

RECORD

Phil
in the
(blanks)

LIVING BY DESIGN

Dr. Phil

BE YOU
ON PURPOSE

Are You Living A Life That Is More In Tune With Your

AUTHENTIC SELF

Whom You Were Created To Be

Or Are You More in Tune With Your

FICTIONAL SELF

Whom The World Has Told You To Be?

***What is the difference between
authentic and fictional self?***

**WHEN YOU'RE ASKED, "WHO ARE YOU?"
WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER?**

"I'M A MOM." "I'M A DOCTOR." "I LIVE IN OHIO."

Often the answer is not who you are, but what you do, what your social station is, or how you see your function in life. You can't answer who you are, because you don't know.

The authentic self is the you that can be found at your absolute core. It is the part of you not defined by your job, function, or role. It is the composite of all your skills, talents, and wisdom. It is all of the things that are uniquely yours and need expression, rather than what you believe you are supposed to be and do.

FICTIONAL SELF

When you're not living faithfully to your authentic self, you find yourself feeling incomplete, as if there is a hole in your soul. You may have found that it's easier to fill the roles your family and friends expect of you, rather than becoming whom you want to be. Living this way drains you of the critical life energy you need to pursue the things you truly value.

When you live a life that has you ignoring your true gifts and talents while performing assigned or inherited roles instead, you are living as your fictional self.

The fictional self sends you false information about who you are and what you should be doing with your life. It blocks the information you need to maintain the connection with your authentic identity. Relying on information from the fictional self means you're putting your trust in a broken compass.

DO THE WORK...

WHO ARE YOU?

(REMEMBER: THE PART OF YOU "NOT" DEFINED BY YOUR JOB, FUNCTION, OR ROLE. IT IS THE COMPOSITE OF ALL YOUR SKILLS, TALENTS, AND WISDOM)

HOW DID YOU GET TO BE WHERE YOU ARE?

I Would Rather Be

HAPPY THAN RIGHT

WHAT DO I WANT?

WHAT MUST I DO TO HAVE IT?

HOW WOULD I FEEL WHEN I HAVE IT?

SO, WHAT I "REALLY" WANT IS TO FEEL _____ (PHIL IN THE
BLANK).

*The only person you
can control is YOU.*

AUTHENTICITY LITMUS TEST

If you want to make the changes that will help you live authentically now and in the future, you need to know where you are. The following exercise is designed to help you see how you're doing. Read each of the statements below and circle the number under the response that best reflects how you're living right now. Be as honest as you can. Anything less is a waste of your time and effort.

| | Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|---|-------|-----------|-------|--------|
| I am constantly tired, stressed, emotionally flat, or even depressed, worried, and unhappy. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| My life includes things I profess to hate, but I continue to do them anyway. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| My life is dominated by anxiety and worry, but I'm not doing anything to change it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| My mind has gotten dull and I don't give much time to new ideas or possibilities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| My emotions are marked by cynicism, apathy, hopelessness, and a lack of optimism. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| I am choosing and behaving in ways that are based on what I think others expect or want. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Scoring: Add up the numbers and see your score.

TOTAL:

6-10 You've stayed in touch with the real you and, for the most part, make choices that reflect who you are and what you care about. Consider this an opportunity to continue to learn about yourself and keep growing, to "polish up" the positive momentum of your life.

11-15 You may have some sense of who you are and what you care about, but you are making compromises that put your authentic self at risk. It's time to stop moving in the direction you're going and make the changes that will help you be whom you want to be.

16-20 You may be on the right road, but you're driving in the wrong direction. This is the perfect moment to make a U-turn and start getting rid of the lies and misperceptions that are distorting your view of you and your life.

21-24 It's time for you to get real. You're cheating yourself and the people you love of a lot of happiness and fulfillment because you're making choices that are eroding the quality of your life. I know you care about the quality of your life, and right now is the time to commit to significant changes that help you rediscover the strong, loving, worthy individual you are.

Listed below are a series of situations. Finish each of the sentences briefly, using as many descriptive terms as you can. Include emotions (sad, angry, hurt, happy, hopeful, scared, tense), physical reactions (tired, shaky, sweaty, hyped-up, weak-kneed, full of pep, headache), and thoughts (“I can’t do this,” “this should be fun,” “he doesn’t like me,” “she’ll probably say no,” “it’s my fault”).

1. When someone compliments my appearance, I . . .
2. When a family member criticizes something I do, I . . .
3. When I make a wrong turn on the road, I . . .
4. When I need to register a complaint with a business associate or vendor, I . . .
5. When a total stranger treats me badly, I . . .
6. When someone close to me successfully gets in shape, I . . .
7. When the service in a shop or restaurant is poor, I . . .
8. When someone does something special for me that they don’t have to do, I . . .
9. When I forget to do something I promised to do, I . . .
10. When my boss asks me to redo something at work, I . . .

WHAT IS THE PAYOFF?

Now that you've taken a first look at some of your typical reactions, I want you to go back and give them a second look. Put a star (*) next to every statement you've written above that could be categorized, either partially or wholly, as a negative assessment of yourself. In other words, what negative self-talk are you throwing at yourself in these situations? Once you've identified the negative internal dialogue, use the spaces below to answer this question about each of the situations in which you put yourself in a negative light: What do you get out of reacting with self-criticism?

This is what the payoff factor is all about. The low self-esteem acted out in your internal dialogue can be a handy excuse for choosing not to change, not to challenge yourself, not to step up to the plate. What's the payoff for you?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

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- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

THE BIG

PAYOFF

Payoffs can be as simple as **money** gained by going to work to **psychological** payoffs of **acceptance, approval, praise, love** or **companionship**.

It is possible, you may be feeding off unhealthy, addictive, and imprisoning payoffs, such as self-punishment or distorted self-importance.

Be alert to the possibility that your behavior is controlled by fear of rejection. It's easier not to change. Try something new or put yourself on the line.

Also, consider if your need for immediate gratification creates an appetite for a small payoff now rather than a large payoff later.

*Identify the payoff. Control the currency.
When you control the currency,
then YOU control YOU!*

Life Law #1: You either get it, or you don't.

Strategy: Become one of those who gets it.

It's easy to tell these people apart. Those who "get it" understand how things work and have a strategy to create the results they want. Those who don't are stumbling along looking puzzled and can be found complaining that they never seem to get a break.

You must do what it takes to accumulate enough knowledge to "get it." You need to operate with the information and skills that are necessary to win. Be prepared, tune in, find out how the game is played and play by the rules.

In designing a strategy and getting the information you need – about yourself, people you encounter, or situations – be careful from whom you accept input. Wrong thinking and misinformation can seal your fate before you even begin.

Life Law #2: You create your own experience.

Strategy: Acknowledge and accept accountability for your life. Understand your role in creating results.

You cannot dodge responsibility for how and why your life is the way it is. If you don't like your job, you are accountable. If you are overweight, you are accountable. If you are not happy, you are accountable. You are creating the situations you are in and the emotions that flow from those situations.

Don't play the role of victim, or use past events to build excuses. It guarantees you no progress, no healing, and no victory. You will never fix a problem by blaming someone else. Whether the cards you've been dealt are good or bad, you're in charge of yourself now.

Every choice you make – including the thoughts you think – has consequences. When you choose the behavior or thought, you choose the consequences. If you choose to stay with a destructive partner, then you choose the consequences of pain and suffering. If you choose thoughts contaminated with anger and bitterness, then you will create an experience of alienation and hostility. When you start choosing the right behavior and thoughts – which will take a lot of discipline – you'll get the right consequences.

Life Law #3: People do what works.

Strategy: Identify the payoffs that drive your behavior and that of others.

Even the most destructive behaviors have a payoff. If you did not perceive the behavior in question to generate some value to you, you would not do it. If you want to stop behaving in a certain way, you've got to stop "paying yourself off" for doing it.

Find and control the payoffs, because you can't stop a behavior until you recognize what you are gaining from it. Payoffs can be as simple as money gained by going to work to psychological payoffs of acceptance, approval, praise, love, or companionship. It is possible, that you are feeding off unhealthy, addictive and imprisoning payoffs, such as self-punishment or distorted self-importance.

Be alert to the possibility that your behavior is controlled by fear of rejection. It's easier not to change. Try something new or put yourself on the line. Also, consider if your need for immediate gratification creates an appetite for a small payoff now rather than a large payoff later.

Life Law #4: You cannot change what you do not acknowledge.

Strategy: Get real with yourself about life and everybody in it. Be truthful about what isn't working in your life. Stop making excuses and start making results.

If you're unwilling or unable to identify and consciously acknowledge your negative behaviors, characteristics or life patterns, then you will not change them. (In fact, they will only grow worse and become more entrenched in your life.) You've got to face it to replace it.

Acknowledgment means slapping yourself in the face with the brutal reality, admitting that you are getting payoffs for what you are doing, and giving yourself a no-kidding, bottom-line truthful confrontation. You cannot afford the luxury of lies, denial or defensiveness.

Where are you now? If you hope to have a winning life strategy, you have, to be honest about where your life is right now. Your life is not too bad to fix, and it's not too late to fix it. But be honest about what needs fixing. If you lie to yourself about any dimension of your life, an otherwise sound strategy will be compromised.

Life Law #5: Life rewards action.

Strategy: Make careful decisions and then pull the trigger. Learn that the world couldn't care less about thoughts without actions.

Talk is cheap. It's what you do that determines the script of your life. Translate your insights, understandings, and awareness into purposeful, meaningful, constructive actions. They are of no value until then. Measure yourself and others based on results – not intentions or words.

Use any pain you have to propel you out of the situation you are in and to get you where you want to be. The same pain that burdens you now could be turned to your advantage. It may be the very motivation you need to change your life.

Decide that you are worth the risk of taking action and that your dreams are not to be sold out. Know that putting yourself at risk may be scary, but it will be worth it. You must leave behind the comfortable and familiar if you are to move onward and upward.

Life Law #6: There is no reality, only perception.

Strategy: Identify the filters through which you view the world. Acknowledge your history without being controlled by it.

