

How satisfied are you with your current life if you're being truly frank with yourself? How profound and genuine are your relationships? Are you confidently climbing your career ladder? Do you feel yourself physically and mentally strong?

Or is there anything missed and suspended in your life?

If it is the case, you probably keep telling yourself it isn't your choice. It is this chaotic life that keeps you apart from pursuing the passion, productivity, or those activities which make you pleased. Promises are made, someday you'll have enough time to do the things that make sense to you. However, life continues to ask more, and that day promised never arrives. In sum, you're not living the life that you've wished.

Fortunately, you don't have to carry on this way. You're capable of managing your time properly and lead your life according to your desires. A pen, paper, and determination are enough to plot your Life Plan.

Chapter 1 - Commanding your own life, it requires a Life Plan

Visualize yourself on a surfboard, ahead of the flouting waves. You are looking for that special moment that you've longed for while taking your time under the sun and with the pleasant breeze. But suddenly you look back and see there is a riptide entailing you. Oaring against the flow is in vain, it has more power and throws you about anywhere you don't want to be.

Generally speaking, this riptide that entails you symbolizes life.

We feel unsettled, fatigued, and lost when we turn forty or fifty. Neither our health nor our relationships are going well, now we're consumed. There is a huge difference between the current life we live and the one we once imagined. It is hard to understand how we've rolled so far.

The living conditions that surround you, indeed, have a determinative role in how remote you are from your dream life. It is not always possible to change the circumstances. But still, you can manage your reactions to them and find an effective way of tackling obstacles.

Possibly you are already aware of it. Leaving close to a fast-food restaurant and working too much does not make you obligated to always eat fast-food. But you always postpone focusing on your eating habits. "I can't eat healthy under this stress, I'll do it after that deadline", that's what you say repeatedly to yourself. That deadline passes but nothing changes, you come with another reason to delay changing your diet.

Maybe you think sometimes that some conditions can't be controlled, but that's not true. You think eating takeout is a must for you because you have to work until late, so you don't have time to do proper shopping and to cook. These assumptions mislead you into supposing that your life is out of your command. But the reality is different! You can seize control over your own life again. You need nothing but a Life Plan.

Making a Life Plan is being responsible for your life. With the assistance of this plan, you can deliberately make your own decisions that take you to wherever you want to be. It will function as a reference point that makes you stay safe from drifting unconsciously by the flow. Remarkably, it will also make you resist irrelevant influences that take you away from your dream life.

Chapter 2 - Thanks to your Life Plan you will recognize your priorities, your goals, and put an agenda to realize them

GPS is a wonderful device that leads you to new sides. Moreover, it offers new routes when you're lost, never judges you, or complains. Don't you think it would be great if controlling life was as simple?

However, life is not as simple as navigating between two determined points. Life is full of unpredictable developments. In this journey of living, some routes emerge suddenly whereas some get blocked unexpectedly. In such cases, you need to be careful about what changes around you to reevaluate your destination and your strategy accordingly. Life Plan serves exactly at this point.

We usually plan material elements of our lives such as our career, exercises, and financial situations, on the other hand, we rarely consider the other issues- such as relationships, productivity, spirituality, etc. More remarkably, our plans have almost no crossing points. We perceive them as independent fragments that have no impact on one another. In reality, we have a brilliant career at the cost of our health and family life. Or we stay in good form, but our relations weaken as we spend the hours at the gym to look well.

Both authors have once lived this worrisome imbalance in their career paths. So, they modeled Life Plans as a means to assess each compartment of their lives, in the light of their concerns.

How about being more accurate? What does a Life Plan include?

It is simply an 8-15 pages long document that describes your ultimate life. Once you have such visualization, you can recognize your own main goals and sketch an Action Plan to actualize them.

Your priorities might change over time, as well as your Life Plan does. You can freely review or change it anytime you want. Its power is behind this liveliness. Your Life Plan will always guide you into rethinking where you want to be, and how you reach there just like a GPS device. Therefore, you reroute your journey if needed.

There are three important points that are worth keeping in mind when you make your Life Plan. We'll issue them over the following pages.

Chapter 3 - The way you see your legacy will draw your Life Plan

You've better start with the end while making your life plan. "Which legacy will be left from you?", that's the first question you need to answer.

Maybe you think only notable figures like Martin Luther King, or Abraham Lincoln leave a legacy behind them. But that's not true. Each of us bequeaths something, so will you. Your legacy signifies how your community will remember you after your death. In the frame of your Life Plan, your legacy is where you'll end up.

To imagine your legacy, you need to raise difficult questions to yourself: "When will you pass away from this world, and what will people say after you?" So, it could be rough, still, remember: It is a must to recognize your life goals. Just like planning a trip, first of all, you should consider respectively your destination and the way that you'll use to reach there. The destination represents your legacy, and the route that you use to get there is your Life Plan.

To bolster your imagination on your legacy, think about what people might say about your life when you are on your deathbed. Record your farewell speech. Hide nothing about you, neither your imperfections nor your strengths. In this way, you can know which parts of your life work on track and which ones require attention.

