the total number of "Y" in each column:

4	6	7	10	2	5	8	8	3
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Now add up the total number of "N" in each column:

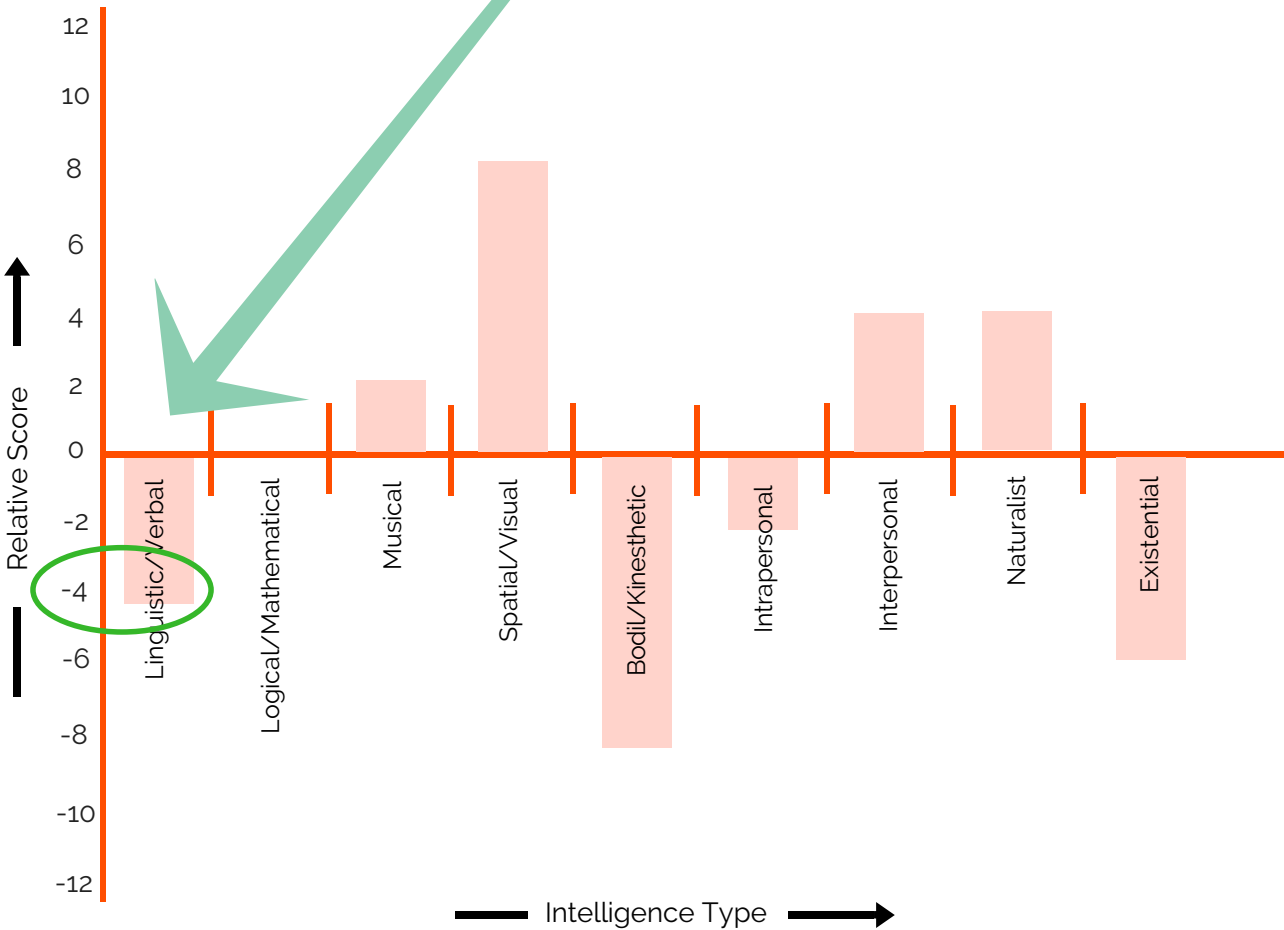
8	6	5	2	10	7	4	4	9
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Now take the number of "N" from the number of "Y":

-4	0	2	8	-8	-2	4	4	-6
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Now plot these results on the graph below:

Linguistic/Verbal	Logical/Mathematical	Musical	Spatial/Visual	Bodil/Kinesthetic	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal	Naturalist	Existential
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**“Tell me what you pay attention to  
and I will tell you who you are.”**

— José Ortega y Gasset











**EXERCISE 2.4.4**

**Q) Determine your most important values, based on your experiences of inner peace. Consider why each experience is so memorable and important?**

Use this list of common personal values to help you get started – aim for approximately **10 top values** (highlight the values that mean the most to you).

As you work through this exercise, you may find that some of these values naturally combine. For example, if you value generosity, philanthropy, and community, you could say that serving others is one of your top values.

Accountability	Dependability
Accuracy	Determination
Achievement	Devoutness
Adventurousness	Diligence
Ambition	Discipline
Assertiveness	Discretion
Authenticity	Diversity
Balance	Effectiveness
Belonging	Efficiency
Boldness	Empathy
Calmness	Enthusiasm
Carefulness	Equality
Certainty	Excellence
Challenge	Excitement
Clear-Mindedness	Exploration
Commitment	Expressiveness
Community	Fairness
Compassion	Faith
Connection	Freedom
Consistency	Generosity
Contentment	Goodness
Contribution	Giving
Creativity	Growth
Decisiveness	Hard Work

Honesty	Security
Hope	Self-Actualisation
Humility	Self-Control
Identity	Self-Improvement
Increase	Selflessness
Independence	Self-Worth
Ingenuity	Service
Justice	Sharing
Leadership	Significance
Legacy	Spontaneity
Love	Stability
Loyalty	Teamwork
Obedience	Temperance
Openness	Thoroughness
Peace	Timeliness
Philanthropy	Tolerance
Practicality	Traditionalism
Professionalism	Trustworthiness
Progress	Truth-Seeking
Purpose	Understanding
Relationships	Uniqueness
Reliability	Unity
Resourcefulness	Vision
Restraint	Vitality

**Note: Although this list of potential values is thorough, it is not necessarily complete. Please feel free to add to the list if required.**



**EXERCISE 2.4.5**

**Q) Prioritise your 'top' values**

This step is usually the most challenging as you'll have to look deep within yourself. However, it's also the most important step, because, when you're faced with a decision, you may have to choose between solutions that will satisfy different values.

This is when it's crucial to know which value is more important to you. **Firstly, without worrying about the order, make a list of your top 10 values:**

My Top 10 values (in no particular order):

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) \_\_\_\_\_

Now, look at the first two values on the list and ask yourself this question: 'If I could only satisfy one of these, which one would I choose?'

Work your way through the list, comparing each value with each of the other values until you've got your list in the correct order for you.

My Top 10 values (in order of priority):

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) \_\_\_\_\_

**"It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are."**  
- Roy Disney







“

**“HAVING  
PRIORITIES IS  
ESSENTIAL. SO IS  
HAVING THEM IN  
THE RIGHT  
ORDER.”**

”

**MICHAEL HYATT**

**SECTION 3:**

**STAGE 1**

**A Vision**

**For Your**

**Future**



**"The best way to succeed is to have a specific Intent, a clear Vision, a plan of Action, and the ability to maintain Clarity. Those are the Four Pillars of Success. It never fails!" — Steve Maraboli**

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## SECTION 3 | STAGE 1

# A VISION FOR YOUR FUTURE

**Goals are merely the desires we have that are made precise with a deadline attached to them. To feel like you're, genuinely moving forward and making adequate progress in life, it's crucial that the goals you commit to pursuing each play a part in driving you forwards toward accomplishing a far greater vision.**

Setting and achieving healthy goals is essential to health and happiness. Striving towards healthy goals expresses that you're the boss of your life and that life isn't the boss of you! Having goals is always a good thing!

Visualising a goal is more important than having all the answers about how it's going to actualise. The first stage in the construction of a house is the creation of a set of plans that show the end vision of what the house will eventually look like. Without this set of plans, it will be impossible for those involved in building the house to know what the end product should look like.

If you don't have a clear vision of what you want to accomplish in life, you can end up spending years, going around in circles, committing to things that you don't care about, and frustrated with the world in general. People who aren't actively working towards a goal or a vision in life will often experience life as being meaningless and directionless.

The great news is that life doesn't have to be this way! Although many people assume that getting a vision for their future will be a challenging and time-consuming process, it isn't.

A meaningful vision for your future can be as simple as making a difference in the life of one other person, or, it could be impacting the world on an enormous geographical scale - and everything in-between!

The first step of goal setting is to define your vision, and take full responsibility for what it is that you want to achieve. This vision cannot be what you think other people want you to do, or even what you 'think' is just a good idea.

It's important to understand that 'good ideas' do not come from the same place as meaningful visions. Ideas come from our head, and visions come from our heart.

The vision and goals that you develop for your future can not be what other people want or expect from you because the purpose here is not to please others, but to find something that will motivate you for the rest of your life (or, for the next couple of years at least).

If you don't have a vision for your future, consider the best case scenario about what you could have achieved in your life in five years from now. Doing this should give you a starting point for defining 1 or 2 goals (at least).

If you want to succeed with goal setting, you need to define your most important goals throughout your full range of life areas. Without having a set of targets in life that inspire you, you won't have much clarity of focus and direction for your future.

Goal setting allows you to take control of your life's direction and also provides you with a benchmark that can be used to determine whether you're making progress towards these goals, or whether you're not.

Firstly, though, to accomplish any goals in life, you need to know how to set goals because goal setting is a process that starts with careful consideration of what you genuinely want to achieve.

The part of the goal setting process that most people don't like is often the (guaranteed) hard work that'll be required to accomplish them!

In between setting goals and achieving them are a series of five steps that transcend the specifications of each goal. Understanding these steps will allow you to set realistic goals that you can confidently accomplish.

### **Tip: Only Set Goals that Inspire You**

When you set goals for yourself, it's crucial that they inspire you, that they are important to you, and that achieving them will positively benefit the world in some way. If your goals are small, irrelevant to anyone's quality of life or uninspiring, then the chances of you investing time into making them happen is slim. Genuine inspiration is the key principle behind successful goal setting.

It's important to set goals that are in alignment with your top priorities in life, because if you don't have this degree of focus, you stand at risk of feeling overwhelmed by them, and giving up too soon due to not even knowing where to start tackling them.

Goal achievement requires commitment, patience, persistence and perseverance - and with any of these elements missing from the goal setting equation, your chances of fulfilling these goals are limited.

So to maximise your chances of goal setting success, remember to make sure that your goals are both inspiring and relevant to you. Ask yourself the question, "If I were to share my goal with other people, would they see my goals as being significant and meaningful, or selfish and small?"

How you answer this question will determine whether your goals are actually worth pursuing, or whether they aren't!

### **Upon completing this section, you will be able to:**

- Define what 'success' genuinely means to you.
- Understand what your main life areas are.
- Establish a vision for each of these life areas.

The following pages will allow you to determine what your 'greatest life vision' is. This is important because it'll lay the foundations for all of the planning and goal setting that you do throughout the rest of your life.

Once you're finished, you'll appreciate the effort spent, as you'll have a meaningful vision for your future that you'll be more than happy to commit your life to.

### **Q) What is Your Greatest Life Vision?**

This is one of those 'BIG' questions that fall into the same sort of category as other major life issues such as;

- What is the purpose of life?
- Why are we here? ...and,
- Why do bad things happen to good people?

Although this workbook isn't necessarily going to help you find answers to these 3 massive questions, it will help you to define the greatest vision that you have for your life.

Once you're able to define your greatest life vision, this definition will become the guiding principle behind all of your future decisions, action, behaviours and attitudes until the very day that you die.

In the business world, if you were a company (for example), your 'Greatest Vision' would be either the organisational vision or mission Statement. (The reason why you exist and what you will commit your life to achieving!)





**3.1 Defining Your Greatest Life Vision**

Your greatest life vision is a simple statement that outlines an ideal description of the main outcome of your life.

This statement should inspire you; it should motivate you; drive you out of bed every morning and towards taking appropriate actions that will get you closer to fulfilling it.

It's this statement that gives you a perspective on life, so that when tough times come your way (which they will), you'll remain focused on the prize, consistent in your ways, and unaffected by the negativity of society, your peers or even your family members.

This personal vision statement will become relevant to every area of your life, including your relationships, your career, your finances, your spare time and even your routine responsibilities.

This statement becomes a vision for your future that will define and shape every decision you make until you eventually fulfil it. To understand what your greatest life vision might look like, consider the statements you'd find on the gravestones of those who have passed away..

Although I appreciate that this might seem like an unusual thing to consider, gravestones merely contain an accurate overview of the way in which people conduct themselves around other people throughout life (who they were, and how they are remembered by those they've left behind).

Your greatest life vision will be a verbalization of the words that you'd ideally have inscribed upon your tombstone.

The words on your tombstone will act as a reflection of the life that you've lived as remembered by others. An obituary is the unabridged version of this and will mostly describe who you were and how other people remember you.

**EXERCISE 3.1 (Part 1)**

**Q) How would you answer the following questions?**

Think about examples in your social life, career, finances and even in your closest relationships.

**A) How would you define personal success?**

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**B) What are your most prominent characteristics?**

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**C) What are your finest personal qualities?**

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**D) How would you NOT like to be remembered?**

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**E) What value do you contribute to the world and all of the other people who are in it?**

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It might be true that you want to be remembered in several ways; as a career woman, a family man, a highly skilled professional or perhaps a shrewd business person?

But, as you're more than likely already aware, there are many areas in life to consider when it comes to life planning, and placing too much focus on one area in your life can easily leave you sacrificing another.

A good example of misplaced priorities is when people place more importance on developing their career, than what they do on maintaining healthy relationships. Money can often come at the cost of intimacy or connection.

Many people commit their lives to pursuing the empty goals of power, ambition and making money, only to end up neglecting their family and losing the respect of their spouses and children.

Upon reaching the end of life, it's common for many people to look back on their lives with regret, mourning the relationships that they 'missed out on'.

I once had a conversation with a depressed millionairess, whose greatest regret in life, was that she placed more importance on her social status than what she did on developing strong relationships with her children.

It's probably fair to assume that not many people enter their final hours wishing that they'd earned more money, or that they'd spent more time at work, building their own business, or even someone elses.

