

# **The Productivity Workshop**

**Simple Strategies for Task and Time Management**

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The Focus Course // The Sweet Setup

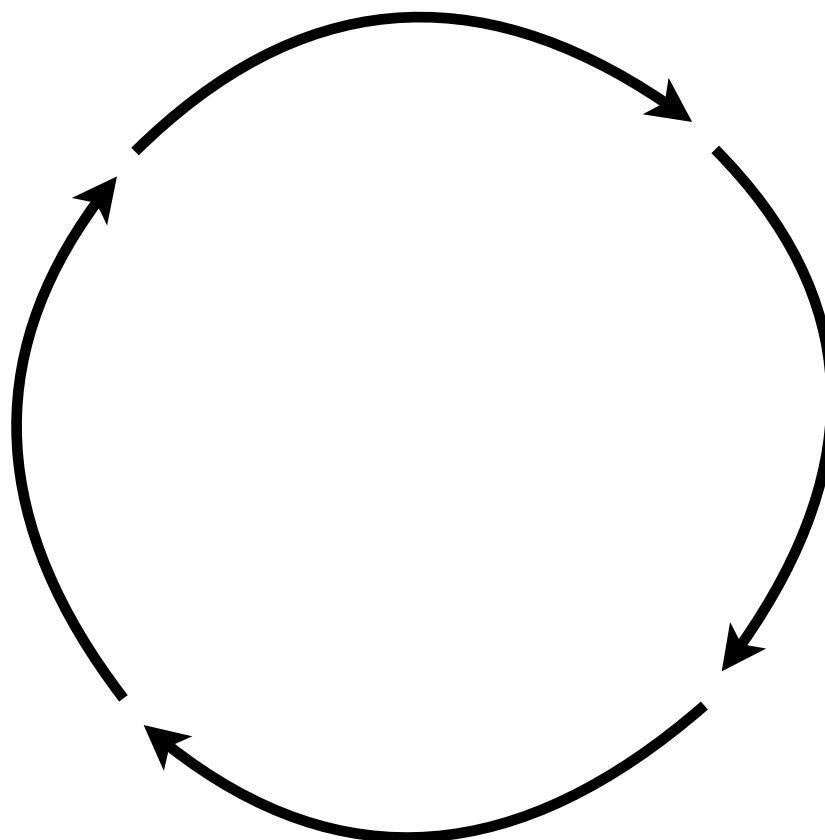
# Focus is a valuable skill in life and a competitive advantage in your career.

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

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

## The Four Symptoms of a Busted Productivity System

From big teams, to corporations, to small groups, and individuals... there are a few symptoms of a broken productivity system.



# The Four Symptoms of a Busted Productivity System

## 1: Busywork

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

## 2: Reactive work

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

## 3: Procrastination

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

## 4: Burnout

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

## Lead Measures vs Lag Measures

You cannot control your outcomes. You can only control your effort and energy — what you focus on. As such, it is important to know the difference between what you can control and what you cannot.

### Lag Measures

Lag measures are the things which have already happened. They are “lagging” behind, so to speak.

For example, a lag measure of your health would be how much you weigh or how many pushups you can do. A lag measure of your business is how much revenue you brought in last month. Looking at the lag measures are looking at the outcomes from your previous efforts.

### Lead Measures

Lead measures are the things which are happening now ... the things you are doing which, you believe, will lead you toward your desired outcome.

For example, a lead measure of your health would be how many minutes of exercise you do each day. A lead measure of your business would be how many sales calls your team makes, or how many new content marketing assets you publish each month.

By focusing on your lead measures, you are focusing on the things which you can control.