You know and experience this world only through the perceptions that you create. You have the ability to choose how you perceive any event in your life, and you exercise this power of choice in every circumstance, every day of your life. No matter what the situation, you choose your reaction, assigning meaning and value to an event.

We all view the world through individual filters, which influence the interpretations we give events, how we respond, and how we are responded to. Be aware of the factors that influence the way you see the world, so you can compensate for them and react against them. If you continue to view the world through a filter created by past events, then you are allowing your past to control and dictate both your present and your future.

Filters are made up of fixed beliefs, and negative ideas that have become entrenched in your thinking. They are dangerous because if you treat them as fact, you will not seek, receive or process new information, which undermines your plans for change. If you "shake up" your belief system by challenging these views and testing their validity, the freshness of your perspective can be startling.

Life Law #7: Life is managed; it is not cured.

Strategy: Learn to take charge of your life and hold on. This is a long ride, and you are the driver every single day.

You are a life manager, and your objective is to actively manage your life in a way that generates high-quality results. You are your own most important resource for making your life work. Success is a moving target that must be tracked and continually pursued.

Effective life management means you need to require more of yourself in your grooming, self-control, emotional management, interaction with others, work performance, dealing with fear, and in every other category, you can think of. You must approach this task with the most intense commitment, direction, and urgency you can muster.

The key to managing your life is to have a strategy. If you have a clear-cut plan, and the courage, commitment, and energy to execute that strategy, you can flourish. If you don't have a plan, you'll be a stepping stone for those who do. You can also help yourself as a life manager if you manage your expectations. If you don't require much of yourself, your life will be of poor quality. If you have unrealistic standards, then you are adding to your difficulties.

Life Law #8: We teach people how to treat us.

Strategy: Own, rather than complain about, how people treat you. Learn to renegotiate your relationships to have what you want.

You either teach people to treat you with dignity and respect, or you don't. This means you are partly responsible for the mistreatment that you get at the hands of someone else. You shape others' behavior when you teach them what they can get away with and what they cannot.

If the people in your life treat you in an undesirable way, figure out what you are doing to reinforce, elicit or allow that treatment. Identify the payoffs you may be giving someone in response to any negative behavior. For example, when people are aggressive, bossy or controlling – and then get their way – you have rewarded them for unacceptable behavior.

Because you are accountable, you can declare the relationship "reopened for negotiation" at any time you choose, and for as long as you choose. Even a pattern of relating that is 30 years old can be redefined. Before you reopen the negotiation, you must commit to doing so from a position of strength and power, not fear and self-doubt.

Life Law #9: There is power in forgiveness.

Strategy: Open your eyes to what anger and resentment are doing to you. Take your power back from those who have hurt you.

Hate, anger, and resentment are destructive, eating away at the heart and soul of the person who carries them. They are absolutely incompatible with your own peace, joy, and relaxation. Ugly emotions change who you are and contaminate every relationship you have. They can also take a physical toll on your body, including sleep disturbance, headaches, back spasms, and even heart attacks.

Forgiveness sets you free from the bonds of hatred, anger, and resentment. The only way to rise above the negatives of a relationship in which you were hurt is to take the moral high ground and forgive the person who hurt you.

Forgiveness is not about another person who has transgressed against you; it is about you. Forgiveness is about doing whatever it takes to preserve the power to create your own emotional state. It is a gift to yourself, and it frees you. You don't have to have the other person's cooperation, and they do not have to be sorry or admit the error of their ways. Do it for yourself.

Life Law #10: You have to name it before you can claim it.

Strategy: Get clear about what you want and take your turn.

Not knowing what you want – from your major life goals to your day-to-day desires – is not OK. The most you'll ever get is what you ask for. If you don't even know what it is that you want, then you can't even ask for it. You also won't even know if you get there!

By being specific in defining your goal, the choices you make along the way will be more goal-directed. You will recognize which behaviors and choices support your goals – and which do not. You will know when you are heading toward your goal, and when you are off track.

Be bold enough to reach for what will truly fill you up, without being unrealistic. Once you have the strength and resolve enough to believe that you deserve what it is that you want, then and only then will you be bold enough to step up and claim it. Remember that if you don't, someone else will.

"I got a wake-up call that made me be one of those people that 'gets it' - that made me stop stumbling through life and pay attention to what's going on so I could seize the moment and live on purpose!"

- Seize what's there and live on purpose.
- Personal Truth- what you believe about yourself when nobody else is looking or listening.
- Don't compare your personal truth(s) to another individual's personal mask.
- Cognitive Dissonance is an internal conflict that needs to be resolved.

TURN YOUR EAR INWARD:

- Ask yourself, "What do you say to yourself?"
- What's your internal dialogue?
- How do you label yourself?

UNLESS YOU HAVE THAT INTERNAL DIALOGUE, YOU'LL NEVER GET THE RESULTS THAT YOU TRULY DESERVE. IF A "THOUGHT" IS RATIONAL OR NOT, IT HAS TO BE GROUNDED IN OBJECTIVE FACT.

- It has to be in your best interest
- It has to protect and prolong your life
- It has to get you closer to the healthy goals you want in your life

Your internal dialogue powerfully programs and shapes your self-concept. If you believe you are worthy and strong, you will live up to that truth. The following exercises will help to focus your habits and patterns and hopefully set you free of some of your negative internal dialogue:

EXERCISE 1

- Pick a day for doing this exercise, preferably a day when you don't plan to be doing anything dramatic or out of the ordinary. Keep your journal or a small notebook and pen handy throughout the day. Make a series of appointments with yourself. Every two hours, stop what you're doing, take out the notebook, and simply jot down observations about the self-talk you've been having for the past two hours. Each of these eight or ten note-taking sessions need only take a few minutes. Write down what you've been telling yourself about:
- Your appearance:
- The work that you've been doing for the past two hours:
- Your intelligence:
- Your competence:
- Your skills and abilities:
- Your worth:

If you find it easier not to wait for the two-hour mark, but instead to jot things down as you hear yourself saying them, then by all means, do it that way. The point is to develop a thorough understanding of one day's internal dialogue, without completely upsetting your daily schedule.

INTERNAL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

EXERCISE 2

Imagine that you are scheduled to make an important presentation at work tomorrow. A number of important customers or clients, as well as several of your coworkers and your boss, will be there watching. It's the night before. You're lying in bed, in the dark, thinking about the presentation. What are you saying to yourself?

Take whatever time you need to consider, honestly and thoroughly, the kinds of messages that would be going through your head. You'd be having a conversation with yourself, so what would you be saying? Write down as much of this conversation as you can.

EXERCISE 3

Look back at the writing that you did for both Exercises 1 and 2. Do you see common themes or threads running through both sets of writings? If so, what are those common features? Describe them in writing.

EXERCISE 4

When you look back over your writing for Exercises 1 and 2, how would you describe the overall tone or mood of your internal dialogue? Is it positive, upbeat? Or is it pessimistic, defeatist, self-condemning? If it is positive, is it rational? Or is it just some rah-rah self-con job with no substance? Are there particular areas where what you've written sounds especially harsh or critical? By contrast, does your internal dialogue as to some areas of your life strike you as particularly upbeat and optimistic? Circle any writing that you think illustrates especially positive or especially negative internal dialogue.

EXERCISE 5

Again, glancing back over your writing for both Exercises 1 and 2: What does your writing tell you about your locus of control? Is your internal dialogue oriented externally, internally, or in accordance with chance? Write down your answer.

EXERCISE 6

As you look at your writing, answer this question: What kind of a friend are you to yourself throughout the day? If you were a friend whispering in your ear the messages you recorded in Exercises 1 and 2, what kind of friend would you be? You're the one who talks to you, all day, every day. What kind of friend are you? Are you actively creating a toxic environment for yourself, contaminating your experience of the world? Or are the messages that you send yourself characterized by a rational and productive optimism?

INTERNAL DIALOGUE EXERCISE

Think about what you say to yourself. What's your internal dialogue? How do you label yourself?

| DIALOGUE | IS THE THOUGHT GROUNDED IN OBJECTIVE FACT? CAN THIS STATEMENT BE PROVED TRUE OR FALSE OR IS IT BELIEF, OPINION, OR PERSONAL PREFERENCE? | IS THE THOUGHT IN YOUR BEST INTEREST? | WILL IT PROTECT AND PROLONG YOUR LIFE? | WILL IT GET YOU CLOSER TO HEALTHY GOALS? |
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It's time to put your life on Project Status! Learn how to prioritize yourself and accomplish your goals to get where you want to be. Dr. Phil says it's never too late to get started, and he leads you on a stronger and more passionate self-journey.

Live your life as if everything matters, and you'll become everything you're meant to be: a true champion.

It is very clear that we are creatures of habit. We get a life momentum flowing just like a river, and rerouting a river is a big job. If you're going to make changes in your life, it requires support from those around you and a commitment to do what you want until it comes to be. It isn't a matter of doing it for a few days or a few weeks, it's about doing it until you get what you want.

The key is to go from awareness and consciousness to putting what you want on project status. Make it a project. Think about it. If you were just aware that you wanted the garage to be painted, it wouldn't get painted. But, if you make it a project with a deadline, it will get done. If you want change, make it project status.

Commit to Change. Think About Your Goals.

- Why do you want to achieve your goals?
- Are you making a change because it is assigned by authority?
- Are you making a change because somebody else wants you to?
- Intellectually, do you know you are ready for a change?
- Are you mentally and emotionally ready for change?

PROJECT STATUS TIMELINE:

| Date | Goal | Reason To Change | Date of Achievement |
|------|------|------------------|---------------------|
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THE FOUR STAGES OF

READINESS

Whether as a family or as an individual, change cannot happen unless you are ready for it.

Stage 1: Compelled by authority to change.

Stage 2: Comply to escape criticism. (“It’s when everybody expects you to do it, so you fulfill their expectations.”)

Stage 3: Intellectually aware of the need for change.

Stage 4: Mentally and emotionally self-motivated by change-

Stage 4 is when you can honestly say....

