

no regrets on sunday

Seven days can change your life
by Dr Peter Hawkins





Wake up it's
a beautiful
morning

BOO RADLEYS

No regrets on Sunday

MOST OF US CRAWL OUT OF BED ON MONDAY MORNING, HEAVE A SIGH OF RELIEF ON FRIDAY NIGHT AND START TO RELAX ON SATURDAY.

On Sunday there's hardly time to pause and think about our lives before the routine of another week kicks in. And without taking the time to think, some of us become trapped on that treadmill with week following week; allowing the same old timetables, the same old habits and the same old moans to dictate our daily lifestyle. For others there may simply be an acceptance that their lives are satisfactory, if perhaps a little bland and lacking in challenge – for them too it's sometimes easier to accept the routine as their lot for life.

Whatever stage of life or career we are at, most of us are reluctant to ask ourselves why we are here, where we are going, who needs us most and how are we going to make the most of the time left.

The big danger is we end up waiting for that final 'weekend' when our working lives are over... the time we retire and do all those things we've been promising ourselves to do all these years.

If this scenario sounds familiar, then this book is designed for you. By simply setting aside an hour or so a day for the next week you'll be delighted to find how easy it is to start gaining a fresh perspective on the way you think about and act on your life. This can save you from looking back when it's too late and regretting you didn't do something sooner. The only way to have no regrets when that distant Sunday comes is to start changing your life now.

How many people on their Sunday evenings have you heard saying 'I wish I spent more time in work'?

What do you wish for?

Don't wait for someday sometime to make that fresh start – it will never happen. Someday is not a day of the week. And a week is no time at all.

IT'S TIME TO REFLECT

This is a concept which should help you to focus your mind – and underline the importance of taking action now! Try imagining your life as a single week, starting on Monday. With each day equal to around a dozen years, you're in your twenties by Tuesday, middle-aged by Thursday and heading for retirement on Friday night.

WHAT DAY OF THE WEEK ARE YOU ON?

It doesn't matter which day you are up to. What really counts is how you're going to make the most of the rest of your week.

WHERE ARE YOUR NEAREST AND DEAREST?

Think about the people you love. Are they at the beginning, middle or end of their week? Does this have any implications for your life?

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO HAVE NO REGRETS ON SUNDAY?

Committing time to the daily exercises in this book will show you how your working, learning, playing and giving will help you meet that challenge.

MONDAY

AM = 0-6 | PM = 7-12

TUESDAY

AM = 13-18 | PM = 19-24

WEDNESDAY

AM = 25-30 | PM = 31-36

THURSDAY

AM = 37-42 | PM = 43-48

FRIDAY

AM = 49-54 | PM = 55-60

SATURDAY

AM = 61-66 | PM = 67-72

SUNDAY

AM = 73-78 | PM = 79-84

BANK HOLIDAY

84+

Seven days to change your life

IF YOU DON'T TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE, WHO WILL? THIS BOOK PROVIDES YOU WITH A BLUEPRINT OF STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE NO REGRETS ON SUNDAY. SO IT'S OVER TO YOU NOW!

Spend seven days working through the following pages. You'll be amazed at how much you can achieve in just one week. From the minute we wake up on Monday morning to the moment we fall asleep on Sunday night, life presents us with seven days of possibilities. And with possibility comes choice. Choice over how we manage our lives – our working, learning, playing and giving.

No Regrets on Sunday will help you to pause and consider what's really important to you, create wishes for the rest of the week and take positive action today. Each day you'll explore another positive step you can make.

You'll learn to understand yourself better, change how you look at the world and discover how to use your time more creatively to get what you really need. You'll also be able to picture the kind of life you wish to lead and acquire the skills and support necessary to realise your ambitions and enjoy that life to the full.

Here's a snapshot of each step of your week:

TO MAKE THE MOST OF THIS BOOK:

Give yourself time to concentrate. Plan to do each section at a pace that suits you.

Share the process with someone else.

Make notes as you go. Record your thoughts and ideas and review them later.

Celebrate progress. Remember you're already on the way to ensuring you have No Regrets on Sunday.

Have confidence in your ability. Take that first determined step and keep moving forwards day by day.

MONDAY MINDSET

Can I change a habit of a lifetime? To have No Regrets on Sunday you may need to review how you think about your life.