## Personal Integrity

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

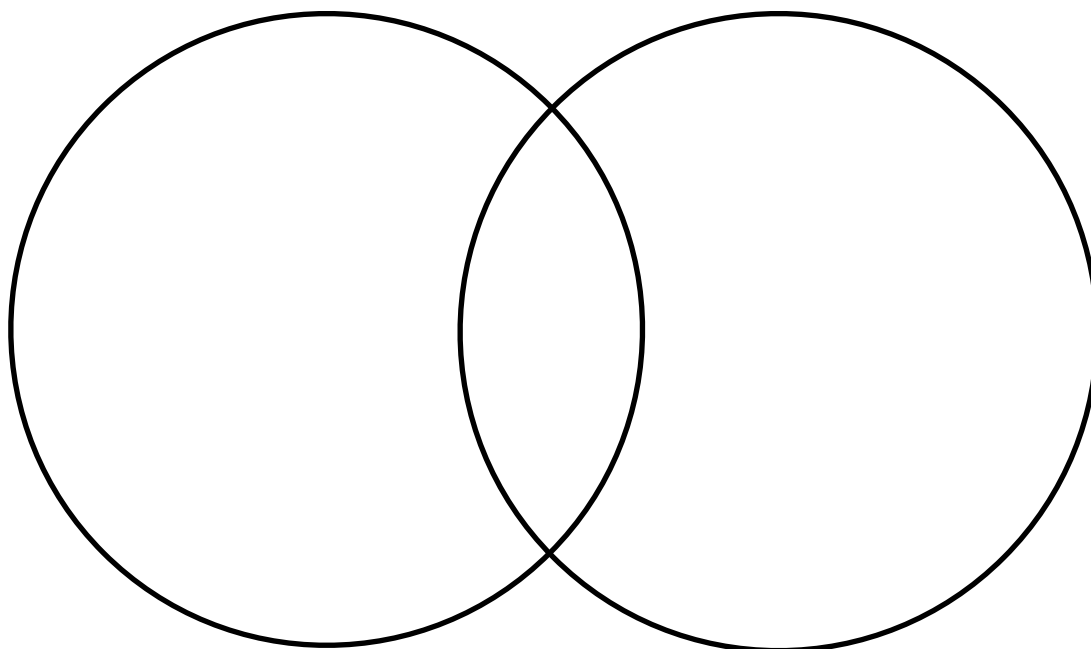
To build your personal integrity, start by making small commitments and keeping them.

For example: Set out your clothes the night before you plan to wear them. You've now made a small commitment to yourself about tomorrow's outfit. Next, when you wake the next day and put on the outfit, you've followed through with your promise to yourself.

Without personal integrity you will often struggle to follow through and act. You will have little bias toward action.

## Meaningful Productivity

*The state of consistently giving your time and attention to the things that are most important.*



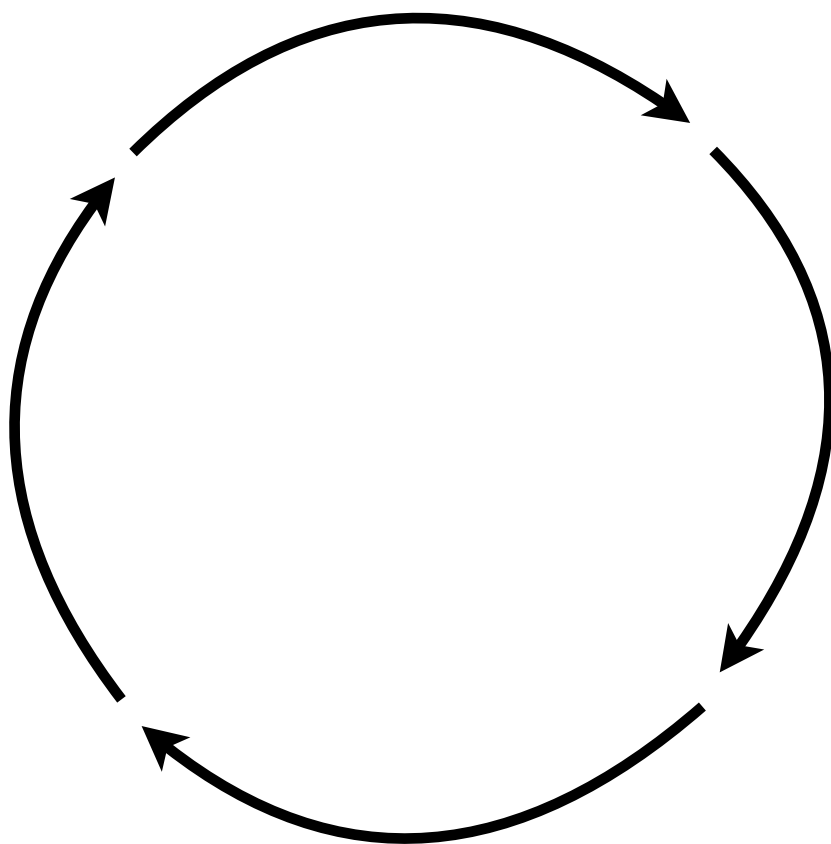
Meaningful Productivity means bringing your calendar into alignment with your values.