‘I am so sick to death of this that I will not put up with this for another second, for another minute of another hour of another day. I don’t care how scary it is, I don’t care what’s on the other side, I will not put up with this for another second. I will change this. I don’t care what it takes.’ That’s when you get change!’ – Dr. Phil

THE SEVEN CORE CHARACTERISTICS OF A

CHAMPION

1. Claim it! Champions are very clear about what they want.

Do you have a very clear definition of success?

“I can tell you how it's going to look. I can tell you how it's going to feel. I can tell you how it's going to smell. I can tell you who's going to be there when it happens. I can tell you everything about it.”

Provide rich detail of your success:

2. Have A Strategy: Champions have a strategy for getting from where they are to where they want to be.

Write out a strategy for success and break your goals down in measurable terms:

THE SEVEN CORE CHARACTERISTICS OF A

CHAMPION

3. The Universe Rewards Actions: Champions don't stand around with good intentions.

What actions are you taking to reach your goals?

4. Willing to Take Risks: Champions do not live in a comfort zone.

What scares people the most if you succeed?

What are some ways to get out of your comfort zone?

5. Deal with Reality: Champions do not kid themselves and are not people that live in denial.

What are some issues you are not dealing with?

How can you “work” the problem?

What are some steps you can take going forward?

THE SEVEN CORE CHARACTERISTICS OF A

CHAMPION

6. Nucleus: Every single Champion surround themselves with people that want them to succeed. They surrounded themselves with like-minded people that share their passion and want them to do well.

Name the people in your life that want you to succeed and how you know.

7. Passion and Excitement: The last characteristic that goes along with nucleus because it is what bonds people together is passion and excitement.

What are you passionate about? What excites you? Are you actively doing what you are passionate about? If so, how? If no...WHY NOT?

THE TEN

DEFINING MOMENTS

Only **YOU** will know when and in what circumstances the defining moments of your life occurred. Take time to think through the various stages of the life you have lived so far.

"In every person's life, there have been moments, both positive and negative, that have defined and redefined who you are. Those events entered your consciousness with such power that they changed the very core of who and what you thought you were."

You may want to deal with only one age range in a single sitting. That's fine as long as you come back to the exercise again and again until you've completed it.

Perhaps you will not immediately remember something from your youngest years, but an adolescent memory is uppermost on your mind. Push yourself to access the earlier years, but **don't get hung up if defining childhood moments don't surface.**

Keep going. You can come back to the earlier time after you've explored some of the later experiences. The life stories you're about to tell are important because they have had consequences in your life. They deserve your full concentration and focus.

DEFINING YOUR EXTERNAL FACTORS

Age Groups

Characteristic Defining Moments and Memories

1 to 5 years old

- interactions with family
- playing games
- going to nursery school for the first time
- learning to sleep in the dark
- noticing people aging

6 to 12 years old

- grade-school years
- teacher replacing parent for the first time
- sibling types to cope with
- having to prove yourself in a new group

13 to 20 years old

- turmoil and frustration
- learning about being an adult
- breaking away from the family
- discovering the "big deal" about sex
- social relations taking on primary importance
- whether you belong to the "in" crowd
- love
- rites of passage or initiations
- thinking about the future

DEFINING YOUR EXTERNAL FACTORS

Age Groups

Characteristic Defining Moments and Memories

21 to 38 years old

- beginning life as a citizen of the community
- jobs
- responsibility for a family
- learning how to be a partner in life
- learning how to be a parent
- dealing with lack of knowledge, power, or self-discipline
- newfound admiration for our parents or other role models

39 to 55 years old

- beginning a new era of life
- settling into vocation and future expectations
- stable living situation
- paying more attention to yourself

56 years old on

- thoughts of retirement from work
- release from some family and community responsibilities
- losing some physical vitality
- confronting more limitations
- turning over responsibilities to others
- getting to know others in more intimate, less competitive ways

DEFINING MOMENT #1

- Where are you at this moment?
- How old are you?
- Who is there with you, or who is supposed to be there with you?

- What is happening that makes this moment so significant?

- What emotions or changes of emotions are you experiencing (e.g., loneliness, anger, fear, confusion, joy, power, helplessness)?

- How would you change this situation if you could?

- What is your mental/physical experience?
 - State of mind
 - Smells
 - Tastes
 - Touch
 - Happiness/sadness
 - Strength/weakness

DEFINING MOMENT #1

- If you could speak to someone at this moment, whom would it be? What would you say?
- What are you saying to yourself?
- What do you need right now more than anything else?
- Now bring yourself back to the present and answer the following questions.
 - How do you feel now about this defining moment?
 - What emotions are you having now?
 - What are you telling yourself about these events today?
 - What power and self-determination, if any, did you lose to this event, if it was a negative event? (If it was positive, what did you learn or gain)

DEFINING MOMENT #2

- Where are you at this moment?
- How old are you?
- Who is there with you, or who is supposed to be there with you?

- What is happening that makes this moment so significant?

- What emotions or changes of emotions are you experiencing (e.g., loneliness, anger, fear, confusion, joy, power, helplessness)?

- How would you change this situation if you could?

- What is your mental/physical experience?
 - State of mind
 - Smells
 - Tastes
 - Touch
 - Happiness/sadness
 - Strength/weakness

DEFINING MOMENT #2

- If you could speak to someone at this moment, whom would it be? What would you say?
- What are you saying to yourself?
- What do you need right now more than anything else?
- Now bring yourself back to the present and answer the following questions.
 - How do you feel now about this defining moment?
 - What emotions are you having now?
 - What are you telling yourself about these events today?
 - What power and self-determination, if any, did you lose to this event, if it was a negative event? (If it was positive, what did you learn or gain)

DEFINING MOMENT #3

- Where are you at this moment?
- How old are you?
- Who is there with you, or who is supposed to be there with you?
- What is happening that makes this moment so significant?
- What emotions or changes of emotions are you experiencing (e.g., loneliness, anger, fear, confusion, joy, power, helplessness)?
- How would you change this situation if you could?
- What is your mental/physical experience?
 - State of mind
 - Smells
 - Tastes
 - Touch
 - Happiness/sadness
 - Strength/weakness

DEFINING MOMENT #3

- If you could speak to someone at this moment, whom would it be? What would you say?
- What are you saying to yourself?
- What do you need right now more than anything else?
- Now bring yourself back to the present and answer the following questions.
 - How do you feel now about this defining moment?
 - What emotions are you having now?
 - What are you telling yourself about these events today?
 - What power and self-determination, if any, did you lose to this event, if it was a negative event? (If it was positive, what did you learn or gain)

DEFINING MOMENT #4

- Where are you at this moment?
- How old are you?
- Who is there with you, or who is supposed to be there with you?

- What is happening that makes this moment so significant?

- What emotions or changes of emotions are you experiencing (e.g., loneliness, anger, fear, confusion, joy, power, helplessness)?

- How would you change this situation if you could?

- What is your mental/physical experience?
 - State of mind
 - Smells
 - Tastes
 - Touch
 - Happiness/sadness
 - Strength/weakness

DEFINING MOMENT #4

- If you could speak to someone at this moment, whom would it be? What would you say?
- What are you saying to yourself?
- What do you need right now more than anything else?
- Now bring yourself back to the present and answer the following questions.
 - How do you feel now about this defining moment?
 - What emotions are you having now?
 - What are you telling yourself about these events today?
 - What power and self-determination, if any, did you lose to this event, if it was a negative event? (If it was positive, what did you learn or gain)

DEFINING MOMENT #5

- Where are you at this moment?
- How old are you?
- Who is there with you, or who is supposed to be there with you?

- What is happening that makes this moment so significant?

- What emotions or changes of emotions are you experiencing (e.g., loneliness, anger, fear, confusion, joy, power, helplessness)?

- How would you change this situation if you could?

- What is your mental/physical experience?
 - State of mind
 - Smells
 - Tastes
 - Touch
 - Happiness/sadness
 - Strength/weakness

DEFINING MOMENT #5

- If you could speak to someone at this moment, whom would it be? What would you say?
- What are you saying to yourself?
- What do you need right now more than anything else?
- Now bring yourself back to the present and answer the following questions.
 - How do you feel now about this defining moment?
 - What emotions are you having now?
 - What are you telling yourself about these events today?
 - What power and self-determination, if any, did you lose to this event, if it was a negative event? (If it was positive, what did you learn or gain)

DEFINING MOMENT #6

- Where are you at this moment?
- How old are you?
- Who is there with you, or who is supposed to be there with you?

- What is happening that makes this moment so significant?

- What emotions or changes of emotions are you experiencing (e.g., loneliness, anger, fear, confusion, joy, power, helplessness)?

- How would you change this situation if you could?

- What is your mental/physical experience?
 - State of mind
 - Smells
 - Tastes
 - Touch
 - Happiness/sadness
 - Strength/weakness

DEFINING MOMENT #6

- If you could speak to someone at this moment, whom would it be? What would you say?
- What are you saying to yourself?
- What do you need right now more than anything else?
- Now bring yourself back to the present and answer the following questions.
 - How do you feel now about this defining moment?
 - What emotions are you having now?
 - What are you telling yourself about these events today?
 - What power and self-determination, if any, did you lose to this event, if it was a negative event? (If it was positive, what did you learn or gain)

DEFINING MOMENT #7

- Where are you at this moment?
- How old are you?
- Who is there with you, or who is supposed to be there with you?

- What is happening that makes this moment so significant?

- What emotions or changes of emotions are you experiencing (e.g., loneliness, anger, fear, confusion, joy, power, helplessness)?

- How would you change this situation if you could?

- What is your mental/physical experience?
 - State of mind
 - Smells
 - Tastes
 - Touch
 - Happiness/sadness
 - Strength/weakness

DEFINING MOMENT #7

- If you could speak to someone at this moment, whom would it be? What would you say?
- What are you saying to yourself?
- What do you need right now more than anything else?
- Now bring yourself back to the present and answer the following questions.
 - How do you feel now about this defining moment?
 - What emotions are you having now?
 - What are you telling yourself about these events today?
 - What power and self-determination, if any, did you lose to this event, if it was a negative event? (If it was positive, what did you learn or gain)

DEFINING MOMENT #8

- Where are you at this moment?
- How old are you?
- Who is there with you, or who is supposed to be there with you?