TUESDAY TIME

How can I make the most of the time I have? The solution lies in finding more creative ways of blending the four key areas of your life – your working, learning, playing and giving.

WEDNESDAY WHO

At the end of the day, who am I and who do I really want to be? The answer lies in the roles you play today and being honest about the most important roles for the future.

THURSDAY TALENTS

What are my talents and skills and how can I maximise them? You have a unique combination of skills you love using and are really good at. What opportunities does today offer you to use them in your working, learning, playing and giving?

FRIDAY FULFILMENT

Is my life simply full or truly fulfilling? True fulfilment comes when we combine our passions with purposes or causes that are meaningful to our lives or those of others.

SATURDAY SUPPORT

What support do I need to sustain myself? The support of my extended family – the people who can help me – is vital to me throughout the week.

SUNDAY SATISFACTION

How can I make all my hopes, dreams and aspirations a reality? By creating your Golden Ticket – a clear picture of your life and what's in your week ahead.

Say it, mean it and do it!

YOUR WEEK AHEAD IS ABOUT BOTH THINKING AND ACTING DIFFERENTLY. IN OUR EXPERIENCE MANY PEOPLE'S DREAMS DON'T COME TRUE BECAUSE THEY CAN'T DEFINE OR COMMUNICATE THEM CLEARLY ENOUGH.

They can't say what it is they want from life.

Then there are the people who may say it but don't really mean it. For them the motivation or desire is never great enough to overcome the inertia of life's routine and do something to turn their dreams into reality.

Others may say it and mean it but they don't actually do it. We also see a fourth group who may appear to 'do it' but in reality lack focus.

Although apparently highly motivated and busy all the time, they are unable to 'say it' in a meaningful way and simply end up going round in circles!

How many times have you heard people say 'I always wanted to...' 'I wish I had...' 'If I had my time again...?'

Perhaps you've said such things yourself. Using this book will ensure you never have to say them again. Each day is therefore divided into four sections:

SAY IT – Helps you talk through a topical theme for the day.

MEAN IT – Enables you to gain deeper insights and understand what this means for you.

DO IT – Encourages you to take a simple first brave step today.

DONE IT – Inspires you to keep the momentum going by learning from others who have done it.

PASS IT ON

We also want this process to create a ripple effect, not just in your life but in the lives of other people – your family, community, organisation or further afield. To make this real, we'll challenge you each day to pass on your learning or action to someone else. But each day you must pass it on to someone different so that by the end of the week seven people will have been touched in some small way.