If the goals and desired outcomes for your life are not manifesting into daily actions, then your goals are merely ideas and wishes.

When you are unable to spend time and attention on the things that matter, it is frustrating — you are spinning your wheels.

## The Flywheel of Focused Productivity

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





# The 4-Step Productivity Flywheel

## 1: Identify

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

For many people, the biggest challenge to identifying that which matters is due to a lack of clarity about the bigger picture: Your Life's Mission and Vision.

## 2: Plan

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

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

## 3: Act

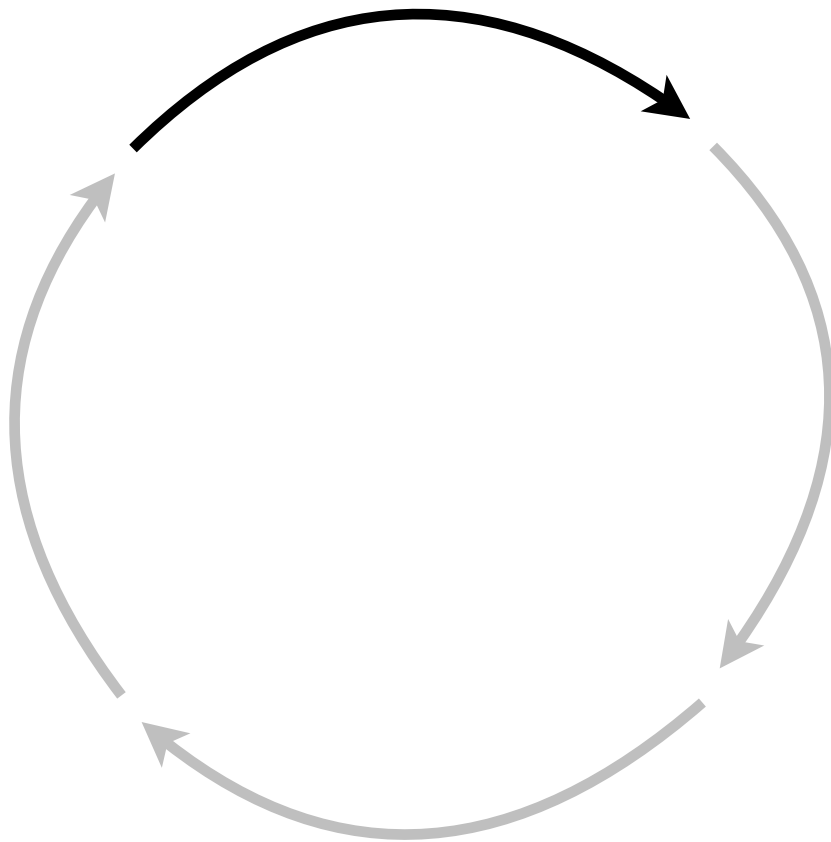
This is where you actually do that which you said you would do. It will naturally include your tasks and actions, but it also includes things such as meaningful moments with your family, resting and recharging, and more. This is the part of the flywheel where you are actually spending your time *doing and living life*.