An indication that someone has failed terribly at planning their life will be found in the regrets and sorrows that they have in their final hours.

All the things they 'wish' they'd done, what they 'wish' they hadn't done and the people that they could've helped along the way (but chose not to).

Life is all about balance, and it's only you who knows the right balance for you. Although it can be hard to articulate our greatest life vision' attempt to visualise what your life would be like if it were perfect in every way.

Imagine if all the people you know were to know exactly how kind, loving, caring and giving you could be. How would you like all these people to remember you?

**Notes so far:**

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**"Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes.**

The ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. They have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them.

About the only thing, you can't do is ignore them. Because they make a difference. They invent. They imagine. They heal. They explore. They create. They inspire. They push the human race forward.

Maybe they have to be crazy. How else can you stare at an empty canvas and see a work of art? Or sit in silence and hear a song that's never been written? Or gaze at a red planet and see a laboratory on wheels?

We make tools for these kinds of people. While some see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because those who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do."

**- STEVE JOBS**



Here are some rather 'brutal' examples of how most people DON'T want to be remembered by others:

(Note: Remember, after you die, other people determine how they remember you - you don't get a say in this!)

#### 1) The obituary of Marianne T. Johnson Roddick. 2013

"Marianne Theresa Johnson-Reddick born Jan in 1935, died alone on Aug. 30, 2013. She was survived by her children who she spent her lifetime torturing in every way possible.

While she neglected and abused her small children, she refused to allow anyone else to care or show compassion towards them. When they became adults, she stalked and tortured anyone they dared to love. Everyone she met was tortured by her cruelty and exposure to violence, criminal activity, vulgarity, and hatred of the kind human spirit.

On behalf of her children whom she so abrasively exposed to her evil and violent life, we celebrate her passing and hope that hope she now re-lives the gestures of violence and cruelty that she put on her children. Her surviving children will live the rest of their lives in the peace of knowing their nightmare finally come to an end.

Most of us have found peace in helping those who have been exposed to child abuse. We hope this message of her final passing can revive our message that abusing children is vulgar, and should not be tolerated in a humane society.

Our greatest wish now is to stimulate a national movement that mandates a purposeful and dedicated war against child abuse in the United States of America."

**"The most pathetic person in the world is some one who has sight but no vision." — Helen Keller**

#### 2) The obituary of Dolores Aguilar. 2008

"Dolores Aguilar, born in 1929 in New Mexico, left us on August 7, 2008. She will be met in the afterlife by her husband, Raymond, her son, Paul Jr., and daughter, Ruby.

She was survived by her daughters Marietta, Mitzi, Stella, Beatrice, Virginia and Ramona and son Billy; grandchildren, Maria, Mario, Alexandria, Tommy, Ashlee and Michael; great-grandchildren, Brendan, Joseph, Carissa, Jacob, Delaney, Shawn, and Emily. Sorry to anyone I've missed.

Dolores had no hobbies, gave nothing to society and rarely shared a kind word or deed in her life. I speak for most of her family when I say we will not miss her. Tears will not be shed, and we will not lament over her passing.

As a family, we will remember Dolores in our own ways, which were mostly sad and troubling times throughout the years. We may have some fond memories of her and perhaps we will think of those times too.

But I honestly believe that ALL of us will only miss what we never had, a good and kind mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

I hope she is finally at peace with herself. As for the rest of us left behind, I hope this is the beginning of a time of healing and learning to be a family again.

There will be no service, no prayers and no closure for the family she spent a lifetime tearing apart. We cannot come together, in the end, to see to it that her grandchildren and great-grandchildren can say their goodbyes. So I say here for all of us, goodbye, Mom."

**Q) How would you like to be remembered like either of these ladies?**



**EXERCISE 3.1 (Part 2)**

**Q) How would you like to be remembered?**

In consideration of the last two stories (Marianne Theresa Johnson-Roddick & Dolores Aguilar), spend 10-15 minutes preparing the best case scenario of what the people you care about the most will write about you on your tombstone. It's this inscription that becomes the greatest vision for you life, and also the factor which you weigh up all of your future decision making against.

This exercise should help you to establish a new standard and perspective for your life. You will define what's most important to you, and also the way in which you must conduct yourself in relation to other people for the remainder of your days ....

**REST IN PEACE**

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**REST IN PEACE** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRACTICE HERE!**

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### 3.2 Defining Your Priority Life Areas

Due to your experience of life so far, you may be able to realise that when you think about your life as a whole, there are many areas to consider, and just as many areas to balance!

Life balance is one of the greatest goals we can achieve in life, but at the same time, this is a very tough goal to reach.

Has there ever been a time when you became so focused on achieving a goal in one area of your life, that it came at the cost of something else in another area of your life? This is a common reoccurring problem for many people today.

May it be a strong focus in your career when you neglect your health, or, focus on a new relationship where you forget your friends or the drive in your career?

Each time you commit your energy to one thing, you're (often unknowingly) choosing to pull it away from something else. It pays to make our decisions wisely. All of us have a limited amount of time and energy each day. No matter how passionately we commit to moving forward in life, none of us can accomplish ALL things, ALL of the time.

Yes, we might rack up possessions, promotions and perform more personal bests. We might even achieve the prestige goals of fame and immense fortune. But if we're ascertaining those things at the cost of other more important things, then our chances of enjoying a fulfilling and balanced life are slim.

In the business world, 'Economics is the study of infinite wants and limited means.' A man called Thomas Sowell once said it best: "There are no solutions, only tradeoffs".

**"There are no solutions, only tradeoffs."**

— Thomas Sowell

It's important to be aware of what we're sacrificing in our attempts of getting something else. The economists would refer to this as opportunity cost. Opportunity Cost is what we have to give up in order to get something else.

What could be more straightforward? If you want one thing, you have to give up something else. This simple idea though, can easily turn out to be more subtle than what it first initially appears.

**Q) So how can we balance out our most important life areas and still achieve our primary goals?**

**A)** It's important to decide what the important areas in our lives are. It's critical that we maintain this perspective as we commit to improving one area in our life, without turning our back on all of the other areas.

There are three empowering questions we can ask ourselves before going full steam ahead with anything that'll demand a significant amount of our time or energy.

Regardless of whether this goal is an accomplishment, acquisition or even a new intimate relationship, ask yourself these three following questions:

- What impact is pursuing this goal likely to have on my time?
- What else could suffer the consequences of my divided attention if I commit to this pursuit?
- In what ways does this effort compliment (or detract from) my greatest life vision?

Although this may sound a little sadistic, this line of self-inquiry can be hugely clarifying. Because if we don't commit to pursuing our greatest life vision, we might end up compromising our standards on a daily basis.

**The late personal development expert Stephen Covey once suggested that:**

'Without a clear focus on our guiding values and priorities, each of us runs a real risk of successfully climbing a very long ladder only to find it leaning against the wrong wall.'

This is why our core priorities are worth regular consideration, repeatedly, habitually and anytime we're about to devote time and energy to a new given pursuit.

Areas of Importance: There are certain areas in life that are important for all of us. These are mainly:

- **Social & Family Relationships**
- **Career & Educational Aspirations**
- **Money & Personal Finances**
- **Physical Health, Recreation & Leisure**
- **Life's Routine Responsibilities**
- **Giving Back to Society & Contribution**
- **Mental, Emotional & Spiritual Health**

The importance that various people place on these life areas will always differ. However, if we can become able to maintain an element of focus in all of our life areas, we will be more likely to achieve this healthy life balance.

When we define those areas of importance, we create awareness within us of what areas in our lives need to be improved upon while taking a huge step towards achieving greater life balance.

**"My point is, life is about balance. The good and the bad. The highs and the lows. The pina and the colada."**

— Ellen DeGeneres

We might recognise someone with a 'healthy' balanced life through their effective prioritisation between work and lifestyle habits. 'Work' incorporates their career, education and personal ambitions, whereas 'Lifestyle' includes their health, pleasure, leisure, relationships and commitment to personal growth).

None of us are perfect, and none of us will ever achieve complete fulfilment in all of these life areas all of the time. However, it is possible to establish a healthy balance.

Achieving (and maintaining) a healthy life balance can be a life-long process. This process will often take form through the strategies and interventions we use for managing the challenges that arise in the context of our everyday lives.

Consider the major choices that you've made throughout your lifetime to date. The ones which have brought you genuine satisfaction. Then in retrospect, consider the 'opportunity cost' of any investments you've made (of focus, time, money or energy) that turned out to be far too unexpectantly high.

Of course, not every choice we make will fully support our greatest life vision every time. But the more choices that do, the more balanced, fulfilled and content we become. The more balanced we become, the clearer we'll be on which opportunities deserve our best efforts, and which opportunities are worth dismissing entirely.

It can become very easy to 'overload' in life due to the constant pressures and demands placed upon us. The following exercise will allow you to gain a balanced overview of your life in its entirety. Upon completion, you'll be able to identify clearly any specific areas in your life that are in urgent need of improvement!

**AND THIS IS WHERE OUR GOAL  
SETTING JOURNEY BEGINS ....**



### 3.3 Life Balance Questionnaire

**A few years ago I learned that nothing is ever as chaotic as it seems. Nothing is worth diminishing our health or poisoning ourselves into the pit of worry and stress.**

There were times in the past where I'd physically (and mentally) exhaust myself due to working regular 12 hour days. I remember a discussion with an old colleague on this topic. At one point I said 'Yeah, but what can you do?' and he answered, 'There's always something you can do.'

Although this statement was very simple, it walloped home and comprehensively resonated with me. As I began to think about it and recognise it as true, I realised that we always have a choice about how we utilise our time.

When we become entrenched into anxiety based patterns of thinking and behavior, we tend not to look outside of our boxes. Unless something shakes us up, we can often fail to recognise even the most practical options that are available to us.

We all have different interpretations of work-life balance. However, in principle, we all share a similar idea of what this means - to have a satisfying amount of time available for doing the things we're passionate about, outside of a work based environment. This could mean time spent with family, time dedicated to personal improvement or even getting our bodies into a better physical shape.

We'll approach your life (and the topic of life balance) in a structured and 'balanced way' throughout this exercise.

The following pages will help you break your life down into seven different areas so that you can clearly identify the specific areas in your life that are currently 'out of balance.' Because it's these very areas that are most likely causing you the greatest degree of anxiety and preventing you from making the degree of progress that you want in life.

**Many of us can 'overload' in life as a result of the demands associated with our work and our home lives.**

This overload comes as we attempt to manage (and maintain) our relationships, our physical health, manage our finances, our routine responsibilities and even provide service within our local communities.

The questionnaire over the following pages has been designed to give you a balanced overview of all your most important life areas.

Upon completion, you'll be able to identify the specific life areas you really want to make changes in today.

**"Grow with discipline. Balance intuition with rigor. Innovate around the core. Don't embrace the status quo. Find new ways to see. Never expect a silver bullet. Get your hands dirty. Listen with empathy and overcommunicate with transparency. Tell your story, refusing to let others define you. Use authentic experiences to inspire. Stick to your values, they are your foundation. Make the tough choices; it's how you execute that counts. Be decisive in times of crisis. Be nimble. Find truth in trials and lessons in mistakes. Be responsible for what you see, hear, and do. Believe."**

— Howard Schultz



**LIFE AREA 1:**

**SOCIAL AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**

Work through the questions & grade your answers from 1 – 10 with 1 being 'High' importance, and 10 being 'Low' importance.

<b>1</b>	How important are your family relationships?	___ / 10
<b>2</b>	How satisfied are you with your family relationships?	___ / 10
<b>3</b>	I am close to my parents and our relationships are healthy.	___ / 10
<b>4</b>	I am close to my children and our relationships are healthy.	___ / 10
<b>5</b>	The people who matter the most in my life accept me.	___ / 10
<b>6</b>	How important are strong social relationships to you?	___ / 10
<b>7</b>	How satisfied are you with your social relationships?	___ / 10
<b>8</b>	I have close friendships with people I can be myself around.	___ / 10
<b>9</b>	I have a good social network/ am part of social groups.	___ / 10
<b>10</b>	I am generally good at connecting with new people.	___ / 10
<b>11</b>	I get along with my neighbours and the people in my area.	___ / 10
<b>12</b>	How satisfied are you with your romantic relationship/s?	___ / 10
<b>13</b>	How happy are you with the overall quality of your relationships?	___ / 10

**Notes:** Write a personal vision statement about about an area/s in your relationships that you'd like to make changes in:

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**"Man maintains his balance, poise, and sense of security only as he is moving forward." - Maxwell Maltz**



LIFE AREA 2:

CAREER & EDUCATION ASPIRATIONS

Work through the questions & grade your answers from 1 – 10 with 1 being 'High' importance, and 10 being 'Low' importance.

1	How important are career achievements to you?	___ / 10
2	How satisfying are your career achievements to date?	___ / 10
3	How fulfilled are you in your current work environment?	___ / 10
4	How much do you look forward to going to work each day?	___ / 10
5	Does your career stimulate and develop you as a person?	___ / 10
6	Do you have a healthy & rewarding work/ life balance?	___ / 10
7	Is your career moving you forward in advancement and reward?	___ / 10
8	How important are strong working relationships to you?	___ / 10
9	How satisfied are you with your current working relationships?	___ / 10
10	Is your working environment positive and supportive?	___ / 10
11	Do you find contentment and fulfilment in your current career?	___ / 10
12	How urgently would you like a career change?	___ / 10
13	If you died today, are you happy with the legacy you'll leave behind?	___ / 10

Notes: Write a personal vision statement about about an area/s in your career or education that you'd like to make changes in:

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**"There is no decision that we can make that doesn't come with some sort of balance or sacrifice."** - Simon Sinek

LIFE AREA 3:

MONEY & PERSONAL FINANCES

Work through the questions & grade your answers from 1 – 10 with 1 being 'High' importance, and 10 being 'Low' importance.