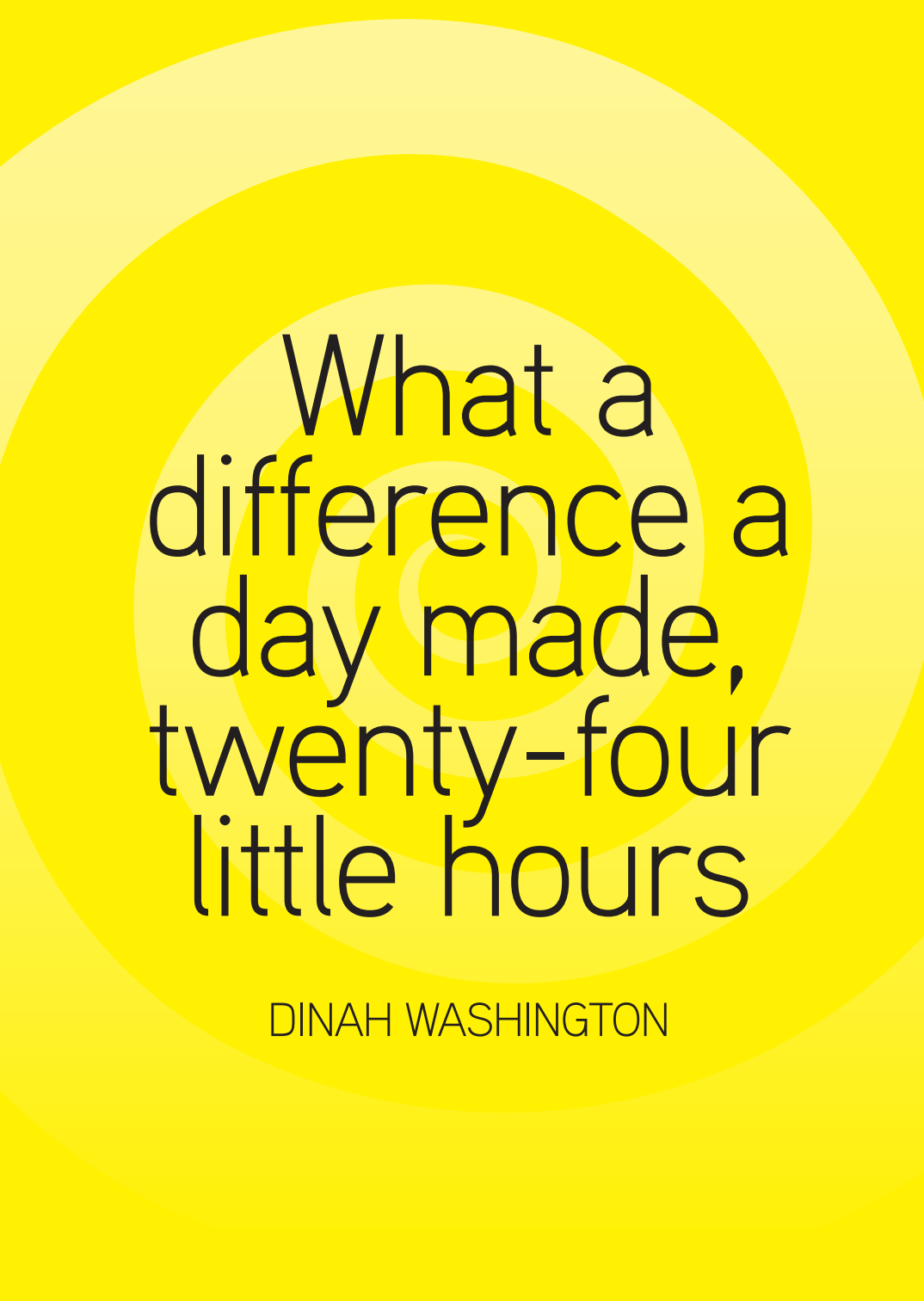
Before you rush into another week on that treadmill take your first step towards a new life now. To ensure you have No Regrets on Sunday, ask yourself:

What are **THREE** things you would love to achieve in life?

Which **TWO** people would you like to share this book with?

What **ONE** thing would you like to gain in seven days time?

Good luck. Now it's up to you enjoy every moment of the week ahead.



What a
difference a
day made,
twenty-four
little hours

DINAH WASHINGTON

MON

WEDNESDAY

MINDSET

LIFE IS 5% ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS
TO US AND 95% HOW WE RESPOND
TO WHAT HAPPENS TO US.

say it...

STOP THE SLEEPWALKING

The moment we wake up on Monday morning we almost start sleepwalking. Automatically we switch into a series of habitual routines.

We get out of the same side of the bed, brush our teeth with the same hand and turn on the taps in the same way as we follow our familiar daily pattern.

In the kitchen we set about a prescribed routine of opening cupboards, switching on appliances and making our breakfast. Our daily activities often follow the same patterns – locking doors, setting alarms, travelling down the same streets, meeting and greeting the same people. And it's not just the habits in that first hour that follow a set pattern.

We have systems for working, shopping, talking with our partners, doing the washing and ironing. Virtually everything we do has a set of learned habits.

We act rather like robots programmed by a number of pre-set default switches. These switches not only affect our activities, they dictate our thoughts and feelings which in turn affect our behaviour.

They govern our view of the day ahead – whether we see it as an exciting possibility or just another manic Monday. They affect our views about work – whether we view it as a prison sentence or a fun day out.

And they decide how we respond to change – whether we resist it as a threat or welcome it as an opportunity.

You're embarking on the first of seven days that could change your life. Just spend an hour or so each day taking in these ideas and you'll be thinking differently by Sunday. You'll feel more satisfied looking back on your week. And as you act on those ideas you'll be on track to spend every week in a way that saves you a lifetime of regrets.

SWITCH TO A NEW MINDSET

The crucial thing to remember is we control those switches – the way we set those defaults is our mindset. Ask yourself what your default settings might be in the following situations:

- In a traffic jam, a car is trying to sneak in front of you from a side road – do you let them in or drive on?
- You come home after a hard day's work and your partner is lying on the couch with the house in a mess – do you start an argument or tidy up?
- You are forced to go out with a couple from hell – do you spend the night sulking or try to have a good time regardless?