## 4: Celebrate

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

# Identify

Getting clear about and identify what is truly essential.



## Focusing on the Most Important (The Ownership Matrix)

Even an ideal schedule requires compromise; you cannot do *everything*.

Think about the activities and commitments you have in your life. Place as many of those activities as you can into the Ownership Matrix below.

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

Consider your normal, current schedule. Are you allowing time to focus and grow in each of the most important areas of your life?

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

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

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

NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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**MY JOB / CAREER**

NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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**MY HOBBIES & SIDE-INTERESTS**

NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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**MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY SPOUSE / SIGNIFICANT OTHER**

NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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**MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY KIDS**

NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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**MY RELATIONSHIPS WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY**

NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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**MY INNER PERSONAL / SPIRITUAL LIFE**

NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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**MY EMOTIONAL STATE**

NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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**MY MENTAL STATE**

NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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**MY PHYSICAL HEALTH**

NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
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**MY REST TIME, DOWN TIME AND "PLAY" TIME**

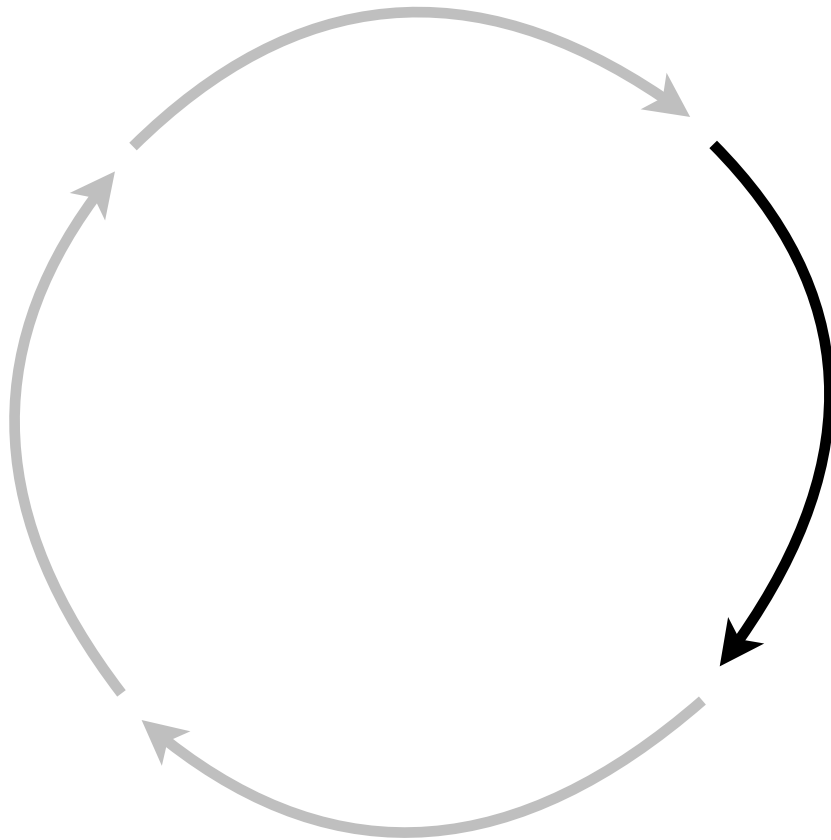
NOT GOOD... AMAZING!

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**MY FINANCES**

# Plan

When will you give some time and energy to the most important things?



## Planning Your Week and Your Day

A system helps you focus on doing what matters. It keeps you proactive, instead of reactive. By having this as a regular part of your life, then you have a regular check in with your tasks and goals. And you can course correct at good, regular intervals (which is critical).

### The Weekly Plan

The weekly plan is your chance to focus in on what you want to do this week. It's your chance to see what will be happening in life over the next seven days and ensure that you are prepared for it.