- What is happening that makes this moment so significant?

- What emotions or changes of emotions are you experiencing (e.g., loneliness, anger, fear, confusion, joy, power, helplessness)?

- How would you change this situation if you could?

- What is your mental/physical experience?
 - State of mind
 - Smells
 - Tastes
 - Touch
 - Happiness/sadness
 - Strength/weakness

DEFINING MOMENT #8

- If you could speak to someone at this moment, whom would it be? What would you say?
- What are you saying to yourself?
- What do you need right now more than anything else?
- Now bring yourself back to the present and answer the following questions.
 - How do you feel now about this defining moment?
 - What emotions are you having now?
 - What are you telling yourself about these events today?
 - What power and self-determination, if any, did you lose to this event, if it was a negative event? (If it was positive, what did you learn or gain)

DEFINING MOMENT #9

- Where are you at this moment?
- How old are you?
- Who is there with you, or who is supposed to be there with you?

- What is happening that makes this moment so significant?

- What emotions or changes of emotions are you experiencing (e.g., loneliness, anger, fear, confusion, joy, power, helplessness)?

- How would you change this situation if you could?

- What is your mental/physical experience?
 - State of mind
 - Smells
 - Tastes
 - Touch
 - Happiness/sadness
 - Strength/weakness

DEFINING MOMENT #9

- If you could speak to someone at this moment, whom would it be? What would you say?
- What are you saying to yourself?
- What do you need right now more than anything else?
- Now bring yourself back to the present and answer the following questions.
 - How do you feel now about this defining moment?
 - What emotions are you having now?
 - What are you telling yourself about these events today?
 - What power and self-determination, if any, did you lose to this event, if it was a negative event? (If it was positive, what did you learn or gain)

DEFINING MOMENT #10

- Where are you at this moment?
- How old are you?
- Who is there with you, or who is supposed to be there with you?

- What is happening that makes this moment so significant?

- What emotions or changes of emotions are you experiencing (e.g., loneliness, anger, fear, confusion, joy, power, helplessness)?

- How would you change this situation if you could?

- What is your mental/physical experience?
 - State of mind
 - Smells
 - Tastes
 - Touch
 - Happiness/sadness
 - Strength/weakness

DEFINING MOMENT #10

- If you could speak to someone at this moment, whom would it be? What would you say?
- What are you saying to yourself?
- What do you need right now more than anything else?
- Now bring yourself back to the present and answer the following questions.
 - How do you feel now about this defining moment?
 - What emotions are you having now?
 - What are you telling yourself about these events today?
 - What power and self-determination, if any, did you lose to this event, if it was a negative event? (If it was positive, what did you learn or gain)

THE SEVEN



CRITICAL CHOICES

There are a surprisingly small number of choices that rise to the level of life-changing ones.

CRITICAL CHOICES ARE
THOSE THAT HAVE
CHANGED YOUR LIFE,
POSITIVELY OR
NEGATIVELY, AND ARE
MAJOR FACTORS IN
DETERMINING WHO AND
WHAT YOU WILL BECOME.

They are the choices that have affected your life up to today and have set you on a path.

CRITICAL CHOICE #1

- Age bracket in which you made the choice:
- What was the choice? Write a sentence that describes it.
- Why did you make it? Describe what prompted this choice. Identify as many factors as you can recall.
- What alternatives did you give up by making this choice? Describe the “cost” of the choice you made.
- Write down how and why you think the critical choice either clarified or distorted your authentic self.
- Review your interpretation of and reaction to the critical choice. Decide whether or not you believe your interpretation and whether it was and is accurate or inaccurate.

CRITICAL CHOICE #1

- Ask yourself: “Has my interpretation of this critical choice been accurate? Have I exaggerated or distorted it in some way?”
- Where were you, in terms of your self-concept, immediately before this choice, and what was your self-concept after this choice?
- What aspect or dimension of your self-concept was involved in or was affected by the choice? Write your observations down.
- Write a paragraph to describe the long-term residual effect of this critical choice.

CRITICAL CHOICE #2

- Age bracket in which you made the choice:
- What was the choice? Write a sentence that describes it.
- Why did you make it? Describe what prompted this choice. Identify as many factors as you can recall.
- What alternatives did you give up by making this choice? Describe the “cost” of the choice you made.
- Write down how and why you think the critical choice either clarified or distorted your authentic self.
- Review your interpretation of and reaction to the critical choice. Decide whether or not you believe your interpretation and whether it was and is accurate or inaccurate.

CRITICAL CHOICE #2

- Ask yourself: “Has my interpretation of this critical choice been accurate? Have I exaggerated or distorted it in some way?”
- Where were you, in terms of your self-concept, immediately before this choice, and what was your self-concept after this choice?
- What aspect or dimension of your self-concept was involved in or was affected by the choice? Write your observations down.
- Write a paragraph to describe the long-term residual effect of this critical choice.

CRITICAL CHOICE #3

- Age bracket in which you made the choice:
- What was the choice? Write a sentence that describes it.
- Why did you make it? Describe what prompted this choice. Identify as many factors as you can recall.
- What alternatives did you give up by making this choice? Describe the “cost” of the choice you made.
- Write down how and why you think the critical choice either clarified or distorted your authentic self.
- Review your interpretation of and reaction to the critical choice. Decide whether or not you believe your interpretation and whether it was and is accurate or inaccurate.

CRITICAL CHOICE #3

- Ask yourself: “Has my interpretation of this critical choice been accurate? Have I exaggerated or distorted it in some way?”
- Where were you, in terms of your self-concept, immediately before this choice, and what was your self-concept after this choice?
- What aspect or dimension of your self-concept was involved in or was affected by the choice? Write your observations down.
- Write a paragraph to describe the long-term residual effect of this critical choice.

CRITICAL CHOICE #4

- Age bracket in which you made the choice:
- What was the choice? Write a sentence that describes it.
- Why did you make it? Describe what prompted this choice. Identify as many factors as you can recall.
- What alternatives did you give up by making this choice? Describe the “cost” of the choice you made.
- Write down how and why you think the critical choice either clarified or distorted your authentic self.
- Review your interpretation of and reaction to the critical choice. Decide whether or not you believe your interpretation and whether it was and is accurate or inaccurate.

CRITICAL CHOICE #4

- Ask yourself: “Has my interpretation of this critical choice been accurate? Have I exaggerated or distorted it in some way?”
- Where were you, in terms of your self-concept, immediately before this choice, and what was your self-concept after this choice?
- What aspect or dimension of your self-concept was involved in or was affected by the choice? Write your observations down.
- Write a paragraph to describe the long-term residual effect of this critical choice.

CRITICAL CHOICE #5

- Age bracket in which you made the choice:
- What was the choice? Write a sentence that describes it.
- Why did you make it? Describe what prompted this choice. Identify as many factors as you can recall.
- What alternatives did you give up by making this choice? Describe the “cost” of the choice you made.
- Write down how and why you think the critical choice either clarified or distorted your authentic self.
- Review your interpretation of and reaction to the critical choice. Decide whether or not you believe your interpretation and whether it was and is accurate or inaccurate.

CRITICAL CHOICE #5

- Ask yourself: “Has my interpretation of this critical choice been accurate? Have I exaggerated or distorted it in some way?”
- Where were you, in terms of your self-concept, immediately before this choice, and what was your self-concept after this choice?
- What aspect or dimension of your self-concept was involved in or was affected by the choice? Write your observations down.
- Write a paragraph to describe the long-term residual effect of this critical choice.

CRITICAL CHOICE #6

- Age bracket in which you made the choice:
- What was the choice? Write a sentence that describes it.
- Why did you make it? Describe what prompted this choice. Identify as many factors as you can recall.
- What alternatives did you give up by making this choice? Describe the “cost” of the choice you made.
- Write down how and why you think the critical choice either clarified or distorted your authentic self.
- Review your interpretation of and reaction to the critical choice. Decide whether or not you believe your interpretation and whether it was and is accurate or inaccurate.

CRITICAL CHOICE #6

- Ask yourself: “Has my interpretation of this critical choice been accurate? Have I exaggerated or distorted it in some way?”
- Where were you, in terms of your self-concept, immediately before this choice, and what was your self-concept after this choice?
- What aspect or dimension of your self-concept was involved in or was affected by the choice? Write your observations down.
- Write a paragraph to describe the long-term residual effect of this critical choice.

CRITICAL CHOICE #7

- Age bracket in which you made the choice:
- What was the choice? Write a sentence that describes it.
- Why did you make it? Describe what prompted this choice. Identify as many factors as you can recall.
- What alternatives did you give up by making this choice? Describe the “cost” of the choice you made.
- Write down how and why you think the critical choice either clarified or distorted your authentic self.
- Review your interpretation of and reaction to the critical choice. Decide whether or not you believe your interpretation and whether it was and is accurate or inaccurate.

CRITICAL CHOICE #7

- Ask yourself: “Has my interpretation of this critical choice been accurate? Have I exaggerated or distorted it in some way?”
- Where were you, in terms of your self-concept, immediately before this choice, and what was your self-concept after this choice?
- What aspect or dimension of your self-concept was involved in or was affected by the choice? Write your observations down.
- Write a paragraph to describe the long-term residual effect of this critical choice.

THE FIVE



PIVOTAL PEOPLE

These are the people who have left indelible impressions on your concept of self, and therefore, the life you live.

THEY MAY BE FAMILY
MEMBERS, FRIENDS OR
CO-WORKERS,
AND THEIR INFLUENCES
CAN BE EITHER
POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE.

They are people who can determine whether you live consistently with your authentic self, or instead live a counterfeit life controlled by a fictional self that has crowded out who you really are.

THE FIVE

PIVOTAL PEOPLE

In section one, first identify, with as much detail as you can, that person's conduct or behavior that you now see as pivotal. You will want to use "action verbs" in order to make it as concrete as possible: for example, Claire, my seminar participant, might begin by writing, "For fourteen years, he thrashed my mother and me with a strap, destroying my sense of self, my sense of value, my sense of dignity."