Ask yourself further questions: Who would be at your funeral? What would their feelings be, would they remember the same things about you? Would those memories be profound and affectionate, or would they be superficial and cold? After all, how you're feeling, how different are those than you'd imagined. This consideration helps you to understand the missing part of your life.

After writing your eulogy, now it's time to prepare your Legacy Statements following how you want them to remember you. These statements could address the people you value in your life -like your family, friends, and colleagues. Keep in mind that you should use a moving and specific tone of language while creating them. For example, if you were writing to your husband you could say "I hope Charlie will remember our shared moments with full of tears or laughter"

Take your time to make these statements eloquent for you. They'll remind you what you find most valuable in your life.

Chapter 4 - Decide what comes first for you by assessing your Life Accounts

You have fifty-two Saturdays every year; it doesn't seem too many! Furthermore, let's think your business, your endless run, and your stress consume half of them. Then it turns out that you have a little time to do whatever makes you happy.

We generally allocate huge parts of our lives to actualize others' expectations. It is challenging to stay determined to our own priorities by turning a deaf ear to others' calls.

And if you're not truly determined on your main goals, it appears even more problematic. You can realize that you're getting away from your life goals, only when you know them precisely. For that reason, as a part of your Life Plan, it is essential to ask what matters most to you in life.

Maybe you find it easy to answer the question of what matters most to you. However, you have to ignore what they expect from your life and contemplate painstakingly what you really want, to find a genuine response to it.

Exercising your Life Accounts is your means of doing this. Your Life Accounts design every detail of your life from your leisure time activities to your valuable affairs. They have basically three main chapters: "Being" that concerns your intellectual, spiritual, and physical state; "Relating", your relationships, or the social group you belong to; "Doing", issues your business, economic affairs, hobbies, and interests.

As soon as your Life Accounts are ready, decide five to twelve of them as your priorities. Name them specifically. Use "Reese", for example, by getting inspired by the name of your partner. Or name your work account as "Teaching". Different accounts might be under the same category, for example, discrete accounts for your partner, your children, and other relatives would be classified within the "Relating".

A further step is to check the well-being of these accounts. Are they all in good health, or is there any account that needs more care? Write down what suits each.

After you finished checking the process, order them according to their level of importance. Now, make a comparison between this list and the previous one which shows their health. This tells the truth about your time management, whether you spend your time doing things that are important to you or simply not.

Let's think of the situation in which your business is the healthiest on the list and you value your family more than your business. Then it would be wise if you were busy with your loved ones on Saturdays. There is no need to consume these precious moments by controlling your emails coming from your colleagues or your boss.

Chapter 5 - Map your actions to realize your Life Plan

Living is like being in a country-race that you run without having a roadmap. Even if you know your final point that you should end up ultimately, you have no concrete ideas about which route you should take. At any moment you might get confused on the way.

When you set your route according to what others say before carefully assessing whether they correspond to your dreams or not, you usually turn in the wrong direction. Occasionally, you might get confused when you encounter new opportunities. Indeed, taking a promotion is irresistibly exciting, but will it necessarily bring you the life you've imagined? To stay loyal to your Life Plan, you need to ask one more Life Plan question: In which way will I reach my ideal final point?

Look again at your Life Accounts to find a proper way that takes you to your destination. Examine every account and prepare statements concerning what you have to do for them. You might record for the account of your “Spouse” that your duty as a partner is to always love and support her.

A further step is writing another statement that portrays what your accounts might be in the scenario where you pay them enough attention. Regarding your “Fitness”, you can write “I m strong, in good health and lively”

Think where you stand right now. Are your statements about to be real soon? Tell only the truths, hide nothing from yourself. Assess which account you’ve failed, which of them you’ve succeeded.

Finally, you can prepare your Action Plans, in another say, draw the maps that make you reach your planned final points. They should be detailed, flawlessly put in a timetable, assessable. So, when you feel you fall apart from your goals regarding your fitness, you could start making regular exercises and change your diet.

You might think that it’s not possible to realize each plan you have. Don’t worry! In the following chapters, we’ll examine the way of managing the time to actualize your Action Plans.

Chapter 6 - Prepare your Life Plan by devoting a full day within the following two weeks

Imagine you stand close to a lake. Something strange has just happened in front of you. You’ve seen a chest that contains three million dollars has just been thrown into the water. This treasure will be yours if you’re able to reach it.

Even though there is a rowboat that you can use, it is too heavy to carry up without help. Maybe you could demand help from a friend, however, it might be late. If you don’t want to lose it, you have to hurry up as the flow is throwing it away. Well, how do you act?

To decide writing a Life Plan resembles quietly this situation. A quick motion could bring you a significant fortune. But if you delay, you’ll never find yourself doing it again. So, you’ll lose your dream life forever.

In order to create a suitable Life Plan, you need to be in a good connection with your sentiments. Devote a full day to complete your Plan, so that you can look into the depths of your soul. If you don’t spend enough time doing it, you can’t connect properly to your heart, as a consequence, your plan will be lacking power. And each time you delay doing it, your enthusiasm will reduce. You’ve better move now, at the earliest opportunity. Take two weeks as your deadline.