These default settings can easily trigger a train of thought in your head. For example, you meet an old boy – or girlfriend holding hands with a new partner. Do you congratulate or ignore them? If you ignore them, do you start thinking 'Why are they so close? Are they sleeping together?... Did they have an affair while I was on the scene?' As each new idea crowds in, your train of thought starts going out of control. Worry simply means you are using your imagination the wrong way.

Clearly, it's not life's events but the way we respond to them that shapes our future.

The problem is that, just like breathing, we do so many things without even thinking about them – sub-consciously deciding to be happy or sad, relaxed or stressed, positive or negative. These habits are ingrained in us through our parents, the environment we grew up in, our peers, society at large, even the media.

Sadly such habits often stop us from developing and living the kind of lives we really want. And after governing us for so long, they can be hard to shake off.

The key to changing a habit of a lifetime is to be aware of it in the first place.

So to cope with the uncertainties of the week ahead, and have No Regrets on Sunday you may need to shift your mindset by changing some of those default settings that control your habits.

As you travel to work, do your shopping or surf the net, start questioning those actions you do automatically.

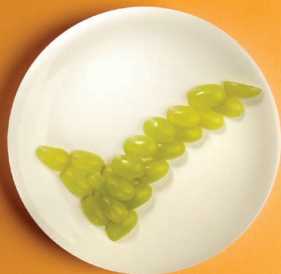
What old habits do you need to discard? What could do with a fresh approach? And what new habits would it help to develop today?

Try thinking differently about 'self-limiting beliefs'. Stop thinking of yourself in a negative frame of mind. Stop making excuses such as 'I haven't got the time or money'. Start thinking positively today.



mean it...

FROM BIRTH TO DEATH... LIFE DISHES UP SOME LANDMARK EVENTS.
BUT ALONG THE WAY WE FIND MANY OTHER THINGS ON OUR PLATE TOO.



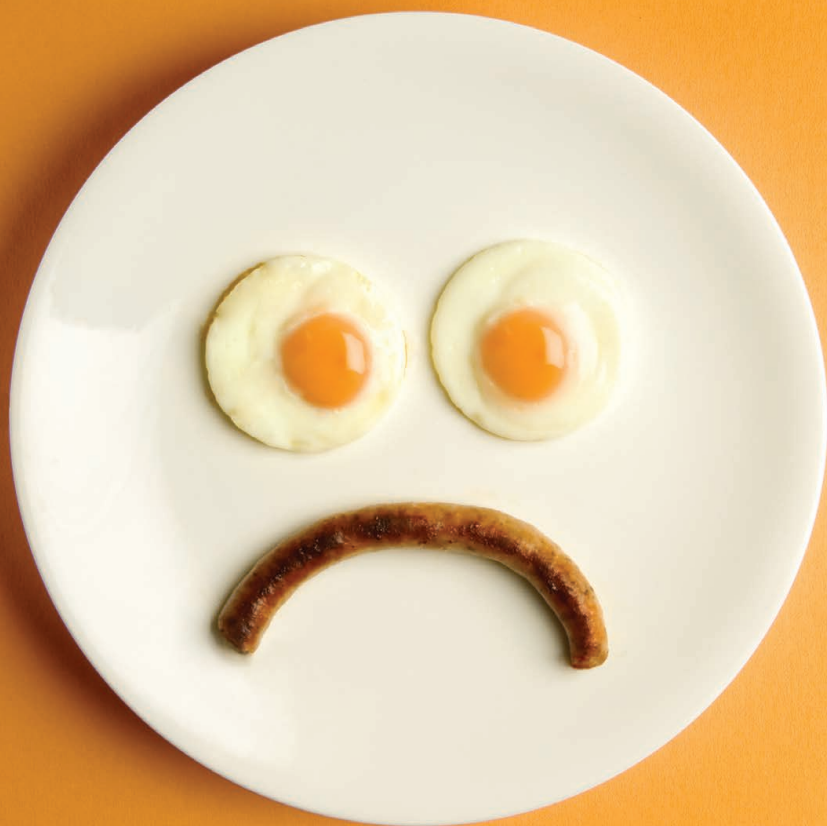
We are all born. We learn about our values, the importance of health and love and the different roles we play. Change affects us all. Sometimes we are broken, other times happy. There are exciting surprises and all sorts of different possibilities. But at the end of the day we are all here for a purpose, and then we pass away.

WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?

So here's some food for thought... think about what's on your plate today.

Look carefully at the above dishes and choose a couple that have real meaning to you, and think how they affect your day today. For example you may be facing changes at work, about to embark on a new role, worried about your wellbeing or looking for a greater sense of purpose in your life.

PLATES TOP TO BOTTOM – L TO R: BIRTH, LEARNING, VALUES, HEALTH, LOVE, ROLES, FAMILY, SHARING, WEALTH, CHANGE, BROKEN, HAPPY, SAD, MESS, SURPRISE, VARIETY, PURPOSE, DEATH



EAT = EVENT
ACTION
THINKING



The positive thing to remember is it's not what we EAT, it's how we EAT. It's not the Event (or dish) that shapes our future, it's the way we Act and Think about it that makes the difference. You only have to look at everyday stories of how some people cope amazingly with disaster, disability or death – while others seem to enjoy an easier lifestyle, yet look enviously at what's on someone else's plate.

So ask yourself the question 'How do I have to act and think differently to create an inspiring future for myself? How do I need to change my EATing habits?' The exciting thing is you have far more control over your life than you can ever imagine. Allow yourself to act and think in a different way and remember, like learning how to EAT as a child, you may need to break things down into small bite-sized chunks.

YOUR PERSONAL EATING HABITS

Below are 10 EATING habits for no regrets in life. For each habit, circle a number which best represents where you lie between the two statements. Be totally honest with your answers, there are no rights or wrongs or anybody to impress.

THINKING

I have low self-confidence and worry about what other people think of me	CONFIDENCE 0 1 2 3 4	I strongly believe in myself and am at ease with who I am
My mood is very much dictated by what happens to me, and the future doesn't inspire me	CHEERFULNESS 0 1 2 3 4	I'm optimistic and positive about my future whatever life throws up
I don't spend enough time exploring who I am and what's important to me	CURIOSITY 0 1 2 3 4	I constantly strive to learn new things about myself
It's hard for me to think creatively about my future	CREATIVITY 0 1 2 3 4	It's easy for me to think of new opportunities which use my skills and passions
I don't have a clear sense of where I'm going	CLARITY 0 1 2 3 4	I have a clear picture of where I want to be in the future

TOTAL

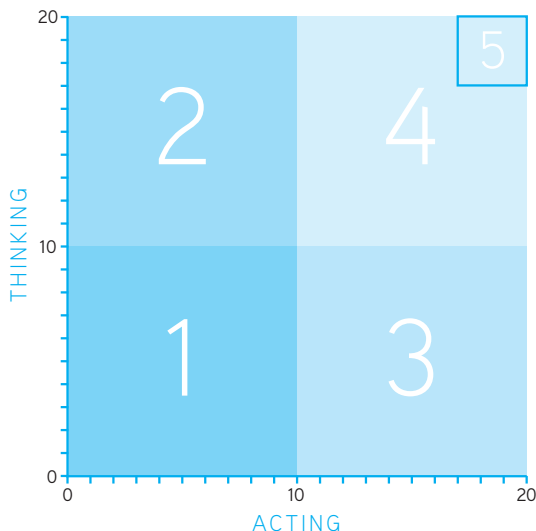
ACTING

It's easier and safer to stay in my comfort zone	COURAGE 0 1 2 3 4	Anything is possible and I am brave enough to do it
I find it uncomfortable to talk about what's important to me	COMMUNICATION 0 1 2 3 4	I enjoy sharing my hopes and dreams with people who matter
I struggle to ask for help, particularly from strangers	CONNECTIONS 0 1 2 3 4	I have all the people in place to turn my dreams into reality
I don't feel resourceful enough to make things happen	CAPABILITY 0 1 2 3 4	I am in control and have all the resources in place to take action
I don't feel particularly motivated at the moment	CONVICTION 0 1 2 3 4	I'm really motivated to take action today

TOTAL

You'll notice the first five habits are about the way you think, and the second five are about the way you act.