I also love having a plan for certain things (such as which days I'll do cardio and which days I'll do strength). By making these decisions ahead of time, it makes it easier to follow through when the time comes and I am enabled to focus more freely on doing the things that matter. If you remember from the session about The Note, this is the very same principle just applied to your whole week.

### The Daily Plan

Starting out your day with clarity about the things that are most important to do, and a plan for when you will be doing them, is a great way to ensure you're spending your time on the things that matter.

By identifying your three most important tasks and then scheduling when you will be doing them, it will help you be proactive (instead of reactive) about your day and it will ensure that you get to spend time on at least one important activity that's not "urgent".

Moreover, this gives you a target to aim for each day for being productive. You're able to define success and then end the day feeling that you actually accomplished what you set out to do.

This process will also help you learn your capacity for work in a day. And over time you'll slowly begin to get margin and breathing room in your day. And this can help keep you from working long hours every day just to get your whole list done.

FOR THE WEEK OF

## WEEKLY PLAN

List this week's three most important goals, and your motivation behind them.

**GOAL 1**

**MOTIVE**

**GOAL 2**

**MOTIVE**

**GOAL 3**

**MOTIVE**

List any events, milestones, or commitments happening this week. Also, any habits or routines you are working on.

**MONDAY**

**TUESDAY**

**WEDNESDAY**

**THURSDAY**

**FRIDAY**

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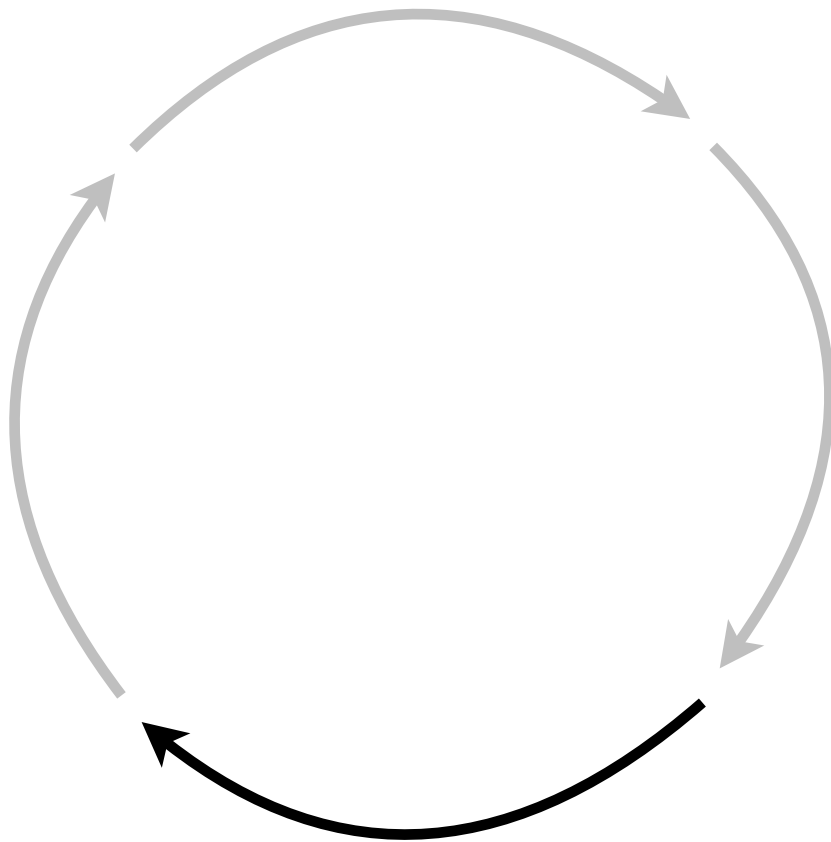
**NOTES, ETC.**





# Act

Time to actually spend your time doing and living life, doing that which matters most.



## Developing a System of Execution (How to Get Stuff Done)

Four things that will help you get better at consistently following through on your commitments.