1	How important is being financially effective to you?	___ / 10
2	How satisfied are you with your current financial effectiveness?	___ / 10
3	You have enough money to meet your current wants.	___ / 10
4	You have enough money to meet your current needs.	___ / 10
5	You know what your exact outgoings are each month.	___ / 10
6	You always know what's in your bank account/s.	___ / 10
7	How important is being generous to others to you?	___ / 10
8	How generous are you currently being towards others?	___ / 10
9	How satisfied are you with how much you give to others?	___ / 10
10	How important is charitable contribution to you?	___ / 10
11	How satisfied are you with how charitable you currently are?	___ / 10
12	How willing are you to step out your comfort zone & take new risks to generate more income?	___ / 10
13	How much do you worry about your current financial situation?	___ / 10

Notes: Write a personal vision statement about about an area/s in your personal finances that you'd like to make changes in:

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**"To establish balance in our personal finances, it's crucial that we learn to live within our means."** - Kain Ramsay

**LIFE AREA 4:**

**HEALTH, RECREATION & LEISURE**

Work through the questions & grade your answers from 1 – 10 with 1 being 'High' importance, and 10 being 'Low' importance.

<b>1</b>	How important is establishing a healthy work/ life balance to you?	___ / 10
<b>2</b>	How satisfied are you with your current work/study/ life balance?	___ / 10
<b>3</b>	How important is your physical health to you?	___ / 10
<b>4</b>	How happy are you with your current physical health?	___ / 10
<b>5</b>	How happy are you with your physical fitness levels?	___ / 10
<b>6</b>	How important is having plenty of 'free' time to you?	___ / 10
<b>7</b>	How content are you with the amount of free time you have?	___ / 10
<b>8</b>	How important is your physical appearance?	___ / 10
<b>9</b>	How satisfied are you with your current physical appearance?	___ / 10
<b>10</b>	I can handle my stress and anxiety levels effectively.	___ / 10
<b>11</b>	How much do you currently enjoy life outside of work or study?	___ / 10
<b>12</b>	Are you able to do things that you enjoy frequently?	___ / 10
<b>13</b>	I have room for improvements in my life outside of work and/or study.	___ / 10

**Notes:** Write a personal vision statement about an area/s in your personal/social life that you'd like to make changes in:

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**"If you're interested in balancing work & pleasure, stop! Instead, make your work more pleasurable." - Donald Trump**

LIFE AREA 5:

LIFE'S ROUTINE RESPONSIBILITIES

Work through the questions & grade your answers from 1 – 10 with 1 being 'High' importance, and 10 being 'Low' importance.

1	How important is managing routine tasks around the home to you?	___ / 10
2	How satisfied are you with how you currently handle routine tasks?	___ / 10
3	Are you disciplined in paying your routine household bills?	___ / 10
4	Could you be more disciplined in managing your bills & other important responsibilities?	___ / 10
5	How important is prioritizing your responsibilities?	___ / 10
6	How satisfied are you with how you prioritise your responsibilities?	___ / 10
7	How important is a well-managed home environment to you?	___ / 10
8	How satisfied are you with your current home environment?	___ / 10
9	How important is dealing with home issues promptly to you?	___ / 10
10	Would your home life be easier if you had a better system in place for managing your routine responsibilities?	___ / 10
11	How much do you worry about your routine responsibilities?	___ / 10
12	How much easier would your life be if you were more disciplined in managing your routine responsibilities around the home?	___ / 10

Notes: Write a vision statement about about how you could become more efficient in managing your routine responsibilities:

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**"Success is nothing more than a few simple disciplines that are practiced every day."** - Jim Rohn

LIFE AREA 6:

CONTRIBUTION & GIVING BACK TO SOCIETY

Work through the questions & grade your answers from 1 – 10 with 1 being 'High' importance, and 10 being 'Low' importance.

1	How important is contributing back to society & making a difference to you?	___ / 10
2	How satisfied are you with how much you currently give back to society?	___ / 10
3	You regularly make a positive impact in the lives of other people.	___ / 10
4	How satisfied are you with the amount of difference you make in the lives of others?	___ / 10
5	How important is leaving behind a meaningful legacy to you?	___ / 10
6	How happy are you with the current legacy that you would leave behind?	___ / 10
7	How much do you encourage and support those closest to you?	___ / 10
8	My time is mainly consumed focussing on myself and my immediate needs.	___ / 10
9	You get involved with, and support a social initiative that you genuinely believe in.	___ / 10
10	Those closest to you find immense value in you.	___ / 10
11	Your peers or co-workers find immense value in you.	___ / 10
12	Someday, your children will be really proud of the way in which you've lived your life.	___ / 10
13	I could make more effort in contributing back to society.	___ / 10

Notes: Write a personal vision statement about about how you could begin making a greater impact in your culture or society:

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**"Try not to become a person of success, but rather try to become a person of value." - Albert Einstein**

LIFE AREA 7:

MENTAL, EMOTIONAL & SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Work through the questions & grade your answers from 1 – 10 with 1 being 'High' importance, and 10 being 'Low' importance.

<b>1</b>	How important is being mentally healthy (and strong) to you?	___ / 10
<b>2</b>	How mentally healthy (and strong) do you currently feel?	___ / 10
<b>3</b>	How important is being emotionally healthy (and strong) to you?	___ / 10
<b>4</b>	How emotionally healthy (and strong) do you currently feel?	___ / 10
<b>5</b>	Are you confident and secure in who you are as a person?	___ / 10
<b>6</b>	How fulfilled are you with the way in which you're currently living your life?	___ / 10
<b>7</b>	How content are you with the way in which you're currently living your life?	___ / 10
<b>8</b>	How important is being spiritually healthy (and strong) to you?	___ / 10
<b>9</b>	How spiritually healthy (and strong) do you currently feel?	___ / 10
<b>10</b>	I regularly invest time into developing myself spiritually.	___ / 10
<b>11</b>	I am consistently competent at managing my emotions. I have good self-control.	___ / 10
<b>12</b>	My emotions will often manage me. I am undisciplined in self-control.	___ / 10
<b>13</b>	Negative and destructive emotions will often get the 'better' of me.	___ / 10

Notes: Write a personal vision statement about how you can begin developing yourself mentally, emotionally and spiritually:

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**"A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him."** - David Brinkley

**EXERCISE 3**

**Writing Your Life Area Vision Statements**

Take some time to reflect on your tomb stone inscription and obituary – does the previous exercise reflect the life areas that you believe are most important?

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Are your current efforts going to help you achieve better life balance? If no, what needs to change?

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Finally for this section, write a personal Vision Statement for each of your 7 life areas.**

These Vision Statements should combine to form your 'Greatest Vision' and form the basis for the goal setting we'll complete in the next sections.

A personal Vision Statement is simply an aspirational description of what you would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future in each specific life area.

**VISION STATEMENT 1: Social & Family Relationships**

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**VISION STATEMENT 2: Career & Educational Aspirations**

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**VISION STATEMENT 3: Money & Personal Finances**

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**VISION STATEMENT 4: Health, Recreation & Leisure**

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**VISION STATEMENT 5: Life's Routine Responsibilities**

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**VISION STATEMENT 6: Contribution & Giving Back**

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**VISION STATEMENT 7: Mental, Emotional & Spiritual Life**

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**DO YOUR OWN  
THING OR DO  
SOMEONE ELSE'S  
THING. EITHER  
WAY, YOU'LL STILL  
END UP DOING  
SOMETHING!**

”

**UN-NAMED BRITISH  
SOLDIER**

**SECTION 4:**

**STAGE 2**

**Knowing  
What You  
Want**



**4**

**"For those who confuse you in life, remember to acknowledge that their confusion is theirs and your clarity is yours. They don't have your clarity."**

**— Barbara Marciniak**

## SECTION 4 | STAGE 2

# KNOWING WHAT YOU WANT

You might be glad to know after all the heavy soul-searching of the last few Sections; this section should become a lot more enjoyable as you begin to focus on establishing the tangible outcomes that you genuinely want from life.

At the end of this Section, you will be able to:

- Have a Mind Map of what you want out of life.
- Have a sound understanding of how to achieve life balance.
- Be able to use the Express Planning Model for achieving your specific goals.

### 4.1 Getting Clear on What You Want

In the last Section, we identified your seven primary life areas, and also prepared a 'Greatest Vision' statement for each one of those areas. It might be worthwhile to revisit these quickly, so they remain fresh in your mind. Because it's these pictures in our minds, that become the vision/s that we develop for our futures.

In its simplest form, a vision is the best picture you have in your 'mind's eye' about what you want to create in your future. A vision is the creatively imagined image of your 'ideal life' and a "visualisation" of the things that you'd like to accomplish at a time in your future.

A vision that is motivated by the outworking of your core values has the authority to drive you forward and guide you in the direction of seeing these things come to fruition.

A meaningful vision will underpin (and often guide) the decisions that you make, on a day to day basis, as you consider how the actions you take will either get you closer to or further away from, this ideal future that you envisage in your mind.

A vision is a picture of what you want to see happen. However, visions will not always necessarily specify 'how' these things are going to happen.

Visions can sometimes be either dreamy or pictorial, but the more accurate and full of detail they are, the easier they will be to turn into a reality.

A vision is what you're here to fulfil, and being the difference that you are going to make in the world. An empowering vision (and a genuine vision) must be one that excites you. Visions are not mere ideas. Visions are much greater than ideas.

If the highest vision you have for the future is to stop smoking or get a pay rise at work, well, these aren't overly compelling things, so they will never genuinely motivate you. A compelling vision is one that will pull you forward in life and drive you to take well-calculated risks. An authentic vision isn't something that will drain you, exhaust you or feel like an effort or chore?

If the vision/s you have for your future don't excite you in every way imaginable, then what would the point be in pursuing it? That's right ... there would be no point at all!

**"You cannot change your destination overnight, but you can change your direction overnight." - Jim Rohn**

**Just to be clear, there are 2 kinds of motivation in life:**

**Away-From Motivation** | which requires constant willpower, effort and striving. And,

**Towards Motivation** | Which accompanies a vision for your future that's so exciting, so attractive and compelling that it becomes the main reason you get up in the morning and the core driving force behind every decision you make.

The size and scale of your vision will often be determined by the quality of people that you interact with on a daily basis. If you 'hang around' with individuals who are just happy in their day-jobs, then you'll more than likely not want too much more than this for yourself.

If you want to find a mature partner to spend the rest of your days with, then going to the pub every Friday or Saturday night probably isn't going to help you accomplish this vision.

Meaningful vision only ever comes to us in life, once we're mature enough to know what to do with it. There's no point in sharing a tremendous vision for your future, with small minded and small thinking people - so make sure to choose the company you keep wisely!

If you want to craft a significant vision for your future, it's imperative that you commit to spending your days with people who are mature, decisive, consistent and strong.

There are many people out there who will never understand why you want more from your life. Some of which might even do their best to hold you back so that they feel better for living small and selfish lives.

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Your greatest vision you get for any of your life areas won't be one that mystically 'comes to you' while you're sitting at home watching TV, or down the pub getting intoxicated with friends. Your quality of your environment and lifestyle will 100 percent influence the quality of the vision you get for your future.

The most exciting visions will often demand nothing less than a miracle from God to make them happen (which is what makes them so interesting).

It's also critical, that whatever your vision/s is or are, you have strong enough reasons to see them through to completion. (This means, that you'll commit to seeing the vision through, even when the going gets tough, and you meet with unexpected challenges!)

The practice of visioning affects our brainwaves in hugely productive ways.

In the school of Biological studies, scientists have identified a part of the Brain called the reticular activating system (the R.A.S.). This section of the brain creates an internal awareness of identifying anything that will help us to get closer towards our goals. Once this part of our brain has been triggered; we become far more attentive towards noticing what's happening around us in our 'outside' world.

The R.A.S. connects our visions and dreams to everything else that's going on around us, with similarity to putting together a jigsaw puzzle. Our R.A.S. is always on the lookout to identify the next piece of the puzzle that'll help us get closer towards wherever it is that we want to be in life (our greatest life vision).

This unique part of our brain allows us to keep the focus we need for keeping the main thing, the main thing!





### Mind Mapping each of your 7 life areas

Mind mapping is an effective way to structure and represent your ideas, best laid plans and concepts. It's a 'visual' thinking exercise that can help you to structure the information that's already in your head (or your heart).

Mind mapping will help you to better analyse your best ideas, comprehend new strategies with greater clarity, recall what you already know (or what you need to know) alongside generating new strategies, plans and ideas. Just as in every great idea, its power lies in its simplicity.

In a mind map, as opposed to traditional note taking or a linear text, information is structured in a way that resembles much more closely how your brain works.

Since mind mapping is an activity that can be both analytical and artistic, it engages your brain in a creative and much richer way, helping in all of its cognitive functions. And, best of all, you should also find mind mapping out your life to be quite an enjoyable process!

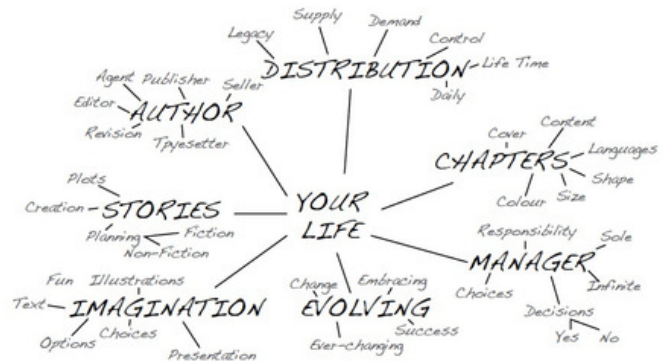
Mind mapping is an excellent way of drawing out and structuring all of the ideas that are in our head - a very useful exercise to complete if we want to get clarity about the things we genuinely want to achieve in our future.

So what does a mind map look like? Better than explaining is showing you an example on the right side of the page:

### Bubbl.us - Recommended Online Mind Mapping Tool:

<https://bubbl.us> is a sleek, quick & easy to use online tool for creating excellent mind maps.

An example mind-map that someone might do if they were thinking about writing an autobiography.



Mind mapping (as demonstrated above) allows you to avoid dull, compartmentalised and linear thinking.

Completing the next exercise will allow you to invigorate your creative 'inner genius' and start making note taking slightly more enjoyable again!

### So, what can we use mind maps for?

- Life Planning
- Business Planning
- Brainstorming (on your own or in groups)
- Problem solving
- Studying and memorization
- Consolidating information from multiple sources
- Note taking
- Jogging your creativity

Mind Maps can help clarify your thinking in anything, in many different contexts: personal, family, educational or business. They're also useful for planning your day, your life, launching a project, preparing presentations, blog posts - and pretty much anything else you could think of!