Someone else, writing about an adult friend, might begin, "She loved and cared about me when I wasn't very lovable. She was coming in the door, when everyone else was on the way out. She stood by me when it would have been so much easier not to." Write as long and as detailed a description as you need to and can. You will be amazed at what flows from your pen.

In the second section, **describe the effects** that you attribute to that action. **What consequences flow** from the pivotal person directly to your present-day self?

Examples might begin: "Because I could not bear the humiliation and pain, I 'checked out' of life, and withdrew from anything that involved my emotions, even when my husband and kids were yearning for my emotional self." Or: "Her words of encouragement spontaneously offered and never judgmental, have caused me to believe that I must have something worth loving or else such a fine person wouldn't have been there for me. She gave me the patience to make it through some of the toughest times I've known and I've tried to emulate her character in the things that I do today."

The value of this exercise depends upon your giving a voice to connections and consequences that you may never have expressed in words. The cause-and-effect relationship between the behaviors of each of your five people, and the results in your own life and self-concept, demand your closest attention as you write.

PIVOTAL PERSON #1

SECTION ONE

- Name:
- Describe the actions of this person that you now see as pivotal in your life.

SECTION TWO

- What specific effects did this person's actions have on your life?
- What consequences flow from the pivotal person directly to your present-day self?

PIVOTAL PERSON #2

SECTION ONE

- Name:
- Describe the actions of this person that you now see as pivotal in your life.

SECTION TWO

- What specific effects did this person's actions have on your life?
- What consequences flow from the pivotal person directly to your present-day self?

PIVOTAL PERSON #3

SECTION ONE

- Name:
- Describe the actions of this person that you now see as pivotal in your life.

SECTION TWO

- What specific effects did this person's actions have on your life?
- What consequences flow from the pivotal person directly to your present-day self?

PIVOTAL PERSON #4

SECTION ONE

- Name:
- Describe the actions of this person that you now see as pivotal in your life.

SECTION TWO

- What specific effects did this person's actions have on your life?
- What consequences flow from the pivotal person directly to your present-day self?

PIVOTAL PERSON #5

SECTION ONE

- Name:
- Describe the actions of this person that you now see as pivotal in your life.

SECTION TWO

- What specific effects did this person's actions have on your life?
- What consequences flow from the pivotal person directly to your present-day self?



THE FIVE STEP

ACTION PLAN

You can't change what you don't acknowledge. You can stop being passively shaped by the internal and external forces in your life.

IT'S TIME TO MOVE YOUR
SELF-CONCEPT AWAY FROM
A WORLD-DEFINED,
FICTIONAL SELF TOWARD A
SELF-DEFINED, AUTHENTIC
SELF THAT IS GROUNDED IN
THE HERE AND NOW.

THE FIVE STEPS OF HOW TO **DEAL WITH THE EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

STEP #1: ISOLATE A TARGET EVENT

Decide which of your key external events has turned out to be the most toxic experience of your life. This will be either one of your 10 defining moments, seven critical choices, or five pivotal people. Then write a short description of the target event. When you're done, read it over to make sure you are being honest in your account.

STEP #2: AUDIT YOUR INTERNAL RESPONSES TO THAT TRIGGERING EVENT

Ask yourself the following questions about the event you described in Step 1:

- a)** Where do you place responsibility or blame for that event, your locus of control? Who was responsible? Did you have any control over the situation? Were you even old enough to have a say?
- b)** What has been the tone and content of your internal dialogue since that event? Do you find your real-time, "normal speed" conversations in your daily life reflecting the changes that occurred within you and are associated with that event? When you reflect on this event, what do you say to yourself? Even when you're not reflecting directly on the event, but experience feelings of guilt and shame, what do you say to yourself?
- c)** What labels have you generated for yourself as a result of your event? What have you told yourself about you as a consequence of what happened?

d) What tapes have this event generated or contributed to? Has this event caused you to develop an automatic, unthinking response that "predicts" the outcome of any given situation?

e) What are the fixed beliefs and resulting life scripts that you have constructed as a result of your event? Do you suspect you are living from a "script" that was written as a result of this event?

STEP #3: TEST YOUR INTERNAL RESPONSES FOR AUTHENTICITY

You can test everything you are saying to yourself and find out whether it is fictional or authentic by asking these four questions:

- a) Is it a true fact?
- b) Does holding onto the thought or attitude serve your best interest?
- c) Are your thoughts and attitudes advancing and protecting your health?
- d) Do your thoughts and beliefs get you what you want?

STEP #4: COME UP WITH AN "AUTHENTICALLY ACCURATE ALTERNATIVE" RESPONSE

When you test your negative internal dialogue and it fails (as it should because it isn't true), you need to do what Dr. Phil calls "**Triple-A Thinking.**" This means replacing your fictional responses with ones that are **Authentically Accurate Alternatives.** How do you know your new responses are **AAA**? Because they meet the authenticity standards outlined in Step 3.

Start by dividing a page into two columns.

On the left, list your present fictional beliefs ("I am worthless").

On the right, list as many alternative beliefs as you can. ("I am a worthy human being with valuable qualities" "I deserve to be treated with respect" "I have things to contribute to the world").

NOW IT'S TIME TO TEST YOUR ALTERNATIVE BELIEFS

- a) Is the alternative true?
- b) Is it in your best interest to hold these beliefs?
- c) Do the alternatives advance and protect your health?
- d) Do the alternatives get you what you truly want?

Circle all of the alternative beliefs that have passed the test. Now you can choose to adopt as many of these authentic alternative beliefs as you like.

STEP #5: IDENTIFY AND EXECUTE YOUR MINIMAL EFFECTIVE RESPONSE (MER)

The goal of Step 5 is emotional closure. You want to be able to close the book on the life event that caused you so much pain with a minimal amount of effort.

Consider your alternatives for action and ask yourself these four questions:

- a) What action can you take to resolve the pain?
- b) If you were successful and achieved this action, how would you feel?
- c) Does the feeling you will have match the feeling you want to have?
- d) Remember the word "minimal." Could there be some other, more emotionally or behaviorally economical action that would give you the emotional resolve you want to feel?

Whatever your MER is, you need to identify it and do it so that you can achieve emotional closure and move on to a more authentic, fulfilling life.

THE TEST OF

CONGRUENCY

The profile that follows will help you see the degree to which your current life experience --

HOW YOU ARE THINKING, FEELING, AND LIVING -- COMPARES TO WHAT YOUR EXPERIENCE WOULD BE IF YOU WERE LIVING AN IDEAL, FULLY AUTHENTIC, AND FULFILLING LIFE. THIS TEST TAKES YOU THROUGH A THREE-STEP PROCESS.

THIS TEST TAKES YOU THROUGH A THREE-STEP PROCESS

STEP #1: You will describe your full potential by rating yourself on certain dimensions as you would be at your best.

STEP #2: You'll rate yourself on the same dimensions, this time as those dimensions reflect who and what you believe you really are.

STEP #3: You will determine the percentage of the difference between the two. The comparison will give you an early benchmark as to the health of your self-concept and the extent to which you are living true to yourself.

STEP #1: Circle all the words that you think describe the ideal person you want to be, the person you believe is the full potential of who you are and will ever be.

pretty attractive beautiful cute nice-looking appealing cool sweet spiritual wise
nice friendly faithful leader strong supportive moral ethical principled good
honest decent warm loving tender warmhearted demonstrative caring kind
affectionate cordial hospitable welcoming amiable cheerful passionate fiery
enthusiastic zealous arrogant egocentric altruistic sympathetic humane selfless
philanthropic smart dependent free gentle thoughtful domineering submissive
autonomous creative compassionate self-sufficient private liberated
conventional objective elegant clever stylish intelligent quick charming tidy
neat thoughtful attentive careful watchful alert reliable inspired inventive
resourceful ingenious productive exciting energetic lively vigorous bouncy
active joyful blissful pleased ecstatic cheery sane rational sensible reasonable
normal complete capable genuine inspiring proud approachable peaceful
honest giving nurturing accomplished whole perfect undivided achiever great
confident compassionate content humble unassuming happy satisfied
comfortable at ease relaxed able knowledgeable skilled proficient expert adept
rich wealthy affluent prosperous full gorgeous valuable abundant fruitful
powerful deep prolific understanding dynamic useful helpful constructive
beneficial positive functional worthwhile

Now count the number of words you circled in Step #1. This will be called the Total Potential Score.

_____ = **Total Potential Score**

STEP #1: Circle all the words that you think describe the ideal person you want to be, the person you believe is the full potential of who you are and will ever be.

pretty attractive beautiful cute nice-looking appealing cool sweet spiritual wise
nice friendly faithful leader strong supportive moral ethical principled good
honest decent warm loving tender warmhearted demonstrative caring kind
affectionate cordial hospitable welcoming amiable cheerful passionate fiery
enthusiastic zealous arrogant egocentric altruistic sympathetic humane selfless
philanthropic smart dependent free gentle thoughtful domineering submissive
autonomous creative compassionate self-sufficient private liberated
conventional objective elegant clever stylish intelligent quick charming tidy
neat thoughtful attentive careful watchful alert reliable inspired inventive
resourceful ingenious productive exciting energetic lively vigorous bouncy
active joyful blissful pleased ecstatic cheery sane rational sensible reasonable
normal complete capable genuine inspiring proud approachable peaceful
honest giving nurturing accomplished whole perfect undivided achiever great
confident compassionate content humble unassuming happy satisfied
comfortable at ease relaxed able knowledgeable skilled proficient expert adept
rich wealthy affluent prosperous full gorgeous valuable abundant fruitful
powerful deep prolific understanding dynamic useful helpful constructive
beneficial positive functional worthwhile

Now count the number of words you circled in Step #1. This will be called the Total Potential Score.