The aim is to spend your time on that which matters to you and to have the capacity to show up for and lean in to the most important roles and responsibilities you have.

### Personal Integrity

As discussed on page 6, personal integrity is your ability to follow through on your commitments to yourself (and to others). Without a history and momentum of follow-through then even if you are able to identify and plan the things which are most important, you will consistently struggle to trust those decisions and actually follow through when it is time to act.

### Habits and Routines

Alas, people are lazy. I'm lazy. You're lazy. We run out of energy. We love to take the path of least resistance. We tend to make dumb choices. We don't follow through with our plans. We are great at justifying our actions in the moment of decision.

But habits and routines can make us smart! They allow us to automate the inconsequential. They can help us stay healthy. They can save us time, money, and energy. And habits compound over time, creating greater and greater results the longer we stick with them.

### Do Not Disturb

Yes, it's all the rage to have your devices in constant Do Not Disturb mode. But think also of any other distractions and diversions. What obstacles and areas of resistance get in your way? Eliminate them if at all possible.

## Your MOB (Margin, Ownership, Boundaries)

Without Margin, Ownership, and Boundaries (MOB) then it will be difficult to lean into, and show up for, your most important roles.

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

**Ownership (is a mindset):** Are you taking personal ownership over the things that you can control? Without ownership and personal integrity, you may find yourself ignoring activities and roles that only you can do.

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

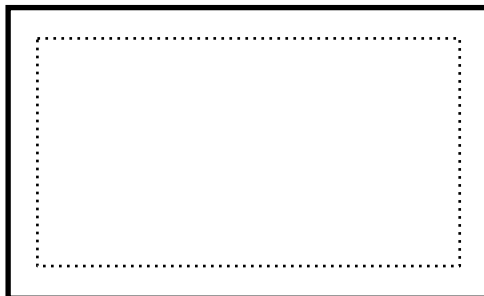
# Margin as a Necessary Component of a Focused Life

Margin is \_\_\_\_\_.

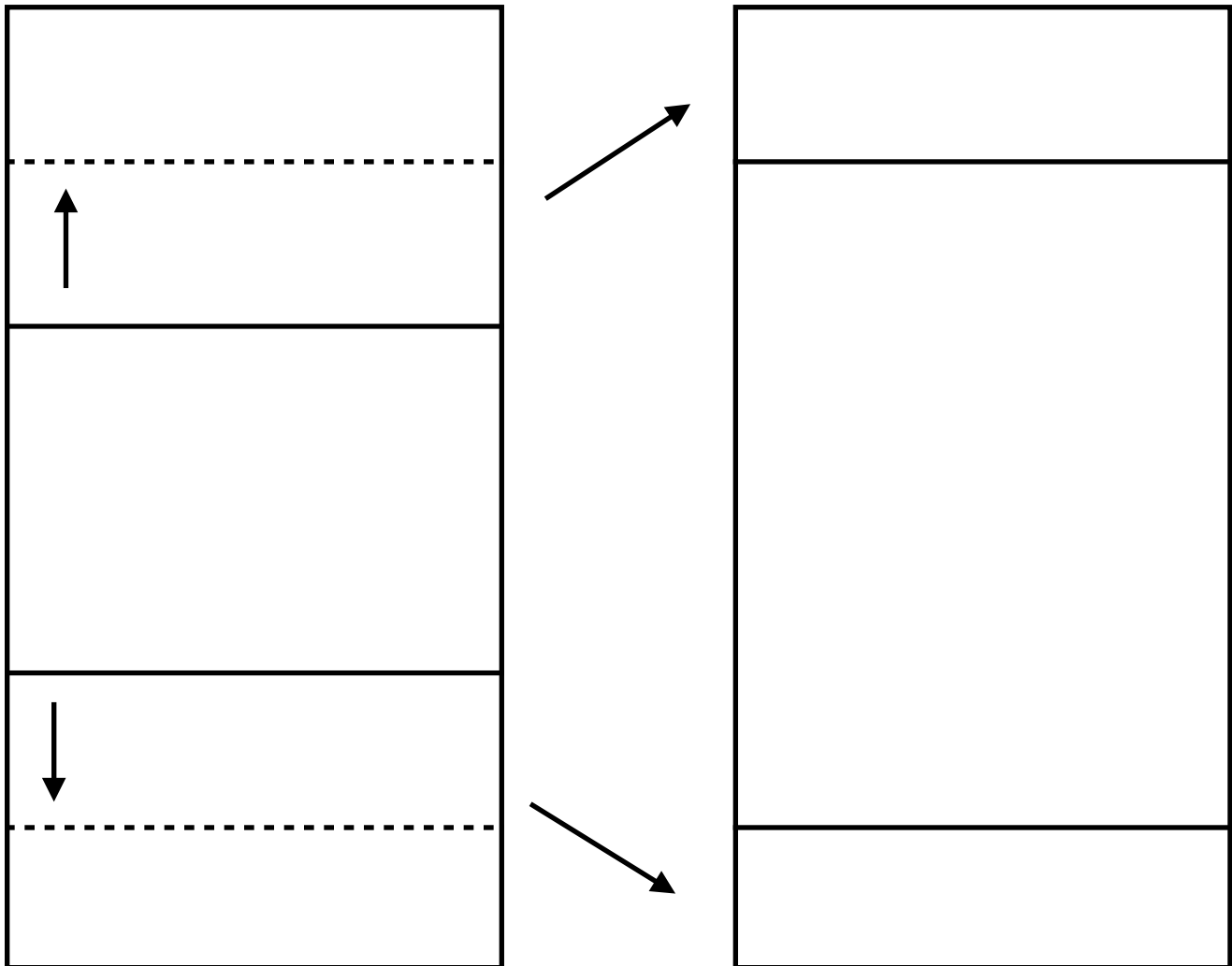
Having breathing room in your schedule, your finances, physical body, emotional energy, and your mental energy is paramount.