Promise yourself to do it a full day-long and be strict to keep it unless an unexpected situation arrives. Arrange whatever requires, an off day from work or childcare for example. As you'll be doing it all day long, be sure that the people who are depending on you could manage in your absence. So, you will be able to perfectly focus on writing your Life Plan.

In addition to the day, you should also find a calm place where nobody can interrupt you. It's better to be in a new atmosphere, away from your usual places. As long as that's stimulating, anyplace such as a hotel room would suit – except the local library in the neighborhood.

When this special day arrives, put all of your other concerns aside and try to inscribe five to ten pages. Be sure they respond to the three Life Plan questions. There is no need to be excellent; no one but you will read them. The key points of that day are believing the process, listening to your heart, and entering your own genuine world.

Chapter 7 - Be in charge of your time management to actualize your Life Plan

In one episode of I Love Lucy, a TV series, Lucy works in a candy factory where she was responsible for covering chocolates. But she can't reach the speed of the conveyor belt, so fails to wrap all of them in time. To escape from getting fired, she finds a solution that is hiding uncovered chocolates under her clothes.

Life is sometimes as fast as Lucy's conveyor belt and the demands of life are like those chocolates; just after a demand passes, another arrives. Impossible to reach all of them. Life asks endlessly more than you cope with and makes you stunned. Just like other normal people, you get overwhelmed with what your family, your work, your friends expect from you. So, is it possible to sort all of it out – and still be able to bring your Action Plans into life?

By using these following three ways you can use your time properly and pursue your Action Plans. To do this, you should first pretend as a triage officer when you're setting your agenda. Consider whether your appointments suit your Life Accounts goals. Leave the ones that are irrelevant to your life goals out. If needed, rearrange unessential things so you give yourself enough space to do whatever matters most to you.

Secondly, prepare an alternative timetable which includes only the appointments that are truly important for you. Let every activity that you need in order to actualize your Life Accounts be scheduled in it, like family time, social events, business affairs, fitness, spirituality, etc. Then, consider this ideal schedule while planning your real-life timetable.

Finally, learn to refuse the demands that don't serve your priorities in life. It could be enormously difficult if you're afraid to disappoint people. But if you keep doing things that are irrelevant to your own life goals and let that riptide throw you, in the end, you'll make yourself

disappointed. Never forget that each no that you say to other people means a yes to yourself. Remember you should pursue the route which is led by your own choices.

Chapter 8 - Life Plan works only if you get it in motion

Michael Hyatt, the co-author of the book, used to work at a well-developing company which required a serious strategic plan. The managers of the company left for three-day-long seclusion under the counsel of an external mentor. This resulted in a notable success. After some sparkling discussions, they made a full-fledged plan that covered all the necessary actions and the accountabilities.

However, after the process had ended, nobody looked at the plan. This could've been very helpful if it had been implemented or re-arranged. Instead, it was forgotten in the library. Consequently, all of these exciting ideas stayed on the papers, and they served absolutely nothing to the interests of the company.

Your Life Plan is alive. It needs to be paid attention to like all other living creatures. Paying attention means regular analysis that makes your plan always suitable while day by day you're getting close to your life goals.

To avoid making your Life Plan useless just like the forgotten strategic plan of that company, you should embrace it strongly. Reading your plan aloud each day in the following three months could help you with it. In this way, your Life Plan will settle permanently inside of you.

After three months, reserve only 15-20 minutes per week to revisit your plan. Use these reviewing times also to assess your progress. As long as you do it regularly, you'll stay in the direction of your time so you will be able to make necessary arrangements on your priorities.

Meticulously examine your plan every three months. Read the whole plan and then determine five to seven objects for the next period. Think about what arrangements should be made. It is possible to get lost on the route and fall apart from the goals in a period. But there is always a chance to make necessary adjustments that existing conditions require.

Finally, reassess your plan annually. Devote a full day to evaluate how much you've proceeded. Think about the possible reasons for the changes in your main goals last year and decide what you envisage to succeed in the upcoming year. Nothing is more valuable than your life, and Life Plan provides you with enjoying it at most. It can serve you better to reach your dreams when you pay more attention to it.

Living Forward: A Proven Plan to Stop Drifting and Get the Life You Want by Michael Hyatt, Daniel Harkavy Book Review

Life asks much and we are very close to getting dragged by its endless demands. Since life amazingly matters, it needs to live by following our own passions, beyond the others' expectations. Be responsible for your decisions if you truly wish to control your life according to your own desires. A Life Plan will provide you with recognizing your own values; also, it'll set the route that will lead you to reach your life goals. A concrete and applicable Life Plan would be the most effective guide for life.

Apply Life Plans to your offices

Life Plans teach us that life is a composition that contains different but interconnected parts. The secret of living a satisfying and cheerful life lies behind the success in harmonizing all the different parts of life. Leaders should support their team members to prepare their Life Plans. At the end of the day, they find themselves more productive as a result of being balanced and satisfied with all episodes of life thanks to the Life Plan. In sum, your team members' attention, motivation, and engagement will remarkably increase.

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