_____ = **Total Potential Score**

STEP #2: Now circle the words below that describe how you actually are at present.

pretty attractive beautiful cute nice-looking appealing cool sweet spiritual wise
nice friendly faithful leader strong supportive moral ethical principled good
honest decent warm loving tender warmhearted demonstrative caring kind
affectionate cordial hospitable welcoming amiable cheerful passionate fiery
enthusiastic zealous arrogant egocentric altruistic sympathetic humane selfless
philanthropic smart dependent free gentle thoughtful domineering submissive
autonomous creative compassionate self-sufficient private liberated
conventional objective elegant clever stylish intelligent quick charming tidy
neat thoughtful attentive careful watchful alert reliable inspired inventive
resourceful ingenious productive exciting energetic lively vigorous bouncy
active joyful blissful pleased ecstatic cheery sane rational sensible reasonable
normal complete capable genuine inspiring proud approachable peaceful
honest giving nurturing accomplished whole perfect undivided achiever great
confident compassionate content humble unassuming happy satisfied
comfortable at ease relaxed able knowledgeable skilled proficient expert adept
rich wealthy affluent prosperous full gorgeous valuable abundant fruitful
powerful deep prolific understanding dynamic useful helpful constructive
beneficial positive functional worthwhile

Now count the number of words you circled in Step #2. This will be called the Actual Self Score.

_____ = **Actual Self Score**

TEST OF CONGRUENCY

STEP #3: The Congruency Score is the percentage of words you circled in Step #2 (Actual Self Score) as compared to the total words scored in Step #1 (Total Potential Score).

$$\text{Congruency Score} = \frac{\text{Actual Self Score}}{\text{Total Potential Score}} \times 100 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}\%$$

For example, if your Total Potential Score was 120 and your Actual Self Score was 90, then your Congruency Score would be:
 $90 / 120 = .75 \times 100 = 75\%$

If you are uncomfortable figuring out your score mathematically, you can use the table here to get an estimate, which you can fill in above.

| Actual Self Score | | Congruency Score | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------|---------|
| 81-90 | 60% | 64% | 69% | 75% |
| 71-80 | 53% | 57% | 62% | 67% |
| 61-70 | 47% | 50% | 54% | 58% |
| 51-60 | 40% | 43% | 46% | 50% |
| 41-50 | 33% | 36% | 38% | 42% |
| 31-40 | 27% | 29% | 30% | 33% |
| 21-30 | 20% | 22% | 23% | 25% |
| 11-20 | 13% | 14% | 15% | 17% |
| 0-10 | 7% | 7% | 8% | 8% |
| | 141-150 | 131-140 | 121-130 | 111-120 |
| | Total Potential Score | | | |

TEST OF CONGRUENCY

SCORING

If your score is 90 to 100 percent: You are operating in your full potential range most of the time, finding happiness and joy from within. You are fulfilling your mission as you see it and probably have good mental health.

If your score is 75 to 89 percent: You are in the positive range of living consistently with your authentic self. You have escaped serious damage to your personal truth. You have good self-esteem that will help you be successful.

If your score is 50 to 74 percent: You are in the positive range and have realized some good aspects of who you are. However, you are missing some important aspects, powerful strengths, and goals that are true to your authentic self. You very likely have some self-doubt and lack of self-confidence in truly appreciating your potential.

If your score is 35 to 49 percent: You are limiting yourself and using only a small part of who you really are, because you have listened to the world telling you who you are instead of being guided by an undistorted personal truth and self-concept. Much work is needed.

If your score is 1 to 34 percent: You are living in your fictional self. Your personal truth and self-concept have been seriously damaged and distorted. You are wasting precious life energy. Your power is infected with fictional concepts and your efforts are misdirected to goals that are not your own.

| Actual Self Score | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 141 - 150 | 100% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 131 - 140 | 93% | 100% | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 121 - 130 | 87% | 93% | 100% | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 111 - 120 | 80% | 86% | 92% | 100% | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 101 - 110 | 73% | 79% | 85% | 92% | 100% | | | | | | | | | | |
| 91 - 100 | 67% | 71% | 77% | 83% | 91% | 100% | | | | | | | | | |
| 81 - 90 | 60% | 64% | 69% | 75% | 82% | 90% | 100% | | | | | | | | |
| 71 - 80 | 53% | 57% | 62% | 67% | 73% | 80% | 90% | 100% | | | | | | | |
| 61 - 70 | 47% | 50% | 54% | 58% | 64% | 70% | 78% | 88% | 100% | | | | | | |
| 51 - 60 | 40% | 43% | 46% | 50% | 55% | 60% | 67% | 75% | 86% | 100% | | | | | |
| 41 - 50 | 33% | 36% | 38% | 42% | 46% | 50% | 56% | 63% | 71% | 83% | 100% | | | | |
| 31 - 40 | 27% | 29% | 30% | 33% | 37% | 40% | 45% | 50% | 57% | 67% | 80% | 100% | | | |
| 21 - 30 | 20% | 22% | 23% | 25% | 28% | 30% | 34% | 38% | 43% | 50% | 60% | 75% | 100% | | |
| 11 - 20 | 13% | 14% | 15% | 17% | 19% | 20% | 23% | 25% | 29% | 33% | 40% | 50% | 67% | 100% | |
| 1 - 10 | 7% | 7% | 8% | 8% | 9% | 10% | 12% | 13% | 14% | 17% | 20% | 25% | 33% | 50% | 100% |
| Ranges of Total Potential Scores | 141 - 150 | 131 - 140 | 121 - 130 | 111 - 120 | 101 - 110 | 91 - 100 | 81 - 90 | 71 - 80 | 61 - 70 | 51 - 60 | 41 - 50 | 31 - 40 | 21 - 30 | 11 - 20 | 1 - 10 |

THE EVIL EIGHT

YOU LEARNED HOW TO IDENTIFY A BAITER (BACKSTABBERS, ABUSERS, IMPOSTERS, TAKERS, EXPLOITERS, RECKLESS) AND HOW TO DO A “LIFE SCAN” AND A “SITUATION SCAN” TO DETERMINE POTENTIAL THREATS IN YOUR LIFE AND THE LIVES OF YOUR LOVED ONES. YOU DISCOVERED HOW TO SPOT THOSE IN YOUR LIFE WHO ARE POTENTIAL THREATS BY “GRADING THEIR PAPER” AGAINST THE “EVIL EIGHT” IDENTIFIERS.

THE

EVIL EIGHT

ARROGANT ENTITLEMENT

LACK OF EMPATHY

NO REMORSE

IRRESPONSIBLE/SELF-DESTRUCTIVE

THRIVE ON DRAMA

BRAG ABOUT OUTSMARTING

SHORT-TERM RELATIONSHIPS

FANTASY WORLD/DELUSIONAL

Answer the questions below to see if you can relate and identify:

-Do they see the world through a lens of arrogant entitlement and frequently treat people as targets?

Yes or No?

How and why?

Do they lack empathy?

Yes or No?

How and why?

-Are they incapable of feeling remorse/guilt and failing to learn from situation to situation?

Yes or No?

How and why?

-Are they irresponsible and self-destructive, and do they disregard the well-being of others?

Yes or No?

How and why?

-Do they thrive on drama and crisis?

Yes or No?

How and why?

Answer the questions below to see if you can relate and identify:

-Do they brag about outsmarting other people?

Yes or No?

How and why?

-Do they have a pattern of short-term relationships?

Yes or No?

How and why?

-Do they live in a fantasy world, marked by delusion?

Yes or No?

How and why?

THE **NEFARIOUS 15**

THE "NEFARIOUS 15" ARE THE
15 MOST NEFARIOUS TACTICS,
BEHAVIORS, OR STRATEGIES
BAITERS WILL USE TO
GET TO YOU, HURT YOU, AND
TAKE WHAT IS YOURS.

THE

NEFARIOUS 15

- INFILTRATE YOUR LIFE
- CREATE CONSPIRATORIAL CONFLICT
- DEPEND ON YOUR APPROVAL
- BUILD A FILE
- MISDIRECT AND OBFUSCATE
- BLAME OTHERS
- LIE
- FRAUDS/CHEATERS
- ISOLATE VICTIMS
- ABUSE AUTHORITY
- PRESS HOT BUTTONS
- REVISIONIST OF HISTORY
- TWO-FACED/GOSSIP
- PARANOID
- PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE

These are the best ways to identify the personality traits of a **BAITER**:

-They infiltrate your life, seducing you with promises and flattery.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

-They define you as a conspiratorial confidant.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

They are too focused on getting your approval- as though their very existence depends on your accepting them.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

-They are always gathering data and "building a file" on you. Everything they do, every interaction, is for a purpose.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

They consistently misdirect and maintain a mystery about who they really are; they answer questions that weren't asked; they obfuscate.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

-When confronted with problems, they always blame others.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

(continued)...**These are the best ways to identify the personality traits of a BAITER:**

-They lie, either by misstatement or by omission; they understand that lies with a kernel of truth are the most powerful.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

-They isolate their victims and foster dependency to obligate them and gain leverage and power.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

-When in a position of power and authority, they abuse it with self-dealing and egomaniacal conduct.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

-They identify your sensitivities and hot buttons to gain leverage.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

-They have "selective memory" and are revisionist historians; they reframe reality. Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

(continued)...**These are the best ways to identify the personality traits of a BAITER:**

-They are two-faced; they spread lies and gossip- pretending to be your friend and ally to give you a false sense of security while being disloyal.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

-Because they are paranoid, they "get you" before you "get them". Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

-They are masters of passive-aggressive sabotage.

Does this apply to you?

Who? How/Why?

RECOGNIZE POTENTIAL THREATS

IN THE CHART BELOW,
**WRITE DOWN THE PEOPLE IN
YOUR CURRENT LIFE WHO YOU
FEAR ARE OUT TO
SABOTAGE YOU OR TAKE WHAT
IS YOURS AND LEAVE YOU IN
THE DUST. NEXT, WRITE DOWN
WHICH OF THE "NEFARIOUS 15"
THEY ARE ATTEMPTING TO USE
AGAINST YOU. IT COULD BE
ONE, OR IT COULD BE SEVERAL.**

RECOGNIZE POTENTIAL THREATS

POTENTIAL BAITER

NEFARIOUS TACTIC USED

| POTENTIAL BAITER | NEFARIOUS TACTIC USED |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| | |
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The
TREASURE OF YOU

PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO WHETHER THIS LIST IS HARDER TO FILL OUT THAN THE LIST OF YOUR SHORTCOMINGS AND PROBLEM AREAS ON THE NEXT PAGE. I AM BETTING YOU CAN MORE QUICKLY PINPOINT YOUR NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES FOR THEY TEND TO GET MORE AIRTIME. YOU SPEND MORE TIME THINKING ABOUT WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU THAN WHAT IS RIGHT WITH YOU.