Margin is the opposite of \_\_\_\_\_.

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



## Restoring Margin through Increase or Decrease



### Ways to Increasing Your Capacity

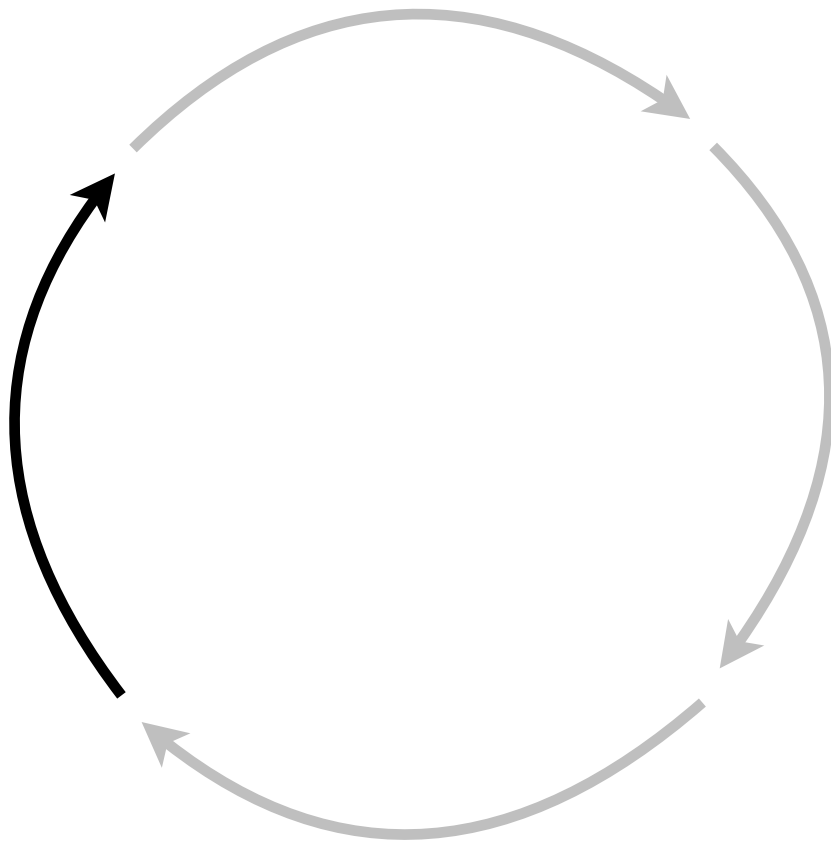
- Intentional Practice
- Deep Work
- Routine & Discipline
- Saving
- Strengthening