**"Writing is thinking. To write well is to think clearly. That's why it's so hard."**

— David McCullough



**EXERCISE 4.1****Mind Mapping Your 7 Primary Life Areas:**

Use the following mind map exercise (over the next seven pages) to create the 'future you' to contrast with the 'present you'. Many life coaches and psychologists understand how visualising ourselves as we want to be in the future is a crucial part of working towards becoming this person.

While it's obvious that we still need to put in hard work & effort, having a mind map of our ideal future life can act as a compass for guiding us through the hurdles and challenges of life.

Mind mapping exercises (like the one that follows) allow for a transparent comparison between where you are now (in life) and how things will evolve and progress in your life as you make the appropriate changes that'll enable you to get closer towards where ever this place is that you want to reach.

**Tip:** There is an excellent book on mind mapping written by Tony Buzan, called *Head Strong: How to Get Physically and Mentally Fit* - this has some great colour mind maps that are bound to inspire you!

**Warning:** Completing the following mind map exercise may feel slightly disorganised if you haven't done an exercise like this before. Don't let this stop you, though, just trust the process and it'll soon become evident that it's only having unorganised thoughts dashing around in your mind that's disorganised - putting these ideas down on paper with links connecting them will tidy everything up nicely!

Most people won't ever try personal mind mapping. However, what they'll never discover until they do, is that the 1,000,001 ideas inside of our minds can be smoothly translated into a more structured and organised plan once we've mind mapped it all.

**FACT: You cannot create a perfect mind map!**

On the mind Map's that you create, remember that nothing is permanent and you can change it as many times as you want to.

In fact, making changes and ammendments is totally encouraged because as time moves on, you'll notice changes in the importance of different elements on your mind map. As a result of this, you'll naturally want to change your ideas (or even create another brand new mind map) to reflect this.

Moreover, there is no such thing as a perfect mind map; that's the beauty of this exercise - it makes use of the patterned, leap-padding thinking of the human brain, so simply follow your intuition, or jump to wherever your mind takes you within the 7 mind maps that you'll now create for each of your 7 primary life areas.

**Note from Kain:** GOOD LUCK WITH THE EXERCISE!

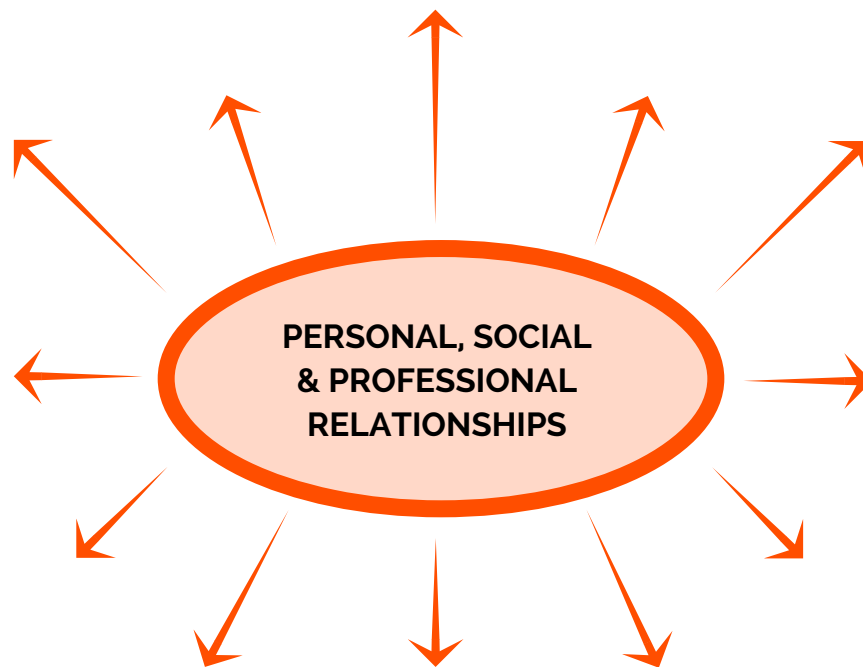
**"Every great building once begun as a building plan. That means, sitting in that building plan on the table is a mighty structure not yet seen. It is the same with dreams."**

— Israelmore Ayivor





**1) Mind Map the goals you have for your personal, social and professional relationships:**



**Some of the questions you might benefit from answering here are:**

- What do I want in my family relationships?
- What do I want in my social relationships?
- What do I want in my work relationships?
- What do I want in my intimate relationships?
- How do I get what I want in my family relationships?
- How do I get what I want in my social relationships?
- How do I get what I want in my work relationships?
- How do I get what I want in my intimate relationships? ... etc.

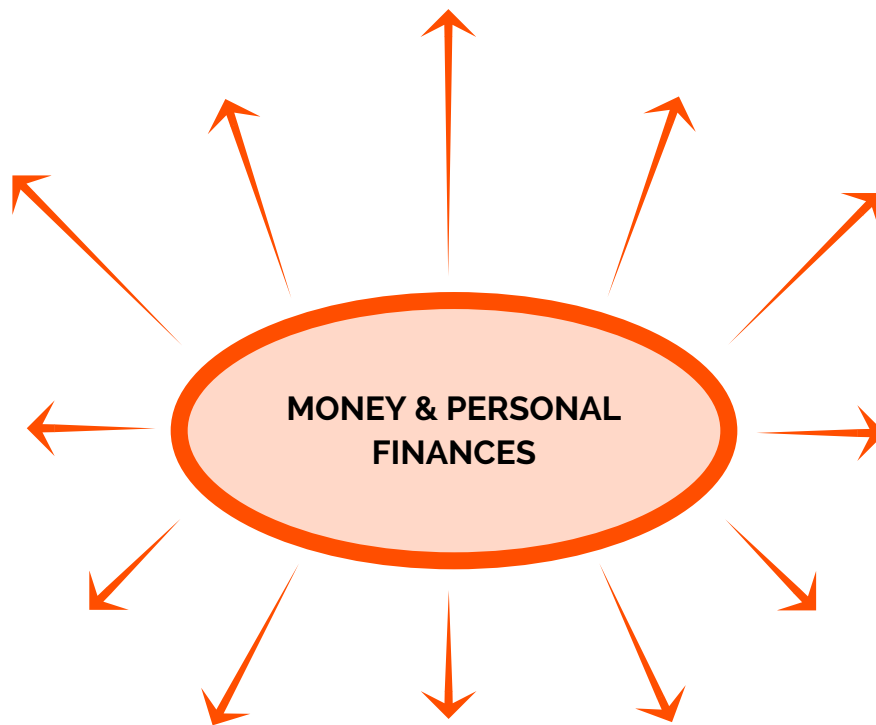
**2) Mind Map the goals you have for your career, business and further education/ self improvement:**



**Some of the questions you might benefit from answering here are:**

- What do I want to achieve in my career?
- What do I want to achieve with my business?
- What do I want to study/ learn in the future?
- In what ways do I want to improve myself?
- How do I achieve what I want to achieve in my career?
- How do I achieve what I want to achieve in my business?
- Where can I access the information that I want?
- What skills do I need to increase my value to other people? ... etc.

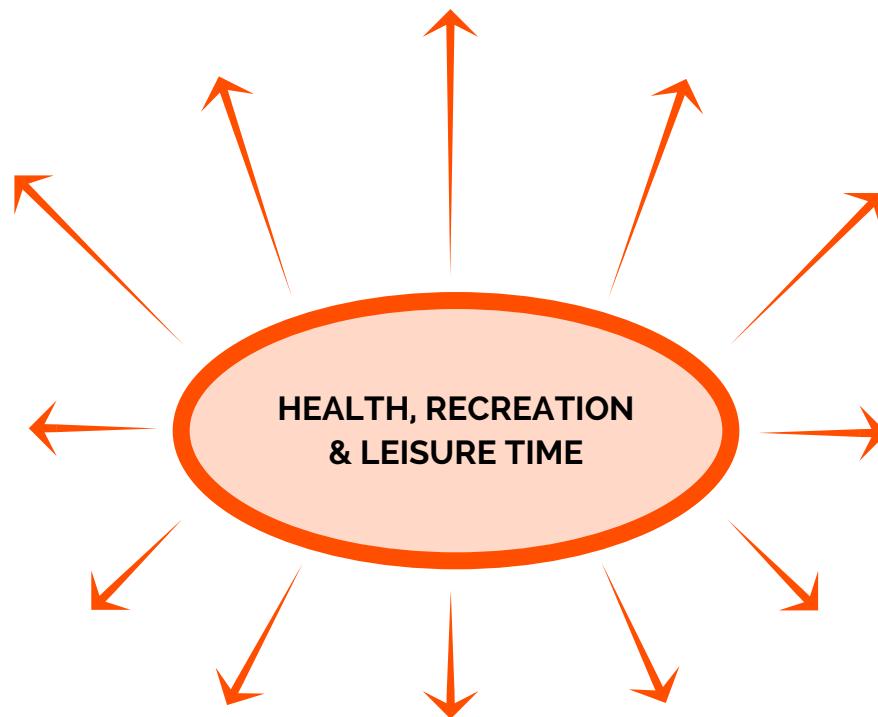
### 3) Mind Map the goals you have for your personal finances:



Some of the questions you might benefit from answering here are:

- What do I want to afford in the short term?
- What do I want to afford in the long term?
- What do I achieve with my personal finances?
- What do I need to learn about money?
- What options do I have for generating more income?
- What options do I have for generating NEW income?
- How can I use the internet to generate more (or new) income?
- Where can I learn what I need to learn about money? ... etc.

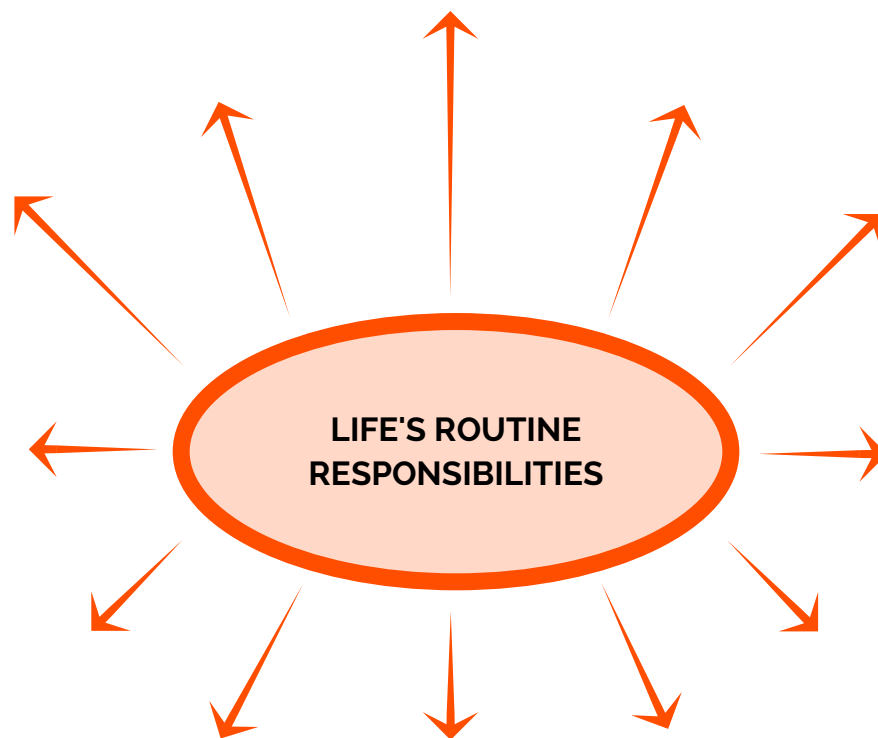
**4) Mind Map the goals you have for your health, recreation and leisure (down-time):**



**Some of the questions you might benefit from answering here are:**

- What do I want to achieve with my health?
- What options do I have for improving my fitness levels?
- What passtimes would I like to do more of?
- What options do I have for doing more of the things I enjoy?
- How can I achieve a better life balance?
- What would I LOVE to do with my life before I die?
- What can I learn to achieve better life balance?
- Are there places I would like to visit before I die? ... etc.

**5) Do a Mind Map to define any goals you have for your routine responsibilities:**



**Some of the questions you might benefit from answering here are:**

- Do I regularly pay my bills on time?
- Do I manage my responsibilities well?
- What improvements can I make?
- Can my dependants 'actually' depend on me?
- Could I improve how I manage my routine responsibilities?
- How can I improve how I manage my routine responsibilities?
- What improvements could I start making that would reduce the amount of stress in my life? ... etc.

**6) Use Mind Mapping to define the goals you have for giving back, social contribution & how you'd like to make a bigger difference in the world:**



**Some of the questions you might benefit from answering here are:**

- Do I make a positive difference in the world?
- Do I want to make a difference in the world?
- What am I genuinely passionate about?
- What could I do to make more of a difference?
- How can I use my skills or talents to benefit others?
- Would helping other people be likely to fulfil me more in life?
- Are there any local charities or social groups who might benefit from my support or input? ... etc

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**7) Use Mind Mapping to define the goals you have for mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing (and health):**



**Some of the questions you might benefit from answering here are:**

- In what ways could I grow in maturity?
- In what ways could I become more consistent?
- In what ways could I grow in decisiveness?
- In what ways could I develop my character?
- How can I further develop myself mentally?
- How can I further develop myself emotionally?
- How can I further develop myself spiritually?
- Does my life set a positive example to other people? ... etc

## 4.2 Getting Clear On The Specifics..

The previous Mind Mapping exercise should have given you a reasonably good idea about what you want from your seven main areas in life, and also about the scale of the void between where you currently are, and where you'll be when you 'get there'.

In all honesty, you can achieve anything that you fully commit yourself towards accomplishing in life. Resources, natural ability, desire, skill and willingness to learn new skills – these are the only factors that determine how long it will take to fulfil the goals that we set ourselves in life.

The main purpose of the last exercise was to get you considering the vision statements that you defined for your seven primary life areas, and then break these concepts down into smaller, and more manageable bite sized chunks.

### The Express Planning Model (EPM)

There is one primary factor that determines the overall quality of the lifestyles that people lead, and this is the willingness to take hold of a vision (for one's life) and turn it into a reality.

Historically, those who live the most inspiringly successful lives are just those who have found an effective way to utilise their resources, manage their time, strengthen their relationships and embrace the main lessons that they've learned throughout life.

