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## Living Forward: A Proven Plan to Stop Drifting and Get the Life You Want

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### 24 Highlights

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 488

Don't let the brevity fool you. Length does not correlate to impact. The Ten Commandments, Sermon on the Mount, Edict of Milan, Magna Carta, Luther's 95 Theses, Mayflower Compact, Declaration of Independence, United States Constitution, Gettysburg Address, and the Emancipation Proclamation—all of these world-changing documents are less than five thousand words, about fifteen to twenty pages in a printed book. And the majority are fewer than a thousand words, just three to five pages. A text does not have to be long to change the course of history. Nor does your Life Plan have to be long to change the course of your history. Eight to fifteen pages is all it takes.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 495

It describes how you want to be remembered. When we are gone, the only essential thing we will leave behind are the memories we create in the lives of those we have touched and those we love. The cool thing is that we have the opportunity to engineer those now. We don't have to leave them to chance. We can be intentional about creating them.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 498

It articulates your personal priorities. For most of us, our priorities are set by external forces—our spouse, our parents or families, our boss, or our social network. But what are our priorities? What are the ones that we want to shape our lives? And what do we want to see in each of these priorities at some point in the future? A Life Plan is an opportunity to define that vision for ourselves. It provides the specific actions necessary to take you from where you are to where you want to be in every major area of your life. Yes, we will get into repeatable or nonnegotiable actions. But these aren't the kind that the Navy uses to build a submarine or corporations use to introduce a new product. These will be simple and to the point.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 517

At this point I could have asked myself several questions: Why am I so clumsy? Why does this have to happen now? What did I do to deserve this? But the problem with these questions is that they are completely unproductive and disempowering. They are natural, of course. Probably even necessary. It's all part of the process of grieving a loss. But ultimately there are better questions. One of the best questions you can ask when

something negative happens is this: What does this experience make possible? Do you see the shift? Suddenly, your attention moves from the past—which you can't do a thing about—to the future. In my case, a broken ankle had several positive benefits, including some much-needed rest.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 523

Regardless of the circumstances, the bottom line is this: You can't always choose what happens to you. Accidents and tragedies happen. What you can do is choose how you respond to those situations. One of the best ways to begin is to ask yourself

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 592

"I'm more confident in me now," Philip told us. "Before Life Planning, I would either overanalyze everything, or constantly second-guess the decision itself." It took a while for his priorities to really become second nature once he began Life Planning, but now, he says, "decisions come naturally." We're confident it will work the same for you. A Life Plan will enable you to set your priorities and understand how they work together—and when they don't.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 616

Balance is giving not equal but appropriate attention to each of the various categories of your life. This will necessarily mean that some categories get more time and some less, but each will get the attention and resources necessary to keep it moving toward an intentional outcome.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 716

Two hours later I boarded a plane for home. As I took off and flew above the California coastline, I took in a spectacular sunset over the Pacific and recalled seeing the sunrise that morning. Before that day I had always looked at a great sunrise or sunset as separate events. But my day with Mike and his passing, which happened not long after, reminded me that the setting is part of the rising. The question for us is what happens in between. It's true for a day, and it's true for an entire life. The problem is that most of us are so caught up in our moment-to-moment activities, we don't stop to ask ourselves, Where is this all going? How is it going to end if I stick to this same path? Play the movie of your life forward and find out. How? Keep reading.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 734

your funeral, someone from your family—perhaps even a few friends—will offer a eulogy, a "good word" about your life. At the reception after the service, the words will continue. People will tell stories about you and express to one another what you truly meant to them. Imagine you could attend your own funeral and listen in to those conversations. What would those closest to you remember about your life? What stories would they tell one another? Would those stories make them laugh, cry, sigh, or all three? How would they summarize what your life meant to them?

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 761

Begin to Shape Your Legacy Imagining your legacy can be challenging, but it's an absolute must. It helps to approach it as a two-step process. The first step is to write your eulogy as if it were being read today. The second is to craft a series of Legacy Statements as you would hope they would be read at some point in the future. The best way to write your eulogy is to imagine you're an invisible guest at your own memorial. Yes, it might sound strange. But it's a fantastic way of becoming present to what our life really means to others. Who is saying what? Who is not saying what you would have hoped they could or would say? Look at those sitting in the first row. Notice their grief. What are they remembering, the highs and the lows? The key is to write out what those closest to you would say. If you're married, what would your spouse say? How about your kids, siblings, parents, and closest friends? Now look at those sitting in the middle and back rows. How are they experiencing this moment?