THE TREASURE OF YOU

Write down the things you love the most about yourself. These can be your natural talents, acquired skills or innate abilities.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

ACKNOWLEDGE NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES

Write down the things you don't like about yourself and are difficult to acknowledge:

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

SEVEN KEY STRATEGIES FOR ATTAINING YOUR GOAL

1. Express your goal in terms of specific events or behaviors. (For example, “My goal is to actively return to college in a degree program.”)

I want:

2. Express your goal in terms that can be measured. (Take six hours per night of school or online semester until the degree is secured.)
Specifically, that means:

3. Assign a timeline to your goal. (Complete six hours by next May. Degree by the end of the sixth semester.)

My realistic timeline is:

4. Choose a goal you can control. (Attending college works here.)

The circumstances I can control in achieving this goal are:

SEVEN KEY STRATEGIES FOR ATTAINING YOUR GOAL

5. Plan and program, a strategy that will get you to your goal. (Make sure you have the money, time, and access. Set up a schedule realistically.)

Potential obstacles are:

Resources required are:

6. Define your goal in terms of steps. (Choose a school, apply for admission, select your courses, and so on.)

The necessary steps are:

7. Create accountability for your progress toward your goal: (“My sister will call me once a week to make sure I’ve taken steps in the past seven days toward obtaining my college degree.”)

I will create accountability by:

We’re not finished yet! Now write the answer to this imperative question:
How will you feel when you obtain your goal?

The Life Code

PLAYBOOK

**HERE IS YOUR “LIFE CODE”
PLAYBOOK WITH WHAT I CALL
THE “SWEET 16” IMPORTANT
STRATEGIES, MIND-SETS,
TACTICS, AND BEHAVIORS TO
CREATE MORE OF WHAT YOU
WANT IN YOUR LIFE.**

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#1: YOU MUST HAVE A DEFINED “IMAGE” AND NEVER GO OUT OF CHARACTER

It's not enough just to know yourself. You also need to know how to present yourself. I made this the number-one point in your playbook because it is critically important and potentially outcome-determinative. You have to decide how you're going to project yourself to the world. Once you do, you must commit to it 100 percent. You can't ride two horses at the same time, so deciding on your image, your personal definition, is so important. It is the horse you'll ride through your future life. Please understand, I'm not asking you to be phony and wear a mask. Quite the contrary. I think it is important that your image, the image you consciously decide to project to other people, is authentic and congruent with who you really are.

You cannot define yourself one way and then do a “180” and expect to be successful in love, business, society, or anywhere else.

Approach this as though you were creating a character in a movie or a play. How would you describe the character? What would be the appearance? Wardrobe? Weight? Beliefs? Behaviors? Personality? Sense of humor? Hobbies? Activities? Energy level? And on and on. This really should be fun if you do it with the right attitude. Remember, you're the star in the script of your own life, so act like it by embracing your authentic self! Create it and then commit to it.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#2: YOU MUST CREATE A PERCEPTION OF UNIQUENESS

When I say you need to be “unique,” I mean that you need to choose to define the image we just discussed such that you distinguish yourself from anyone else in this world. We have enough sheep; we have enough cattle that just belong to the herd and blend into the background. If you want to be a winner, you need to find, embrace, and project those things that set you apart from everyone else. Uniqueness is valuable in so many different respects. I very much believe in a defined product. I think people need to know what they get when they get you. I have subscribed to this philosophy my entire life, including right now.

Remember, you're the star in the script of your own life, so act like it by embracing your authentic self!

What does that say about our world when you can successfully distinguish yourself from the masses simply by showing manners? The point is, it can be something big, small, or a compilation of small things that set you apart and make you memorable to others.

If, in fact, you don't feel like you are unique, then it may be time to reinvent yourself. You can do so without abandoning who you are because we all have a range of traits, skills, abilities, and the capability to move about within that range.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#3: YOU MUST PLAY “BIG,” NOT JUST LONG

In this day and time, it's simply not enough to keep your head down, work hard, put in your time, and expect a reward at the end because that “end” may never arrive. Playing big is dramatically different from playing long, because plodders, even reliable and competent ones, seldom win big. Sometimes they don't win at all. This is not a pleasant message to deliver, but it's one you need to hear. Current events have shown us that a lot of long-term employees are the first to go when corporations cut back. Seniority means nothing when performance is what's critical to a company's survival. How many stories have you heard about folks who have put in years of faithful service only to be turned out just short of qualifying for retirement? Longevity may have meant something once, but I'm just not sure it does anymore.

There is a new “Life Code” in today's world that calls for different strategies, and if you want to win big, you have to play big, now.

You want to make an impression, one that people remember. You have to make noise; you have to rise above everybody else's noise and become the figure that pops from the background of everybody else. Like it or not, I'm telling you the truth. If playing big feels contrary to your personality, if it is out of your comfort zone, keep in mind that you can do it in your own way—the bottom line is that you need to do it.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#4: LEARN TO CLAIM AND ACCEPT PRAISE, AND ACKNOWLEDGE IT IN A GRACIOUS WAY, BUT DO ACCEPT IT

It is not prideful or egotistical to accept, claim, or expect praise. You need to choose to respond differently when someone praises you or confirms your value. In fact, you should work out your response in advance and rehearse giving it so you don't choke under pressure and revert to your old, outdated response pattern.

How about simply learning and practicing to say, "Thank you for saying that, you are kind to notice." Or, "That means so much coming from you, so thank you for noticing and saying so." Or, "Thank you so much; I have worked very hard and have had a lot of help, so thank you from all of us. With your permission, I will pass your kind words on to my team or co-workers."

***A main tenet of the new "Life Code" is this:
There is absolutely, unequivocally, no way
that you are going to win in this world
without being noticed, accepted, admired,
complimented, sought after, and appreciated.***

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#5: YOU MUST BECOME “ESSENTIAL”

In addition to embracing your best image, being unique, and getting noticed by playing big, you also need to become essential. Common sense should make this point pretty self-explanatory. If you want to succeed in any situation—personal, professional, romantic, social, or familial—it’s important to be needed. It is good to be relied upon. It is good to be essential.

Find actions you can take toward becoming an essential, irreplaceable element in any situation or scenario that you value. This should become a conscious priority—a mission.

What I’m telling you is to become an essential, vital player in whatever situation or scenario you are in.

You want to guard and protect what you know. Do not give away the recipe to the “secret sauce.” Remember there is no reality, only perception, so maintain at least the perception of being irreplaceable. If you’re out there flapping your mouth about your unique knowledge, it’s no longer unique! Don’t teach ten people information that makes you much less unique and essential. You don’t want to dilute your value. If people believe that they can’t get by without you, that is a good thing in this competitive world.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#6: YOU MUST KNOW YOUR REAL CURRENCY

Don't waste valuable time working for what you don't want. The saying "Different strokes for different folks" applies here. Some people strive for a promotion because they need the money, while others seek acknowledgment. Neither is right or wrong, just different. The key is to not waste time or effort even on short-term goals if they cannot yield what you really want and need; it's simply inefficient. Don't spend even five minutes doing things that simply can't get you what you want.

The key is knowing your real currency, or else you inadvertently spend time doing things that, even if they go 100 percent perfectly, cannot and will not generate what you want.

There are many different kinds of "currency." Be attuned to all the different ways you can be rewarded in a given situation. We all know about monetary currency, but there is also mental, emotional, social, security, and spiritual currency. Maybe the guy you're in a relationship with won't ask you to marry him right away, but raising the issue helps you achieve some clarity that gives you peace of mind and creates a timetable you can live with. That's currency. Maybe you don't immediately get the manager's job, but you do get a raise, and you are now on the boss's radar as someone looking to move up. That's monetary and social currency. Pay attention to all of the ways that you can get paid off. Define what you really want, and do not invest in people or situations that couldn't give it to you even if they wanted to.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#7: YOU MUST ALWAYS, ALWAYS HAVE A PLAN

Being spontaneous is great if you want to show your fun-loving side or your spirit of adventure on a date or out with some friends. But if you want to achieve a sustained measure of success in any area of your life, you need a plan. You need a very specific plan—a plan that begins with identifying what it is that you want.

Take specific action toward a known outcome every single day of your life.

You must have plans that do not let days turn into weeks, weeks into months, and months into years, as you sit on the porch and watch your life pass by. Make a plan and write it down with great specificity. Doing it in your head just isn't effective. You need to write it out so you can refer to it later. Don't just read right over this and then do it haphazardly in your head (that's what I would be tempted to do). There is such power in the objectivity you will gain by writing it out and seeing it in black and white.

Note: Complete "The Seven Key Strategies For Attaining Your Goal" to help with this process

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#8: YOU MUST KEEP THINGS “CLOSE TO THE VEST”

You never want to be predictable. You know that from your time in the dating world, right? The worst thing you can do is to allow yourself to be taken for granted, to be a “sure thing.” To be interesting is to be powerful. Mystery draws people to you because they are curious about who you are and how you do what you do. They will check to see where you stand on an issue and see what you think is important. They will check because you are not predictable, so they must.

To be interesting, you have to maintain a certain degree of mystery, because it gives you a degree of mastery.

The old saying “Familiarity breeds contempt” is all too often true. Cardinal Richelieu said it well: “If you give me six lines written by the hand of the most honest of men, I will find something in them which will hang him.” The message is clear: Limit your words. People tend to “over-share.” My dad always said, “Boy, don’t ever miss a good chance to shut up!” Good advice.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#9: YOU MUST ALWAYS BE IN INVESTIGATORY MODE

If you accept my premise that the vast majority of your life is competitive, then it makes perfect sense that you should always pay attention to what's going on around you. But I want you to do more than just pay attention. I want you to proactively be in constant investigatory mode, constantly gathering relevant information that may empower you to do and achieve that which you desire. It's long been said that "knowledge is power," and nothing could be truer. That is exactly why BAITERS are always building an arsenal of information. They do it to misuse it; you will do it to use it. This is exactly why I told you to always play it close to the vest. I want the power to be yours to use in a competitive situation, not theirs to use against you in a competitive situation.