### Ways to Decrease Your Load

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

# Celebrate

You've done something important; you've made progress!



## Celebrate Your Progress

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

### **This is called The Progress Principle.**

When we see that we are making progress — even small victories — then it strengthens our emotional and motivated state. We are happier and more motivated at work. And therefore, we are more likely to be productive and creative.

Consider the inverse. When we feel like cogs in a machine then we see our time as being spent just doing meaningless busy work and not contributing to anything worthwhile.

Without recognizing our progress, we slowly lose our desire to be productive and efficient. We don't care about coming up with creative solutions or fresh ideas. We simply put in the minimum effort needed in order to do what's required of us.

When you take the time to recognize a successful trip through the Productivity Flywheel, then you are reinforcing that positivity workflow. Celebrate that you identified, planned, and acted on something that mattered. Doing this will help you to continue to repeat the process.

### **Ways you can celebrate your progress:**

- ✓ Write it down in a journal
- ✓ Share it with a friend or loved one
- ✓ Brag about it on social media
- ✓ Make up a "reward" for yourself for certain milestones
- ✓ Pause, look at what you've done, lean back, and smile



# The Focused Productivity Checklist

Ensure you are completing the whole 4-Step Productivity Flywheel.

## 1: Identify

*I have identified what is most important for me to focus on and/or do.*

My most important task / project / area of focus is: \_\_\_\_\_.

## 2: Plan

*I have a plan for when and where I will spend time on the above.*

I will do \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.  
task day time location

## 3: Act

*I have followed through with my simple plan.*

I will keep myself accountable to my plan by telling \_\_\_\_\_.  
person / group

## 4: Celebrate

*I recognize my progress (no matter how big or small) and have celebrated.*

By keeping my commitment and making meaningful progress on something that matters,  
I will (or did) celebrate by: \_\_\_\_\_.

## Whenever you're ready, here is one of the ways we can help...

The worksheets, ideas, and frameworks taught in this Productivity Workshop have been taken from The Focus Course. (Pretty much everything we do comes from the Focus Course, *tbh.*)

Our brand-new Academy format takes you through our popular, flagship productivity training, The Focus Course, as a member of a live-online group cohort. This cohort-style structure gives you the tools you need for drastically tuning up and rebuilding your productivity, along with the hands-on coaching to make sure you're doing it right, and the dedicated time you need to actually get the answers and results you are looking for.

### Is The Focus Course Academy right for you?

There are three specific types of folks whom would also have the most to gain by participating in the Academy...

**1: Creators and Knowledge Workers:** As a creator and knowledge worker, your work ethic is not about the number of hours you put in. Rather, it's about the quality of your focus during those hours. This is a prevalent and constant struggle. We know. We've been there. And we can help.

**2: Leaders and Entrepreneurs:** Most leaders don't need more time (a resource which cannot scale), they need more focus. As a participant of the Focus Course academy, you'll walk away with a clear framework you can use to free up your time to focus on that which only you can do.

**3: Productivity Nerds:** The Focus Course offers a unique and highly-effective framework for how to manage your time, build habits and routines, and set goals.

**[thefocuscourse.com/academy](https://thefocuscourse.com/academy)**

If you have questions or any other ideas for coaching, private workshops, and more, please email us.

[desk@blancmedia.org](mailto:desk@blancmedia.org)