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1012

“Remember to secure your own mask before assisting others.” Why? Because if you run out of air, you can't help anyone. Here is a little insight into how we look at life. We have to attend to ourselves first (second only to God for us) in order to be spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, and physically available to others. If you have trouble with the semantics of putting yourself first, think of it as preparation to serve others. For example,

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1087

For example, rather than saying: I want to be lean and strong, possessing vibrant health and extraordinary fitness. Say: I am lean and strong, possessing vibrant health and extraordinary fitness. Do you see the difference? Or, rather than saying: I will become debt-free. I want to have a six-month emergency fund. I want to achieve financial independence, so I could sustain my current lifestyle indefinitely—even without additional income. I hope to have all the money I need to meet my obligations and accomplish my goals. Say: I am completely debt-free. I have a six-month emergency fund. Because I am financially independent, I could sustain my current lifestyle indefinitely—even without additional income. I have all the money I need to meet my obligations and accomplish my goals.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1122

Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1280

It's about breaking free of your limiting beliefs, tapping into your deepest desires, and standing in the realm of possibility. You need the time to work through each Life Account, see it in relationship to the whole, and imagine what can be.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1289

The busier you are, the more intentional you must be. Otherwise, you amplify your risk of drifting to a destination you didn't choose.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1293

But if you do, we encourage you to reframe this as an investment rather than a cost. What could be a better use of your time than establishing a game plan for your life?

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1304

Here's the reality: Anything worthwhile is opposed. Steven Pressfield calls this the Resistance.<sup>2</sup> Any time you try to make an improvement or tackle a significant project, you can expect to encounter obstacles. Creating your Life Plan is no different. Sometimes these obstacles come from without; often they come from within. Regardless, the key is to connect with why your envisioned future is personally compelling, so you are willing to overcome the Resistance to achieve it.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1375

So I gave myself permission to dream. What do I wish I could be doing if money or status were not an issue? Almost immediately the thought came: Speak and write full-time. I had no idea how I would make it happen, but I knew it was the right course. I chose to listen to my heart and began to lay the groundwork for one of the biggest career transitions I would ever experience.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1379

Please, please, please listen to us when we say this: perfectionism is the mother of procrastination. If you expect perfection, you will never finish.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1601

This makes them look sloppy and incompetent. Reality is that they don't have a process in place for systematic review of previous meetings and assignments.)

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1737

1. Practice before you preach. St. Francis of Assisi reportedly said, "Preach the gospel at all times and when necessary use words." Nothing speaks louder than our lives. When we preach what we aren't practicing, people consider us hypocrites. That's hardly the outcome we're after. On the other hand, when we practice what we preach—especially before we preach it—we provide evidence that what we are advocating actually works. We've all had this experience when a friend or co-worker decides to lose weight. Their strategy is far more compelling after they have lost fifty pounds.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1781

Others have brought in various marriage training programs, like Gary Chapman's The Five Love Languages. These have the added advantage of directly involving spouses. Building Champions and several of its clients have had great success by inviting teammates to marriage retreats either created by us or conducted by other

organizations with this expertise. Some companies have brought in parenting programs like Foster Cline and Jim Fay's Parenting with Love and Logic. Attention to family-related areas like these can also have a positive impact on work productivity. The main thing is viewing this as something that is part of an ongoing program. Life Planning provides the foundation, but people need additional resources if they are really going to succeed.

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1813

The wise old man looked at the boy and said, "The bird is as you choose it to be." So it is with your life. The power is in your hands. You have been given a great gift—your life. What will you do with it?

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Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1861

**Step 1: Write Your Eulogy** The first step in life planning is to consider where you want to end up. Nobody plans a trip without choosing a destination. For us that means writing your own eulogy. What will your legacy be? What will your life mean to those closest to you? What will they remember about you? How will your life have impacted theirs? It might feel daunting, but this first step is critical. It will not only get your head in the game but also your heart. One easy way to begin is to list all the people you want to remember you: spouse, family members, friends, teammates, and so on. Then list how you want to be remembered by each of them: loyal, brave, kind, always eager to help—however you most desire to be remembered. Once you have those elements, you can shape them into your eulogy. To see how others have done it, you can jump ahead to the Life Plan examples in the next section. The key is to write it as if your funeral is being held today, not some date down the road. By writing as if your eulogy was being delivered right now, you can begin thinking of what it will take to make those imagined memories real.

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