When it comes to living a fruitfully effective life, the only real problem that people will ever face is an emotional response to something that either has or hasn't happened (yet). If you think about it; there are countless people all around the world, who live in a happy marriage, have money in the bank, a good job (or a sustainable business) but yet still exist in a constant state of anger, anxiety, fear or stress.

**Most people spend their whole lives focusing on what they don't have rather than on what they do.**

If you're guilty of this (worrying about what you don't have rather than appreciating the things that you do), you stand at risk of living a highly stressed life in a constant mode of striving, busyness and stress (like a pressure pot that's waiting to explode).

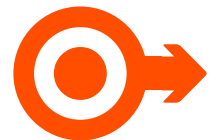
However ... if you've ever achieved anything significant in life, then you'll already understand how to be completely focused (and clear) about what it was that you specifically wanted. The greater degree of clarity you have about what it is you DO want from your life, the easier it will become for you to achieve and accomplish these goals.

Today, there are so many countless demands that are clampering for your time, attention and focus. If you don't become clear on what you want in your own life, you might end up trapped, working for peanuts (or for a minimal salary) or helping somebody else to accomplish all of the goals, dreams and visions that they have for theirs.

The imperative first step that we can take towards taking control of our lives, regaining our focus and achieving visions that we have, is to ask ourselves the following three questions.

And just to note, that the sequence in which we answer these questions is essential to us actually getting what we want - so just go with the process here .....

**RECCOMENDATION:** Use the following exercise as a framework for breaking down every goal that you set from this day forward & for the rest of your life ... because it works!







**The only arrow that'll ever reach your target will always be the actions you take. The previous three questions give you an actionable framework that you can use as often as needed; that'll help you get closer towards achieving anything that you're willing to commit to in life.**

**Note:** Once you've written down all the required actions you need to take for fulfilling a goal; you might decide that some of them are more relevant than others. Or, even that some of the steps aren't relevant at all!

Once you get consistently competent at answering these three questions in the Express Planning Model for yourself, you'll be able to 'get yourself out there' and start accomplishing anything that you're committed to in any area of your life. But remember, the order in which you answer these questions is crucial, so don't break the 'natural order' of things, and just stay with the program! ;-)

### 4.3 Bringing Everything Together So Far

So far, throughout this EPIC of a workbook, we've gone on quite 'the journey of self-discovery'. We've begun to look at different tools and techniques you can use for understanding yourself, what you want from your life, how to structure your life in a balanced way and how to prioritise your goals.

As you've worked through the exercises so far, you may have found some of them to be more useful than others - and that's OK. Not all self-analysis tools will suit all people.

However, if you've found one or two exercises that have genuinely resonated with you, then 'keep 'em' and use them again whenever you need to in the future. It's for this purpose that I originally designed this workbook!

Moving forward, my hope is that you'll be willing to reflect upon all the ideas and thoughts that we've covered so far, and merge them with the main goals that you've defined throughout the Mind Mapping exercise. Throughout the four sections that follow, the aim is to turn these goals into a meaningful plan that you can start actioning immediately.

By now, I also hope that you'll be able to recognise a common theme running through the responses you've made to the exercises that is consistent with your core values (which we defined in section 2).

For now, though, take a few moments and review everything you've written out thus far to identify any common themes (or conflicting messages) for yourself.

It's important that you do this as the results from the exercises in this section will form the basis of the goal setting exercises that follow in the forthcoming sections.

The last thing to consider before we move on to section 5 is prioritising each of the goals that you've identified until now. These goals can easily be defined as:

#### **PRIORITY 1: RED GOALS (Our 'Must Do's')**

(We must fulfil these if we want to get closer to reaching our greatest life vision. These are our main priority goals.)

#### **PRIORITY 2: ORANGE GOALS (Our 'Should Do's')**

(These goals must be achieved in the future, but it's not essential that we get 'busy' trying to fulfil them today!)

#### **PRIORITY 3: GREEN GOALS (Our 'Nice to Do's')**

(This kind of goal should be quite self-explanatory.)

Use different colour pens (Red, Orange and Green) to highlight each different Priority on your **Mind Mapping exercise sheets**. In the next section, we'll look at various types of goals in more detail, and how to approach them.



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**THE TRUTH HAS  
A FUNNY WAY  
OF CHANGING  
PEOPLE'S  
PLANS.**

”

**VERONICA ROTH**

**SECTION 5:**

**STAGE 3**

**Defining**

**Your**

**Main**

**Goals**



**"There are some people who live in a dream world, there are others who face reality, and then there are those who turn one into the other."**

**— Douglas H. Everett**

# SECTION 5 | STAGE 3

## DEFINING YOUR MAIN GOALS

Throughout this section you will learn how to:

- Categorise and structure all of your goals.
- Prepare Short Term Mini-Goals that lead you towards fulfilling your Greatest Life Vision.
- Understand how to develop S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goals.
- Document your own personal goals

### 5.1 Different Kinds Of Goals

In the last Section, we identified your 7 primary life areas, and prepared a vision statement for each of them. This is what we'll base the rest of this workbook's exercises upon.

One reason why people fail at goal setting is that they don't understand the various types of goals that we can set in life. In section 3, we noted that goals might involve:

- **Developing a new skill:** Maybe you always wanted to learn a new skill, play an instrument or get better at initiating new relationships.
- **Breaking a bad habit:** e.g. Stopping smoking, exercising more or developing a more positive attitude towards life.
- **Achieving specific outcomes:** This might be building more intimate relationships with friends, becoming financially free or achieving a specified career goal.

The way we manage these various goals will always differ. Where some goals we set will be short term, others will be medium term, and others will be long term. Some of our goals will be easy to accomplish, and others ... well, not so!

The Goals We Set Will Always Be One of the Following:

- **A Greatest Life Vision Goal:** Our greatest 'purpose' in life as defined by the vision statements we set for each of our seven primary life areas. A goal like this will typically not be achievable in one or two simple steps – it'll take us the journey of a lifetime to accomplish this one!
- **Long-Term Main Goals:** These are the main 'life area' goals that will lead us towards fulfilling our greatest life vision.
- **Medium-Term Milestone Goals:** These are the milestone goals in-between the first immediate steps that we need to take today, and our main long-term goals or greatest life vision.
- **Short-Term Mini-Goals:** This type of goal allows our medium term milestone goals to be broken down into smaller, bite size chunks to make them more manageable and achievable.

The diagram on page 87 will show you how your greatest life vision can be achieved through fulfilling your long-term main goals (your main life area vision statements).

You can only achieve your long-term main goals (your main life area vision statements) through fulfilling your medium-term milestone goals, again, of which, can only be met through accomplishing your short-term mini goals. And that's a rap!



**The Goals We Set Will Always Be One of the Following:**

**• A GREATEST LIFE VISION GOAL:**

Our greatest 'purpose' in life as defined by the vision statements we set for each of our seven primary life areas. A goal like this will typically not be achievable in one or two simple steps - it'll take us a lifetime to accomplish this one!

**• LONG-TERM MAIN GOALS:**

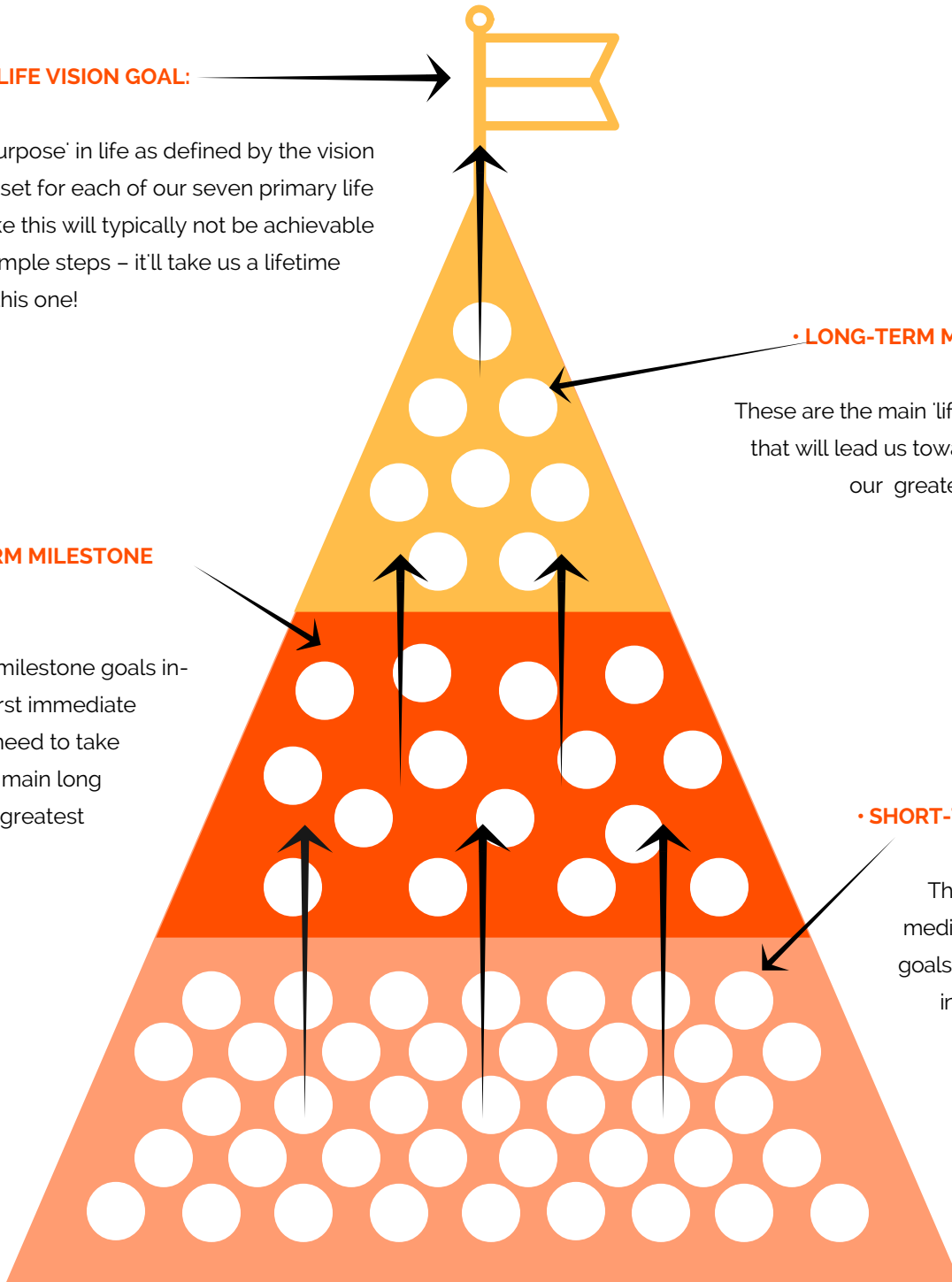
These are the main 'life area' goals that will lead us towards fulfilling our greatest life vision.

**• MEDIUM-TERM MILESTONE GOALS:**

These are the milestone goals in-between the first immediate steps that we need to take today, and our main long-term goals or greatest life vision.

**• SHORT-TERM MINI GOALS:**

These goals allow our medium-term milestone goals to be broken down into smaller, bite size chunks that make them far more manageable.



In similarity to how you'd consider climbing a mountain, we must 'start at the bottom' and work our way up through the goal climbing process. We start with the Short-Term Mini Goals before we fulfil our Medium-Term goals. We then meet our Medium-Term goals before we can see the progress we're making towards our Long-Term goals & our Greatest Life Vision.





### THE GLASS JAR PRINCIPLE

One day an instructor was speaking with a group of his business students and to make an example, he used an illustration to help his students understand what he wanted to teach them. A principle about goals, and a principle about life.

As the instructor stood in front of the group, he said, "Okay then, it's time for a quiz." He went on to pull out a one-gallon, wide mouthed mason jar and set it on a table in front of the group. Then he produced a dozen fist-sized rocks from his drawer and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the wide mouthed jar.

Once the jar had been filled to the top, and no more rocks would fit inside of it, he asked his audience, "Is this jar full?"

Everyone in the class said, "Yes." Then he said, "Really, are you sure?" He proceeded to reach under the table where he pulled out a small bucket of gravel.

The instructor dropped a few handfuls of gravel into the jar, then shook it, causing the pieces of gravel to work themselves down throughout the spaces between the larger rocks.

He smiled and asked his audience once more, "Is the jar full now?" By this time the class had guessed that he was probably trying to prove a point. "Probably not," one of the students answered.

"Good answer!" he replied. He then reached back under the table and produced a bucket of sand. This time, he started dumping the sand in, and it began filling up all the spaces left between the rocks and what the gravel had filled. Once more he asked his class the question, "Is the jar full yet?"

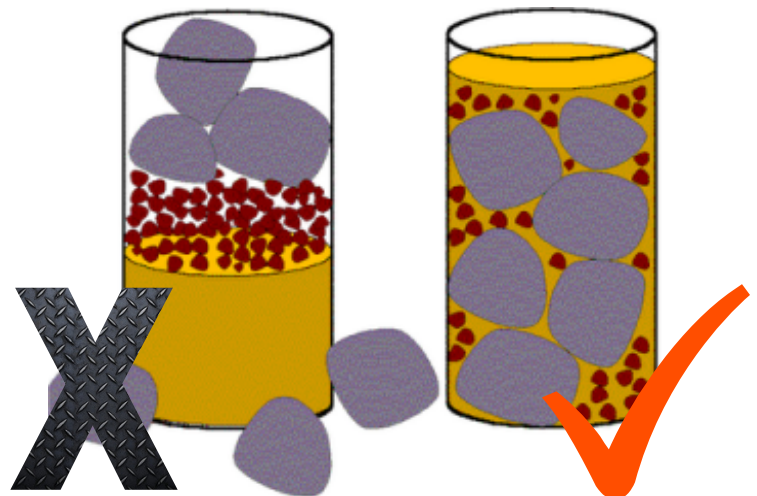
"No!" the class shouted. Once again he said, "Good answer!"

Then he grabbed a large jug of water and started pouring it in until the jar had been filled to the brim. Finally, he looked up at his class and asked them, "What's the purpose of me making this illustration?"

One of his brave students raised his hand and answered, "The point is, no matter how full your diary is, if you work harder or smarter, you can always fit some more appointments into it?"

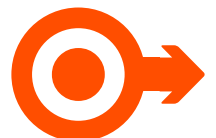
"Nope, wrong answer." the teacher replied, "that's not the point I wanted to make today.