Add your first five scores together and then add your second five together. You'll now have a combined score for 'thinking' and a combined score for 'acting'. Use these scores as a grid reference to plot your position on the graph. Find which box you fall into and use the advice below to improve your EATING habits



BOX 1. YES BUT...

Do you find yourself making 'reasonable excuses' why things aren't working out? Yes Buts often focus on the problems rather than possibilities, blame others rather than themselves and react to what life dishes up rather than take control. Remember, if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem! Consider what your life will end up like if you carry on week in week out in the same way. Will you have any regrets? Remember you have far more potential than you ever imagine. Focus on one of the 10 dimensions that you feel comfortable with and think 'what will make the greatest difference to the rest?' What one small step can you take today?

BOX 2. IF ONLY...

Are you a bit of a dreamer? Lots of great ideas but no action to turn them into reality? I'll do it 'someday sometime!' If Onlys are forever putting things off. If Only I'd been braver, If Only I'd asked for help, If Only I'd talked to someone about it, If Only I'd stuck with it. Think of all the regrets you may have if you don't have the courage of your own convictions. If you don't do it, who will? Focus your energy on 'acting' in a different way today. What calculated risk can you take? Who could you share your ideas with? Who can you ask for help? How can you start to take control and keep the momentum going? Don't even think about it – ACT NOW and see where it takes you.

BOX 3. NO IDEAS

Do you ever find yourself busily rushing through life like a headless chicken? Lots of action, lots of talking, lots of energy – but no real focus or direction. No Ideas are great at acting, they'll jump into anything head first. But they're not so good at thinking. Where's this taking me? Does it creatively combine my skills, passions and values? Does it make me happy? The danger is you may spend the whole of your life going round in circles and later on have regrets that you missed out on something really important. Give yourself some 'me time' today, or schedule it into your week. Spend time on the important things rather than the urgent. Check your whole attitude and approach to the day ahead. How can you think differently about yourself and your future today?

BOX 4. ACTION THINKERS

Are you someone who has learned to take control by thinking and acting differently or does it come naturally? Action Thinkers are a bit like helicopters. They have the confidence and ability to rise up and see the bigger picture but also responsiveness to position themselves to seize opportunities. Some words of caution from our years of experience is, 'are you really fit enough to fly?' Be honest with yourself and make sure you've been totally accurate with your scores and have the evidence to back them up. Don't try and impress others or feel you have to be seen to be doing well. The danger is you may well crash and burn on the long haul!

After this long safety warning – congratulations, you're well on your way. Remember to have absolutely no regrets you may need to set your sights even higher or practice even more to respond to future winds of change.

BOX 5. NO REGRETS

If you passed away today, would you have absolutely No Regrets? No Regrets are outstanding thinkers and actors. They are at ease with who they are and clear about where they want to be, but also treat every day as though it was their last. Just as importantly, they have the courage, connections, creativity, capability and conviction to make their hopes and dreams a reality. No Regrets believe in the art of the possible and are not held back by their own or other peoples' baggage. As with 'Action Thinkers', No Regrets must be able to walk the talk and provide practical evidence in their daily lives. We all have the potential to be, and have 'No Regrets'. So what can you do today to bring meaning and life to these two words?

What are you going to do today to Say it, Mean it, Do it? It's all well and good saying you need to do something fresh and new, but is it motivating and purposeful enough for you to really mean it? And even then, are you going to take that brave step to make it real? Someday is not a day of the week. If you don't take responsibility, who will?

CREATE A NEW HABIT TODAY

While we may not be able to control all the events life dishes up for us, we can control the way we think about and act on them. We all have one simple choice – whether to speculate sadly on the sorrows and scariness of life or be positive and proactive, and focus on life's pleasures and possibilities.