I'm suggesting here that you become a private detective who is "psychologically-minded."

Become a student of human nature. Seriously, I want you to start thinking about the psychology of the situation, the agendas, and the motivations of the players. Become a student of everything that is in play in any given situation. Pay attention to how relevant people react to different happenings, events, or stimuli. What sets them off? What embarrasses them? What angers them? What intimidates them? What are the alliances and allegiances within the group that you're involved with? What motivates different people to do what they do? What can you learn about someone's background? Often this information can be both diagnostic of the current situation and predictive of the future.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#10: YOU MUST “STRETCH” AND BEHAVE YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS, EVEN IF IT FEELS LIKE “FAKE IT UNTIL YOU MAKE IT.”

Let me be clear right up front, I am not advocating that you go through life as a fraud. What I am telling you is that if you get an opportunity to move to the next level in your job, for example, do not—repeat do not—listen to self-doubt and take yourself out because you don’t think you know everything you need to know in order to do what you think you’re going to be asked to do.

You need to have confidence and be bold enough to stretch yourself, scramble to close the gap if one exists, and grow into new opportunities.

Give yourself a chance to succeed, whether it is in your love life or professional life or whatever. Take your shot. A risk-free life can be really boring, and the clock is ticking. Don’t let life pass you by because you’re playing it safe and sitting on the sidelines. The world is moving at a faster and faster rate, and it’s becoming easier and easier to fall behind in your own life. The new “Life Code” calls for playing big and playing bold. I promise that at the end of your life, it will not be the times you said “no” along the way that you will look back on fondly and with pride. Taking reasonable risks is not reckless, and if it is the potential of failure or embarrassment that frightens you, remember that you now know how to play the “what if?” game all the way to the end.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#11: YOU MUST ALWAYS KEEP YOUR OPTIONS OPEN

I do not believe in management by ultimatums, and I don't believe in embracing rigid positions that take away your ability to move and adapt. For example, I don't believe in going "nuclear" with kids, saying things like, "If I catch you drinking, you are grounded for life and will never get your driver's license!" Now, I might agree with that sentiment, but my problems are with "life" and "never." It leaves you nowhere to go; you have closed off your options. What do you do once you have grounded your child for life and told them that they will never drive an automobile? What are you going to do next, chain them in a dungeon?

Once you declare your position, your leverage is gone, and winners never give up their leverage.

Always leave yourself a face-saving way out. As we say in Texas, when you "throw down the hoe handle," there's nothing left to do but fight. Threats and ultimatums—particularly involving extreme consequences—paint you into a corner and leave you nowhere to go. Plus, particularly at work or in a relationship, you would be disclosing too much about what you think and feel.

So, keep your options open, and don't tell people everything you're thinking. Once you declare your position, your leverage is gone, and winners never give up their leverage.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#12: YOU MUST ALWAYS MASTER THE SYSTEM AND FIGURE A WAY TO MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU

Whatever situation or circumstance you find yourself in will have rules, parameters, and almost always subtle nuances. And I'm not just talking about formal structures; there is always a dynamic that defines the give-and-take of life. You can gain a distinct advantage if you know, and I mean really know, the game better than anybody else.

If you know the system, the game, and you really know how it's played, you have a distinct advantage over your competition.

And make no mistake about it, you're in a game, whether you like it or not. It's up to you how well you play it—or whether you get played.

Know the rules, know your options, and know how to use the system to your advantage. Like so much of the new "Life Code," what I'm advocating here takes effort, but it will pay off in spades.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#13: YOU MUST CREATE A PASSIONATE NUCLEUS OF SUPPORTERS

Winners are not lone rangers. You should strive to surround yourself with a nucleus of people who share your passion, share your vision, and support the pursuit of your goals. It is important to understand that people do not bond head-to-head; they bond heart-to-heart. Your goal is to get your nucleus of supporters to buy into your agenda not just intellectually but emotionally. This is a hugely important piece of information. Also, recognize the reality that everyone approaches every situation at least in part asking the question, “What is in this for me?” If you can answer that question for your potential supporters, they are much more likely to truly get behind you.

You can create this emotional buy-in by empathetically putting yourself in the position of your potential supporters and seeing things through their eyes. You will need to figure out how to make it clear to those people how your success is in their best interest and that of the team. You cannot be at all places all the time; you cannot cover every demand or contingency by yourself. You need a team, and you need that team to be emotionally motivated toward a common goal. The team must see that you are “their guy.” They must see that you will lead them, protect them, and advocate for them. When they see this, they will do amazing things to ensure your success.

***Let them see you taking action on their behalf,
and they will support you at every turn.***

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#14: YOU MUST DEAL ONLY WITH THE TRUTH

Denial is for suckers and losers. You must resolve to never, ever fail to acknowledge if you have a problem or are in some kind of toxic situation that is draining your very life energy. We have all done it and painfully learned that problems don't get better with time. If there is a problem festering in any part of your life, personally, professionally, romantically, socially, or family-wise, you have to acknowledge it and create an action plan for dealing with it.

Pretending that everything is okay and that there aren't any problems, when there are, is a fool's folly.

If you are in a toxic marriage that is emotionally barren or perhaps even abusive, that circumstance will drain you dry, and that is not something you should allow to happen. If you have a relationship with a friend in which you feel as though you are being used, failing to deal with it will just drain you of important energy and build resentment that is not fair to you or the friend. Deal with the truth, and do not allow yourself to exist in toxic circumstances that will bleed you dry. You may think that you don't know what to do about a problem, and you may be right, but denying its existence is not helping. Admit that it exists, put it on your radar screen and your to-do list, and resolve to start making some progress.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#15: YOU MUST RECOGNIZE AND USE THE EGO AND GREED OF OTHERS TO CREATE A PATH TO SUCCESS

You may remember me saying that most, if not all, people's favorite topic is themselves. That is not just an idle observation; it is powerful knowledge that you can use to your advantage in advancing yourself and your agenda in this world. We tend to believe that someone is telling us the truth, not based on the validity of their message but, instead, because we feel liked by them. You can use this dynamic to your advantage. If you want acceptance and you want your opinion or point of view to be heard and well-regarded, you can create receptivity by being sensitive to your listener's ego.

*I'm not telling you how the world should work;
I am telling you how the world does work.*

Whether you're talking about your boss or the man you're trying to get to marry you, you have resident power over their perception because you understand how to increase your credibility and persuasiveness. This may sound highly manipulative because, well, because it is. Again, I am describing human nature, and this point is just as sure as the sun coming up in the morning. This is powerful knowledge because you can use it to change the acceptability of you and your message, and possessing this knowledge can ideally inoculate you to falling prey to the reality. I make no apology for sharing this reality with you. You can use it to create acceptance and allies in support of goals that advance your agenda without victimizing anyone along the way. Again, it is the use of the tool, rather than its misuse, that I advocate here.

Life Code

PLAYBOOK

#16: YOU MUST PICK YOUR BATTLES AND NEVER LET YOUR OPPONENT HAVE CONTROL

Never put yourself in an untenable position by picking a battle that you don't need to fight and don't know with great certainty that you can win. If it is a fight that can't be won, it is a battle that you should not fight. Life is a marathon, not a sprint, and sometimes you just play a delaying game and stay afloat until conditions change. And be careful where you shine and when you shine—timing is everything. Let your opponents think you're on their side until you are ready to declare otherwise. The element of surprise can be one of the most powerful in your arsenal. Learn how to "be" one of them, as far as they know. And when you do decide to step up and claim your position, make certain you do not outshine your boss or your mate or make his or her life more difficult with your position.

YOU MUST...

- Be clear about what constitutes a win*
- Make every effort to control the time, place (public or private), and modality of the confrontation*
 - Play to win and win decisively*
 - Know your opponent's hot buttons*
- Do your homework and amass facts, not just opinions*
- Never suffer an outright defeat by admitting you are wrong*

Do not go off half-cocked, do not shoot from the hip, do not get into a conflict just to vent your anger or frustrations, and do not pick a fight you can't win in the first place. Violate any of those principles, and you will lose power in your relationship, socially, professionally, personally, or otherwise—power that you may never regain.

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WIN WITHOUT FIGHTING

The real key to understanding conflict, however, is knowing how to win without fighting at all. Let others have the “ugly showdowns.” This means never getting pulled into interactions that are unbecoming to you. Seriously, battle is not the place to play out your frustrations. No one goes through a battle, a conflict, without at least getting dinged up. Therefore, every battle you can let someone else fight instead of you is just that many more battle scars you can avoid. Across time, that can become significant. Support others, encourage others, but don’t always be the one who leads the charge. Generals in the army don’t survive long enough to become generals by charging every machine gun nest there is.

Let others have the “ugly showdowns.”

Always consider the risk-to-reward ratio when you’re picking your battles. A real-world example of this is letting your spouse take on any conflicts with your mother-in-law. You carry much more risk in this scenario than your spouse does. Your mother-in-law has to forgive her child—but you? Not so much. You’re not her baby—she doesn’t have to forgive you, and you might end up catching one too many daggers if you enter into a tête-à-tête with her. It’s hard to unring that bell, and you could permanently damage your relationship. So let your spouse lead the crusade in a mother-in-law scenario. The point is, stay above the fray whenever you can. Remember, this life is a marathon, not a sprint, so stay focused on surviving for the long haul.

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**THIS PLAYBOOK SHOULD BE
SOMETHING YOU READ AND
REREAD UNTIL IT BECOMES YOUR
NATURE. WE ALL NEED TO HAVE A
PLAN FOR LIFE, AND THIS IS MEANT
TO BE AT THE CORE OF YOUR PLAN
FOR LIVING IN THE REAL WORLD.
MASTER IT, CUSTOMIZE IT TO
YOUR OWN PERSONALITY, AND
PERFECT ITS EXECUTION.**





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