"The principle that this illustration teaches us is: If you don't put your big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all."



So, the question is, what are the big rocks in your life? What are your greatest priorities? Time with your family? Your faith, your education, your personal finances? A worthwhile good cause? Mentoring other people?

**Remember, maintain your priorities and place the Big Rocks in your jar first, or, stand at risk of never squeezing them in at all!**



**EXERCISE 5.1 Understanding & Categorising Your Goals:**

From the goals and aims that you determined for yourself in the last section, identify which of your goals fit into the following categories:

**a) New skill or skill improvement:**

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**b) Getting a new habit or kicking a bad one:**

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**c) Short-Term Mini Goals:**

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**d) Medium-Term Milestone Goals:**

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**e) Long-Term Main Goals:**

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**"It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end."**

— Ursula K. Le Guin







**We've reached a stage in the goal setting and life planning process where it's now time to choose a specific goal that you have identified in one of the previous sections, that you're ready to start working on today.**

You may (or may not) want to choose a relatively simple goal, to begin with, so you can get a sound understanding of how the goal planning process works.

Once you've started making progress with this first goal, you'll then have the confidence to return to your larger list of goals and choose another one to work on, and so on. Remember: Life Planning and Goal Setting are acquired skills that will often take time and practice to become efficient at.

Start with a Priority 1 goal (as these are the ones you must achieve to begin making tangible progress). A Priority 1 goal will motivate you more than what a 'nice to do' goal would. To start, choose a goal that is going to be achievable for you today (e.g. writing a basic business plan could be the first step towards building a sustainable business).

Once you've chosen the first goal you want to work on, write it in BIG LETTERS in the space provided below - as throughout the rest of this section, we'll look at how to build some parameters around the goals with the popular S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goal setting framework.

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. is a goal-setting process that is designed to help people create healthy success-oriented goals. (It is also a variation of the traditional S.M.A.R.T. Goal)

**The specific goal that I want to start working on is:**

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### 5.3 The Components of a S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goal

The Structure we'll be using to set your goals is the S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goals framework. This goal setting framework includes two additional elements beyond what S.M.A.R.T. goals do; this will allow you to ensure that the goals you set are entirely accurate and unique to you.

One benefit of using this process is that your goals are structured in a manageable way. The act of documenting your goal removes it from your thoughts and into a reality.

#### "S" stands for Specific.

Being specific about the goals you are setting will establish a clear finish line and a definitive reference point for you to channel your focus on.

A goal is a well-defined target that gives you clarity, direction, motivation and focus towards what you want to achieve. The goal needs to be significant enough to inspire you to take the appropriate and necessary action steps.

All goals will either be focussed on something that you do want, or, upon something that you don't. Setting goals which will 'add' something to your life will always motivate you more than goals that will potentially take something 'away from' your life.

Ask yourself the big questions: What do I want, when do I want it, where will I get it, why do I want it and how will I get it? These are the specific details that you'll need to know before you fully commit yourself to pursuing any goal that you set.

If your goal is vague, you will find it difficult to achieve without first clearly defining what you want your specific 'ideal' outcome to be.



**'M' stands for Measurable.**

The measure can be quantitative or qualitative, but either way, should be measured against a defined standard of performance or a pre-determined level of expectation.

All goals should have specific metrics so that you know when you're making progress. When focussing on a Long-Term main goal, they can be broken up into smaller segments in order to make the progress you make more measurable (i.e. with Medium-Term and Short-Term goals).

Throughout this time, it's important to ask questions like:

- How much further do I have left to go?
- When will I be likely to reach my target?
- How will I know that I'm making tangible progress?

Measuring your goals helps you to determine if you are going in the right direction and therefore make any appropriate adjustments along the way as required.

**'A' stands for Action Focussed.**

Setting action focussed goals is critical to accomplishing anything in life. There's no point in having a goal to win the Lotto if you don't take action and buy that winning ticket!

You will need to develop a strategy for the action steps you need to take in order to achieve your goal. You don't need to know all of the details to begin with, just start off with a general plan that can be built upon.

Focus on actions you can take immediately that are within the remit of your direct personal control, i.e. never build your hopes upon other people, or upon factors that you are not directly able to influence.

**'R' stands for Relevant.**

A goal must be relevant to your greatest life vision and the Long-Term main goals that you want to achieve. Relevant goals will help you to keep your 'eyes fixed on the prize' and focused on what's important.

Goals need to be relevant to you. They must also be meaningful and significant enough to make a difference in the overall quality of your life.

**'T' stands for Time-specific.**

A timeline or date should be integrated into your goal. Being time-specific helps you to measure your success along the path to reaching your goal.

For goals that have a measurable finish (or ending), e.g., a weight loss goal, it is important to set a timeframe or a deadline for specified results.

Goals without these deadlines attached to them can easily find themselves being put off until tomorrow, and then the next day and the day after that .... you catch my drift!

All serious goals should have a time-bound deadline specifying the exact time and date that you'd like to have your goal accomplished by.

If your goal is shrouded in the idea of, "someday, I'll hopefully get around to it", you'll have a much more difficult time of reaching it. If you want to achieve a goal by the end of the year, you'll be likely to work more aggressively for it.



**'E' stands for Exciting & Enjoyable.**

Regardless of what your goals are, if you don't personally find pursuing them to be exciting and enjoyable, then you'll unlikely locate the motivation to fulfil them.

Goals should be something that naturally excite you and that don't just feel like another chore. If goals don't meet these criteria, you'll be unlikely to prioritise them enough to ever get around to achieving them.

**'R' stands for Revise.**

After evaluating the success of your goal, it's good practice to revise the whole S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goal-setting process and make appropriate adjustments if required.

Goals should be revised and revisited often. Not only is it important to review the progress you're making towards a goal, but it's also crucial to assess whether those goals need to be adjusted in any way.

Ask yourself:

- a) Are the goals I've been pursuing still relevant to my life?
- b) Is this what I still want and need?

The S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goal process allows you to set and achieve specific goals that have definable steps and actions for you to outwork.

While the S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goal process might not always be useful for helping you to achieve your main Long-Term Goals, it will help you get closer towards fulfilling your Medium-Term milestone goals and also your Short-Term mini goals - which will both get you closer to accomplishing your greatest life vision anyway!

**Exercise 5.3**

**Specific Goal Setting Exercise**

Use the following model to define the specific elements of a goal that you chose in **Exercise 5.1**:

**a) What is the specific goal that I want to achieve?**

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**b) Why do I want to achieve this goal?**

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**c) When do I want to have achieved this goal by?**

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**d) Where will I be able to achieve this goal?**

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**e) Who can help me to accomplish this goal?**

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**f) How will this goal be achieved?**

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**This short exercise should help you to gain much deeper clarity on how to break down your goals into more manageable 'bite sized' chunks that are far easier to tackle and complete.**



**Exercise 5.4 Your S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goal Setting Worksheet**

**Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Desired Goal Completion Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Start Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Achieved:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Target Goal:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Structure your goal into a S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goal**

**SPECIFIC:** What exactly do you aim to accomplish? (Remember: be as specific as you can be!)

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**MEASURABLE:** How will you know when you have reached this goal? How will you know that you are making progress towards it?

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**ACTION FOCUSED:** Do you have a good idea about what's required to achieve this goal?

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**RELEVANT:** Why is this goal important to you? How does it fit in with your greatest life vision or Long-Term goals?

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**TIME SPECIFIC:** What timeframe/s do you want to achieve this goal within?

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**EXCITING & ENJOYABLE:** Why is this goal exciting to you and why will you enjoy working towards it?

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**REVISE:** How will you revise and review the progress you are making? How will you know if your plan needs to be ammended?

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**In the next Section of the workbook we'll look at how to Take Action!**



**Congratulations! You've just created your 1st S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goal! Good job & well done ... this process can now be repeated as many times as you need to until goal planning becomes second nature to you.**

**Section 5 Summary:**

Have a look through your notes and check that you've achieved all the outcomes at the start of this section?

- Categorise and structure all of your goals.
- Prepare Short-Term Mini Goals that lead you towards fulfilling your Greatest Life Vision.
- Understand how to develop S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goals.
- Document your own personal goals

**By now, you should now have a fully developed S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goal that is:**

**• Specific and well defined**

(giving you a clear direction for achieving what you want)

**• Measurable**

(by a set standard of units or measurements)

**• Action Focused**

(with a set of clear actions that you can take immediately)

**• Relevant and realistic**

(in view of your greatest life vision)

**• Time Appropriate**

(having a set timeframe or deadline)

**• Exciting and enjoyable to pursue**

(there is no point in writing yourself a boring list of chores)

**• Revisit-able**

(for your ongoing assessment, evaluation and reflection)

Keep your completed S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goal Planning worksheet somewhere prominent (or even print a load of copies off which you can use with all of your other goals).

This is the pinnacle of what we've been working towards so far, and should be reviewed regularly to ensure you stay on course with your greatest life vision and with the various aspects of each goal.

Remember that goal setting and life planning are a set of processes that will constantly evolve and change, and it's important (for your own emotional stability) that you also continue to grow and change throughout the journey.

Make sure that you understand the elements of S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goal planning, because throughout the next Section we'll begin to structure everything that you've done so far into an actionable 'easy to follow' plan.

**Notes:**

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**"Never look back unless you intend on going that way."**

— Henry David Thoreau



“

**THE TRUTH HAS  
A FUNNY WAY  
OF CHANGING  
PEOPLE'S  
PLANS.**

”

**VERONICA ROTH**

**SECTION 6:**

**STAGE 4**

**Preparing  
An Action  
Plan**



**A vision written down within a timeframe becomes a goal. A goal broken down into actionable steps becomes a plan. A plan backed up with action will always become a result.” - Dorothy Canfield Fisher**

## SECTION 6 | STAGE 4

# PREPARING AN ACTION PLAN

**Throughout this section you will learn how to:**

- Prepare an Action Plan to achieve your S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goals
- Understand why your Action Plan needs to be integrated with your routine activities
- Start taking actionable steps towards achieving your goals
- Prioritise short term goals you want to fulfil immediately

This is the final stage to complete before you can get underway with fulfilling your goals.

So now that you have a fully developed SMARTER Goal that is Specific, Measurable, Action Focused, Relevant, Realistic, Time Appropriate, Ethical, Exciting, Enjoyable and Revisited, it's time to turn this into a plan of action.

Remember that your goals are merely your target destination with your Action Plan being the instruction manual on how you get there. Many people produce S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goals that look great on paper, yet are never fully accomplished due to not taking the practical and crucial action steps required to achieve these goals.

Ideas can change the world. But ideas, preparation and even the greatest forms of intelligence are completely useless unless practical steps are taken. Action is the starting point of all progress, and absolutely nothing happens until someone or something begins to move.

So if you wait for something or someone else to act first, it's unlikely you will be able to control the outcomes of the goals and the vision that you hope will come to pass.

Contrary to popular belief, you don't need to be motivated to take action. If necessary, force yourself to take action, and motivation will naturally follow. In other words, action is the fuel to your brain's engine.

Always take action first, and your natural creativity will then rise to the occasion. This, in turn, will further motivate you to go on and take even more action.

### 6.1 The Secret to Goal Setting Success

The secret to achieving your goals is in taking massive action. The key to taking action towards your goals is to integrate an action plan into your day-to-day routine and tasks. This is where it's crucial to develop action plans.

Action plans are specifically for listing the action items or steps required to achieve your goals.

Action plans can be used to incorporate your goal setting actions and day-to-day activities into one simple list. You can use your own system if you like but just simply find a system that works for you. The key here is to be organised!

Whether it's personal goals or career goals, we've all been there - setting overly ambitious and sometimes aggressive goals, chasing after it, hitting road bumps and eventually becoming de-motivated because we never see the goals come to fruition.

**Success is the sum of small efforts,  
repeated day in and day out.**

- Robert Collier



No one likes to be stuck in a plateau. You may spend months working hard towards a goal without seeing any progress, and it can be hugely frustrating when it feels as though your motivations have gone unrewarded.

How you react to a plateau will determine whether you reach your final destination or not. While many people react by quitting or burning themselves out, some people continue to persevere every single day. Those that do persevere will eventually break through their plateau.

### **Why Get-Rich-Quick Schemes Fail**

Getting rich quick does not just fail because the methods used are scams. They fail because the individuals they attract were not interested in what it takes to succeed, to begin with. They were looking for an immediate solution to a problem that requires a lifetime of dedication.

### **One key to Goal Setting Success: Deliberate Slowness**

Instead of searching the fastest path to success, consider the opposite: the slowest path to success. Deliberate slowness to goal setting is not a popular mantra in a fast-paced world where most people are looking for shortcuts.

While most people want to know how the superstar managed to become incredibly successful in just a few months, they don't often want to hear about the individual who meticulously planned their degree of success for more than a decade.

Despite its lack of glamour, deliberate slowness with goal setting is a more effective strategy. It pushes you to stop craving the immediate acquisition of your goal, focus on the process and get down to the practicalities of doing what needs to be done.

This focus on process increases the likelihood that you will keep your goals once you've achieved them.

More importantly, focussing on the process allows you to actually enjoy the road to success, instead of seeing everything as an obstacle towards it.

### **What Are You Going to Master in the next 10 Years?**

Consider your Long Term Main Goals in terms of the next decade, and not the next few months.

If you think in terms of a decade - your strategy changes. Instead of frantically pushing effort into the present moment; you focus more on the continuous behaviours you must adopt in order to succeed and achieve your goals. Instead of trying to achieve a goal for the moment, you focus on how to sustain it for a lifetime.

Malcolm Gladwell, in his excellent book *Outliers*, proposed that it takes over 10,000 hours to master any skill. Computer hackers and virtuosos alike all need to put 10,000 hours of work in before they reach complete mastery of their craft. If you spent three hours a day, for almost every day of the year, it would take you a decade to completely master a skill.

**KEYNOTE:** Instead of searching for the quickest route to your goal, seek out the most sustainable route to your goal. Don't worry about what will get you to your greatest vision immediately, but consider what will keep you at your greatest vision in five or ten years from now.

**"Action is the foundational key to all success"** - Pablo Picasso.



### **Building the Foundation**

Beneath any skyscraper, there is always a large foundation. In order to build upwards, you first need to dig downwards; otherwise, you are resting on uncertain grounds. The same is true of life. Before you can begin to build the greatest empire that the world has ever seen (or whatever your greatest life vision is), build a foundation first.

That foundation is your habits. The things you do, regardless of how you feel or the feedback you get. If you can build a solid foundation, you can build almost anything on top of it. Your foundation will continue putting effort in for you, even when you are too busy, exhausted or stuck in a rut. It is the most important part of your overall goal setting strategy.

With a foundation, you can then try all the experiments and tricks you want to use to speed up the rate of your success.

Work out what you would need to do, every day or every week, in order to sustain your goal. What is the bare minimum output level you would need to meet? Once you establish this level, make it a habit. Commit to it for at least 30 days without stopping. Then commit to continuing it for another 90 days.

Once your foundation is set, you're far less likely to quit out of frustration or exhaustion. You can experience almost any setback, and continue persevering every day.

### **Goal Setting Motives – Lifestyle? Or A Means to an End?**

One significant difference between those who continue and people who quit is the way they approach their goals. The individuals who continue see the path to their goal as part of a lifestyle. Those who quit see the path to their goal as just a means to reach their objective.

Incorporate your goals into your lifestyle. While part of this is similar to setting habits, it is also an attitude. Ask yourself whether you would continue to work this hard, once you have reached your goal? If your answer is 'no', then you probably won't be able to continue in the long run. If your goal takes longer than you realised or you get stuck, you may never reach it.

### **Goal Setting Sustainability**

Sustainability means choosing a strategy that will work on into the future in the same way that it works and get results for you today. Sustainability applies to every area of your life and every aspect of your goal setting. If you pursue paths that are not sustainable, you're not committing to the long term and the likelihood of maintaining your goals.

### **Don't Pursue Half-Committed Goals**

The side-lesson of 'deliberate slowness' is that you shouldn't pursue half-committed ventures. If you want something, you must be committed to accomplishing it whether it takes only one month or a decade. If you are not willing to wait ten years to complete your goal, then you might struggle with the perseverance required to see your greatest life vision come to full fruition.

### **When Deliberately Slow is Surprisingly Fast**

If you focus on changing just one habit per month, you can completely rewrite the behaviours of your life in less than one year. Three years to build a business looks painfully long in the future, but once it's done, your hard work and perseverance begin to pay off.



The best way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time! This is a ridiculous saying really because none of us would actually want to eat an elephant. However, it paints a metaphorical picture of how we can get things done without feeling completely overwhelmed.

Sometimes a Long Term Main Goal can seem too big to tackle. And when something seems too big to tackle, we can feel completely overwhelmed. If we break the goal down into smaller bite-sized chunks, it takes just as long to eat the elephant, but it's a lot more feasible to achieve!

The level of energy and commitment that you put into your Action Planning will have a direct result on whether or not you accomplish your goals. The more you want something – the stronger your motivation will be in achieving it. The greater clarity you have with regards to what you want and how you can go about it – the more chance you have of getting it.

## 6.2 What is action planning?

Action planning is the process that guides the day-to-day activities that will enable you to accomplish your life plan and fulfil your greatest life vision. Your action plan will determine:

- What needs to be done
- When it needs to be done
- By whom it needs to be done
- What resources and inputs are needed to do it

Action planning is the process of operationalising each and every one of your goals. The action plan you produce for any of your goals must consist of the following components:

- A statement describing what must be achieved (the long, medium or short-term goal).
- Details of the specific steps required to fulfil the goal.
- A time schedule of when each step must be completed by and how long it will take.

- Clarification of who will be responsible for ensuring each step is successfully fulfilled.
- Clarification of all the inputs and resources that are needed to accomplish the goal.

As you go through the action planning process, you should end up with a practical plan that will help you to resource and complete the required steps in order to achieve your objective/s and accomplish your long-term goals.

### Action Plan Outputs and Outcomes

An action plan will show the ultimate feasibility of reaching its goals when the activities and action steps define when each action will be carried out. This very act of planning will enable you to think ahead and mentally rehearse the steps you'll take towards fulfilling your goals.

**Remember:** The goals you have set will all be in view of you achieving a specific outcome. An outcome is the result of change. You'll always have a new desired outcome as soon as you have identified an area in your life that needs to be improved upon or changed. Whether or not these outcomes are achieved will be directly influenced by the actions you take towards this improvement or change.

Action Plan Outputs are the tangible things that demonstrate how your goals have been successfully fulfilled - they are the results of all the actions you take.

So, for example, if one of your short or medium-term goals is to write a book, then the output would be 'a published book'. Outputs are the "what" that must come out of actions if a result is to be achieved and your life plan is to be successful.

All of your Action Plan Outputs together should lead to the achievement of a Long Term Main goal and influence the progress you make.





**Goal: Social & Family Relationships**

<b>Action Step:</b>  What needs to be done?	<b>Responsible Person:</b>  Who should take action to complete this step?	<b>Deadline:</b>  When should this step be completed?	<b>Necessary Resources:</b>  What do you need in order to complete this step?	<b>Potential Challenges:</b>  Are there any potential challenges that may impede completion? How will you overcome them?	<b>Result:</b>  Was this step successfully completed? Were any new steps identified in the process?

**Goal: Career & Educational Aspirations**

<b>Action Step:</b>  What needs to be done?	<b>Responsible Person:</b>  Who should take action to complete this step?	<b>Deadline:</b>  When should this step be completed?	<b>Necessary Resources:</b>  What do you need in order to complete this step?	<b>Potential Challenges:</b>  Are there any potential challenges that may impede completion? How will you overcome them?	<b>Result:</b>  Was this step successfully completed? Were any new steps identified in the process?

**Goal: Money & Personal Finances**

<b>Action Step:</b>  What needs to be done?	<b>Responsible Person:</b>  Who should take action to complete this step?	<b>Deadline:</b>  When should this step be completed?	<b>Necessary Resources:</b>  What do you need in order to complete this step?	<b>Potential Challenges:</b>  Are there any potential challenges that may impede completion? How will you overcome them?	<b>Result:</b>  Was this step successfully completed? Were any new steps identified in the process?

**Goal: Physical Health, Recreation & Leisure**

<b>Action Step:</b>  What needs to be done?	<b>Responsible Person:</b>  Who should take action to complete this step?	<b>Deadline:</b>  When should this step be completed?	<b>Necessary Resources:</b>  What do you need in order to complete this step?	<b>Potential Challenges:</b>  Are there any potential challenges that may impede completion? How will you overcome them?	<b>Result:</b>  Was this step successfully completed? Were any new steps identified in the process?

**Goal: Life's Routine Responsibilities**

<b>Action Step:</b>  What needs to be done?	<b>Responsible Person:</b>  Who should take action to complete this step?	<b>Deadline:</b>  When should this step be completed?	<b>Necessary Resources:</b>  What do you need in order to complete this step?	<b>Potential Challenges:</b>  Are there any potential challenges that may impede completion? How will you overcome them?	<b>Result:</b>  Was this step successfully completed? Were any new steps identified in the process?

**Goal: Giving Back to Society & Contribution**

<b>Action Step:</b>  What needs to be done?	<b>Responsible Person:</b>  Who should take action to complete this step?	<b>Deadline:</b>  When should this step be completed?	<b>Necessary Resources:</b>  What do you need in order to complete this step?	<b>Potential Challenges:</b>  Are there any potential challenges that may impede completion? How will you overcome them?	<b>Result:</b>  Was this step successfully completed? Were any new steps identified in the process?

**Goal: Mental, Emotional & Spiritual Health**

<b>Action Step:</b>  What needs to be done?	<b>Responsible Person:</b>  Who should take action to complete this step?	<b>Deadline:</b>  When should this step be completed?	<b>Necessary Resources:</b>  What do you need in order to complete this step?	<b>Potential Challenges:</b>  Are there any potential challenges that may impede completion? How will you overcome them?	<b>Result:</b>  Was this step successfully completed? Were any new steps identified in the process?

### 6.3 Knowing What's Important And What's Not!

Imagine that your employer, colleague or co-worker has asked you to prepare an important presentation to present to your team and the rest of the staff. (This could also be a voluntary presentation or a school project).

You've only got three days to prepare it; your workload is already demanding, and you have lots of other urgent tasks to complete on your 'ever growing' To-Do List. Because of this, you end up feeling stressed; you can hardly concentrate, and everything else going on in your life becomes a distraction.

Time stressors are some of the most common causes of pressure throughout our lives, and they occur as a consequence of having too much to do, in too little time. So, how can we beat this stress, and fulfil all the most important goals in our lives?

Eisenhower's Urgent/Important Principle helps you consider your priorities and identify which of the actions that you need to take are important and which are just simply distractions.

#### What Are "Urgent" and "Important" Activities?

In 1954, former U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower gave a speech to the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches: "I have two kinds of problems: the urgent ones and the important ones. The urgent ones are not important, and the important ones are never urgent."

This "Eisenhower Principle" is said to be how he organised his workload and priorities. Eisenhower identified that great time management means being effective as well as efficient. In other words, we must spend our time doing things that are important and not just the things that seem to be urgent.

To do this for our own life planning and goal setting, it's important that we understand the difference between what's urgent and what's important:

- Important actions have an outcome that leads to us achieving our goals (whether these are professional or personal goals).
- Urgent actions demand immediate attention and are usually associated with fulfilling someone else's goals. They are often the ones we focus on, and they demand attention, as the consequences of not dealing with them will be immediate.

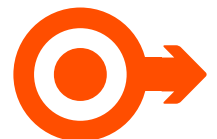
Once we can determine the difference between activities that are important and those that are urgent, we can then overcome the natural tendency to focus on unimportant, urgent activities, so that we can clear enough time to do the things that are essential for our own degree of progress in life.

#### EXERCISE 6.3 Creating Your Priorities List

**List all of the activities and tasks that you want to fulfil moving forward.** As you do this, consider each of the action steps that you've identified in your action plan/s.

Remember to include every task that takes up your time whether at work or at home - regardless of how important or unimportant you believe these tasks might be.

**Over the forthcoming pages, consider each of the activities/tasks on your priorities list and place each one into one of the four prioritisation categories, as illustrated in the diagram and descriptions on pages 113 and 114 (the next two pages).**





## Diagram of Eisenhower's Urgent/Important Principle



### 1) Important and Urgent

There are two definite types of urgent and important activities: those that you could not have anticipated, and those that you have left until the last minute.

You can eliminate last-minute activities by planning ahead and avoiding unnecessary procrastination. If you have lots of urgent and important tasks, highlight which ones you could have foreseen, and consider how you could schedule similar activities ahead of time, so that they don't become urgent.

### 2) Important but Not Urgent

These are the activities that help you to achieve your primary long-term personal and professional goals and also complete the important things. Make sure you allow time to complete these activities thoroughly so that they don't become urgent.

Allow enough time in your schedule to deal with unforeseen problems and last minute crises. This will maximise your likelihood of staying on track, and help avoid the stress of your To-do list becoming more urgent than necessary.

### 3) Not Important but Urgent

Urgent but not important activities are the 'thorn in your side' which prevent you from fulfilling your primary life goals and vision. Consider whether you can reschedule the urgent activities or pass them onto someone else?









Urgent activities usually come about when dealing with other people - sometimes it's a good thing to have the word 'no' in your vocabulary! Alternatively, try to have specified time slots available for others, so that they understand they can have your time when it's appropriate for you.

### 4) Not Important and Not Urgent

These activities are just a distraction and must be avoided whenever possible! You can ignore or cancel a lot of them. However, some of these may be activities that other people want you to do, even though they don't contribute to your own goals and desired life outcomes.

Again, say "no" politely, where possible, and explain why you can't do it. If people can see that you are clear about your objectives and your own personal boundaries, they will avoid asking you to do "not important" activities in the future.

### Your Priorities List

<p>Important and Urgent:  </p>	<p>Not Important but Urgent:  </p>
<p>Important but Not Urgent:  </p>	<p>Not Important and Not Urgent:  </p>

**Key Points to note:**

Eisenhower’s Urgent/Important Principle helps you quickly determine the activities that you should focus on and those that you should ignore.

When you use this tool to prioritise your time, you can manage the urgent issues, at the same time as you work towards the important, longer-term goals. To use this tool, make a list of all your activities and tasks, and then put each into one of the categories below:

- Important and urgent
- Important but not urgent
- Not important but urgent
- Not important and not urgent

Once you’ve completed this, you can then schedule activities and tasks based on their immediate importance and urgency.

**Section 6 Summary:**

**“A vision written down within a timeframe becomes a goal. A goal broken down into actionable steps becomes a plan. A plan backed up with action will always become a result.”**

- Dorothy Canfield Fisher

Reconsider the Section Outcomes at the beginning of this Section. Have you now achieved all of these outcomes?

- Prepare an Action Plan to achieve you SMART.ER. Goals
- Understand why your Action Plan needs to be integrated with your routine activities
- Start taking actionable steps towards achieving your goals
- Prioritise short term goals you want to fulfil immediately

You now have a set of actionable tasks integrated with your day-to-day routine; these will make up your road map to success so use them to steer you towards your end destination - your goal.

**Notes:**

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**Every major achievement in life begins with the first action step we take in that direction.**

- Kain Ramsay

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**SUCCESS IS  
CONNECTED  
WITH ACTION.  
SUCCESSFUL  
PEOPLE KEEP  
MOVING. THEY  
MAKE MISTAKES  
& DON'T QUIT!**

”

**CONRAD HILTON**

# SECTION 7:

## STAGE 5

### Review, Adapt & Adjust



“Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success.” — Stephen A. Brennan

# SECTION 7 | STAGE 5

## REVIEW, ADAPT & ADJUST

**At the end of this Section, you'll be able to:**

- Understand the importance of monitoring and evaluating your goals and your daily progress.
- Understand why your S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goals and Action Plans need to be flexible.
- Use failure as a learning curve for a more effective future.

**Now that you've got an Action Plan Template for integrating into your daily life as part of your Life Planning journey, it is time to introduce you to the last and final stage of this process. Reviewing your goals and the progress you make towards these goals is essential if you want Life Planning success.**

**This section will explain why it's important, and how you can get started!**

### 7.1 Why Monitor and Evaluate Your Goals?

As mentioned in the last section, you need to plan your monitoring and evaluation. This section is all about helping you to go about it.

For the purposes of this workbook, we describe monitoring and evaluation as if they were special types of activities within the action planning process. However, monitoring and evaluation should ideally be an integral part of all stages of the life-planning journey.

Monitoring and evaluation need to be mainstreamed into every goal that you set and every action you take.

The main objective here is to work through each action step within each of your goals and determine how each of the actions will help get you closer towards your greatest life vision.

In doing so you'll pick up on any early signs that you would like to take a different journey in your life to the one you have planned, and this is perfectly normal. In fact, it's expected as your progress through life. The main thing is not to see a change in plans as a failure; it is just a refocusing exercise.

Even your short term mini-goals need to have some flexibility to accommodate the factors that are outwith your control (for example - other priorities on your time); perhaps even things that are within your control however you underestimated during your goal setting process (for example - underestimating how long it actually takes to break a habit).

**Don't forget that the S.M.A.R.T.E.R. components of your goal always need to be applied.**

**"Life's up and downs provide windows of opportunity to determine your values and goals. Think of using all obstacles as stepping stones to build the life you want" - Marsha Sinetar**



## 7.2 Reviewing The Progress Of Your Goals

No matter what kind of goals you set, you should always find something to track your progress. The advantage of doing this is that you'll always know whether you're making progress or not. If you are, you'll feel encouraged and become confident that your goal is achievable. If you aren't, you'll know straight away that what you're doing is not working for you, and it's not moving you any closer to your goal.

Setting and achieving your goals should not be that difficult once you have learnt how to track your progress effectively. All you need to remember is to review your goals frequently, break tasks down into manageable steps, ensure your goals are measurable and finally track how long you're working on them. Once you have mastered these things, you can then accomplish anything you want.

So, what are the different elements of a goal that should be reviewed?

**Measure your progress:** Goals need to be measurable so you can monitor your progress. How you measure your goal should be determined at the start of the goal setting process. By establishing your current measurement and comparing it with your starting point, you'll be able to see if you have progressed towards your goal or not.

### **Are you on track or behind/ahead of your schedule?**

If you are not on track (and particularly if you're behind schedule), it's important that you determine 'why', as this could undermine your whole goal setting and achievement process.

**Is the goal still relevant?** Goals are identified based on the situation at the time of setting them. Has your situation in relation to this goal changed considerably? Is it still necessary or are you still able to fulfil this goal? Is this goal still in line with what you really want to do?

**Are you using your Action Plan?** Your action plan is your roadmap that will lead you towards your final destination. If you are not using your map, how can you expect to get there? Review how you have set up your action plan and if there is another method that would suit you better.

**Are you meeting the deadlines on your action items?** If not, why not? Perhaps your deadlines were unrealistic or your time has now been directed to other more urgent activities – either way, consider why so that you can adjust your action plan accordingly.

### **Do you need to alter your action plan/ timeframe?**

If you answered "No" to either of the above questions, you need to make an adjustment to your plan. Don't forget that action plans need to be flexible enough to allow changes where required and to ensure the plan is relevant to whatever you want to accomplish.

**Is your level of resources (money, support, time, information) adequate for achieving your goal?** Is there a resourcing factor preventing you from fulfilling your goal? Don't spread resources too thinly – extend your deadlines if necessary. Highlight any additional resources you need and then plan out the required steps to help you find them.

**Review your foundations:** Review your planning and preparation for this goal from the previous sections of this workbook; including any key messages, your greatest life vision, personality profile, and mind maps. Are you still on track to achieving your greatest life vision?

**The victory of success is half won when one gains the habit of setting goals and achieving them** - Og Mandino







**7.3 Analysing Your Successes and Failures**

As you progress through your life planning and goal setting journey, you will experience many successes and failures too. The essential thing is not to give up when you have a failure, but analyse the failure so that you can build on that knowledge and improve future goal setting processes.

**5 Reasons Why That Failure Could Be Better Than Success**

This is a bold claim to make. However, in essence - our success is considerably dependent upon how we fail, how we perceive our unsuccessful endeavours; and most importantly - how we react to them afterwards.

Success is really the progressive realisation of worthwhile pre-determined goals. It's this very journey that makes or breaks us. Here are five reasons why failure can actually be more beneficial for you than success:

**1) Failure Inspires Lateral Thinking**

As we all make mistakes, it makes sense that we learn from these and try to find other possible ways to resolve our situation. Failure encourages us to look for alternative solutions that we most likely would not have considered if our goal had been easier to achieve.

**2) Failure Gives Us Experience And Wisdom**

As we make mistakes and learn from them, we tend to react accordingly which makes us slightly more aware of what must be done in order to fulfil our objectives. This wisdom is valuable and something that we can also share with others.

**3) Failure Builds Character**

If we fail in our endeavours, we can choose to take the easy option and give up, or we can learn from our experience, grow in confidence, develop character and become more determined in the pursuit of our goals.

**4) Failure Encourages Further Self Development**

Failing is simply a way of discovering that your methods have not worked. It is not a bad thing; it just requires a different approach. Through careful observation and planning, failure will drive you in the direction of success if you use it as a stepping-stone for simply getting closer to your goals.

**5) Failure Reveals Your Weaknesses**

Are you somebody who passes on all the things you don't do very well or would you rather persevere, making a few mistakes along the way to eventually master the art? Use failure as a chance to improve upon the areas that are letting you down. By better understanding your weaknesses, you will more easily turn these into strengths, as you know exactly what you need to work on!

**Notes:**

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### Success Stories Which Came Through Failure

**1) J.K. Rowling**, author of the Harry Potter novels, was waitressing in Edinburgh while writing the first instalment of what would go on to become one of the best-selling series in history. A dozen publishers rejected the book initially, and the main reason it was finally published was due to her eventual CEO's eight-year-old daughter who begged him to publish it.

**“Failure meant a stripping away of the inessential.”** - J.K. Rowling

**2) Thomas Edison** was both hearing impaired and fidgety. He only lasted three months at school where his teachers said that he was “too stupid to learn anything.” Finally, his parents who had believed what his teachers said about their son decided to homeschool Thomas. In conversation about his invention of the light bulb, he claimed:

**“I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that do not work.”** - Thomas Edison

**3) Ludwig Van Beethoven's** initial skills in music, and the violin were decidedly unimpressive. His teachers considered him hopeless. It was his father who saw potential in him and took over his education.

Beethoven gradually lost his hearing throughout his life, but despite this, four of his greatest pieces were composed when he was completely deaf.

**“Just as well I can write music, thank God, because I can't do anything else!”**

- Ludwig van Beethoven

Although we have focused a lot on failure in this section, it's equally important to analyse your successes, as doing so will give you insight into what's really working for you.

For every goal you fulfil, it is essential you review the goal and the process that you have taken to develop a master strategy, which you can then use again and again as you progress throughout the rest of your goal fulfilling endeavours.

Upon doing this, you'll go from strength to strength and also learn a whole lot of hugely valuable lessons along the way.

So what should you analyse? The earlier lessons in this workbook give you all the ammunition for this analysis. Consider some of the key learning's we've covered so far:

- Where Life Planning goes wrong
- The 7 Deadly Sins of Life Planning
- Your Personality Profile
- Your Aptitude and Intelligence Preferences
- Your Inner Drivers: Deciding What Your Priorities Are
- What is Your Greatest Life Vision?
- Your Most Important Life Areas
- Life Balance Questionnaire
- Getting Clear On What You Want
- Prioritising Your Goals
- Developing SMARTER Goals
- The SECRET to Life Planning Success

Goal success or failure may occur at any of these levels, which is why it's crucial that we put the right amount of effort into each stage of the process.

**The key to analysing your success/failure is to identify the things you did well, what didn't go so well and most importantly, how you can improve upon and do things differently next time.**



**EXERCISE 7.3**

**Doing Your Own Success And Failure Analysis**

**Think about a success and a failure that you've had, and analyse them both:**

**What are your main findings?**

My Success:

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My Failure:

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**"Success is stumbling from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm."**

— Winston S. Churchill

**Does this fit in with the concepts that have been discussed throughout this workbook?**

My Success:

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My Failure:

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**Are there any new A-haa's to add to your notes list?**

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## **“The journey you must take to reach a main goal is always the main reward.”**

— Chinese Proverb

When we set goals, we naturally focus on the result. If we pay attention to the desired achievement, we will discover the path to get there. However, the value that we gain from accomplishing the goal is not solely about the reward of achievement.

Once you fulfil a significant goal, you'll not be the same person that you were when you set out on the journey. The process of accomplishing your goal and the experience that you've gained will have changed you.

Who you become when you achieve an important goal is a someone who's much more likely to achieve more goals. This is why those who are successful in one area, are usually also successful in others.

Life planning and other types of self-improvement are not essentially focused on you getting more stuff. It is not about having a good body, a compatible partner or even about achieving financial freedom. These things may come, but they will merely be results and by-products of the changes that you've made throughout your life journey.

The changes we make within ourselves are always more rewarding than the goals that we ultimately achieve.

When you set goals with the intention of developing yourself rather than a physical symbol of success, you're more likely to achieve them.

You might need the physical symbol to drive you and to help you measure your progress, but it's the journey that will change you, and the lessons you learn on the way will always be your most significant reward.

Even if you never fulfil your main long-term goals, you'll still have experienced changes in yourself, and this will always be an accomplishment in its very own right.

### **7.4 What to do after achieving a goal?**

What do you do once you've achieved your main goal and made it to the top of your mountain?

Ironically, for some people, accomplishing milestone goals can become a huge problem, if, upon completion of the goal, the only direction left to go is down!

An example of this would be seen in ageing celebrities, models or professional athletes (who have problems with growing old gracefully).

There was a retired Scottish footballer, who'd fulfilled a phenomenal career, yet refused to hang up his boots at the right time. He ended up spending his final years in the game, sitting on the bench, riddled with injury, and not knowing what he was going to do next with his life. Watching the younger generation of superstars constantly outperform him, done his self esteem no favours what so ever!

There are strategies that we can easily implement to avoid the slippery downhill slope that comes after reaching a big goal. Some of these strategies include the following:

#### **Set a New Goal:**

This approach works well in areas where the goal that you've just fulfilled has further room for expansion (or development).

Further goal setting is a popular approach for business, creative and entrepreneurial types who recognise that there are always bigger deals to accomplish (and more fish in the sea). Watch out, though, as a never ending list of goals can feel like a tiresome vicious cycle!

**Move the Original Goalposts Further out:**

This strategy focuses on expanding the original goal rather than simply setting a new one. For someone who has completed a marathon (for example), the next goal might be to complete a triathlon?

Following on from before, as I mentioned the former footballer ... for him, moving the goalposts out further, ended up requiring him to hang up his football boot, but then encourage a younger generation to put on theirs. In short, he became the coach of a youth football team.

**Retire:**

Retiring might be a valid option if you have exhausted yourself in view of achieving your goal. It's often better to quit while you're ahead and leave on a high note. A completed goal does not always have to lead to a new one. Take time to have a break, 'smell the roses' and don't worry about rushing to a bigger and better goal right away (if ever again).

**Join A Community Of Other Achievers:**

Let's say that you completed a marathon or met your weight-loss target. Join or stay with a club that you are already part of, and simply help others to achieve their goals by allowing them to learn from your experiences. This strategy involves just 'staying in the loop'.

**Don't Let it Die a Slow Death:**

If you're finding that your career has peaked, be careful that you don't become a casualty of a slow painful death. Persevere, change goals, quit or stay involved in a different capacity, but don't accomplish your goal and then let everything slowly fall apart because it could drain the life out of you in the process.

Too many individuals experience the let downs associated with passing their peak without having determined someplace else to turn.

These strategies can also work for individuals who have not yet achieved a main long-term goal, or, have established that there's no viable way to reach it. Make the necessary changes to your goals in order to make them more achievable.

If your goal were a worthwhile one, it would most likely have demanded a lot of effort, energy, focus, time and money to complete. Setting and achieving your larger goals will usually involve enormous personal growth (and huge personal sacrifice).

Once you have reached any of your goals, your degree of personal growth shouldn't stop there. Growth can be in the same life area, or in a new life area. But be careful to avoid the opposite effect, 'personal shrink', as this will just leave you feeling unfulfilled, frustrated and bored.

So, as you move forward throughout the remainder of your years, let life planning, goal setting and goal achievement become a 'way of life' for you.

**YOU WON'T REGRET IT!**

**Notes:**

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**LIFE TAKES ON  
MEANING WHEN  
YOU BECOME  
MOTIVATED, SET  
GOALS AND  
PURSUE THEM IN  
AN UNSTOPPABLE  
MANNER!**

”

**LES BROWN**

# **FINAL SECTION: A Few Words To Close**



**"Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort" - Paul J. Meyer**



## FINAL SECTION: A FEW WORDS TO CLOSE

**Our lives will often be referred to as a 'race', and in a similar way to vehicles, our lives need a 'pit stop' after completing a couple of laps. It's in the pit stop that we can fuel up, tune up, improve the engine's capability and change tires if necessary before we re-enter the race and make it across the finish line.**

In terms of this workbook, we've now come to the end of the race. By now, you should be clear about the areas of your life that you wish to make positive improvements in. If this is the case, then it's time to continue the rest of your race and not keep coming off at the same corners as you have done in the past.

It is possible to live an effective life without a plan, in the same way that you can reach a geographical destination without a map. However, a life plan will allow you to live far more efficiently and with fewer unnecessary mistakes.

So consider your life plan regularly, amend it when appropriate and remember to monitor and review the results you achieve as you continue to move forward and make further progress.

Life is easier with a plan to follow, and you'll also be much more likely to enjoy the journey.

As you move forward, why not share the lessons you've learned with others, in a way that will allow them to get better results in their lives also.

**And other than these last few word, I wish you a fond farewell, and all the very best for your future. Good luck!**

### Feedback:

All feedback on this Life Planning Workbook would be very much appreciated in order to make improvements going forward. Please feel free to offer constructive criticism and suggestions on how this book could be improved. Every piece of feedback will be considered and reviewed.

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**"When you do the things in the present  
that you can see, you are shaping the  
future that you are yet to see"**

**- Idowu Koyenikan**

“

**IF YOU DON'T HAVE  
A PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE,  
CHANCES ARE YOU'LL  
FALL INTO SOMEONE  
ELSE'S PLAN. AND  
GUESS WHAT YHEY'LL  
HAVE PLANNED FOR  
YOU? NOT MUCH!**

”

**JIM ROHN**