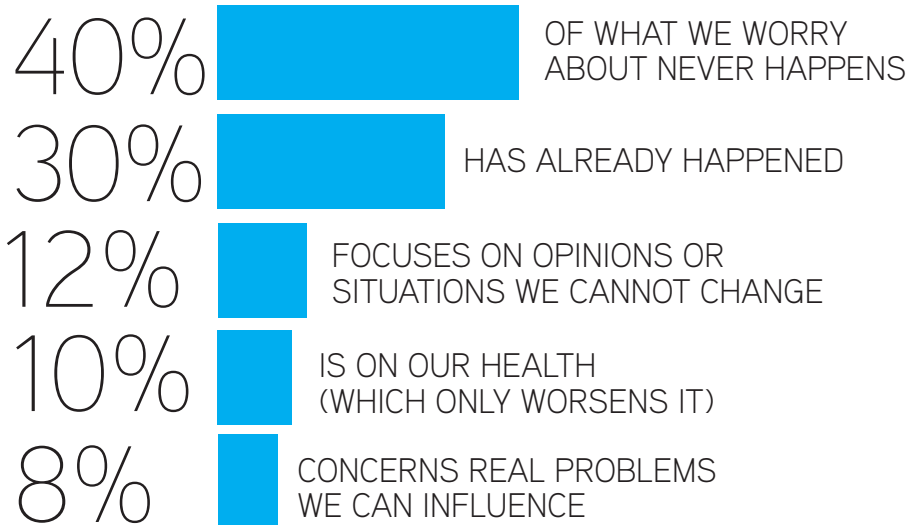
Having no regrets is about making choices that are right for you. How would you like to end your life – happy or sad? Bitter or sweet? Full up or fed up? How are you going to change the way you EAT today? What one new habit can you adopt now?

DON'T WORRY... BE HAPPY!

To create a new habit, you'll probably need to break an old one first. Stop worrying and start living today. Look at the diagram below and you'll see that 92% of our worries are absolutely needless.

Like jam, if we spread ourselves too thinly, we become tasteless.

So where are you going to focus your energy today?



do it...

So what single small step can you take today to take control and ensure you have No Regrets on Sunday?

Try picking one of your 'Personal Eating Habits' that is easy to work on and can make the greatest difference. Do something practical today to improve it. Remember it's easier to act your way into a new way of thinking than to think your way into a new way of acting. Here are some simple things you could do today.

- ☐ **BE MINDFUL** – Slow down, take a few deep breaths and be conscious of what is around you... and what you take for granted. Start a diary of the three things you are grateful for today.
- ☐ **BREAK HABITS** – Go to work a different way, listen to a new radio station or buy a different paper. Greet people with a smile instead of walking by with your head down.
- ☐ **BELIEVE IN YOURSELF** – Spend 15 minutes listing all the changes, challenges and celebrations in your life to date.
- ☐ **BRING IN HELP** – Find someone who inspires you or has been through what you are going through. Phone them up today and learn from their experiences.

- ☐ **BROADEN YOUR HORIZONS** – Go to places you wouldn't normally visit, join a new group, turn the TV off and do something different.
- ☐ **BE MORE PROACTIVE** – Find something you've always put off, and do it today.
- ☐ **BUILD 'ME TIME'** – Diary in some quality time today for yourself. Refuse to feel guilty about relaxing
- ☐ **BOOST YOUR WELL BEING** – Healthy body, healthy mindset. Join a gym, walk instead of drive and eat a healthier diet.
- ☐ **BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND** – Imagine a happy end to your day – you've no regrets, you've made a real difference yet had loads of fun. Start the day with that attitude and stick to the plan.
- ☐ **BIN YOUR WORRIES** – Jot down your worries and stick the list in a folder or box. Have a look at the list in a month and if any remain, decide what you can do differently to tackle them.

So what steps will you take today? Consider picking one or two of these suggestions to get you up and running and, when completed, the other ideas may provide you with further thoughts.

Monday Monday
so good to me,
Monday Monday
it was all I hoped
it would be

MAMAS & THE PAPAS

done it!

A severe dyslexic, I couldn't read at the age of 37 and was going nowhere. I needed to change my whole way of thinking and sought help. With brute determination, I progressed through education and jobs to become Senior Director responsible for European operations in a global organization. Now I'm fighting for the rights of others. As long as I never give up, I can't fail.

LARRY

COMPANY SECRETARY,
PARENT ADVOCATES TOGETHER





PASS IT ON



What ONE key message will you pass on to someone else today? Who has something on their plate that they need your help with? How can you act and think differently about one person you meet today? It may be a close friend or a complete stranger.

TUES

SDAY

TIME

YOU PROBABLY SPEND MORE
TIME PLANNING YOUR TWO WEEK
HOLIDAY THAN THE OTHER FIFTY
WEEKS OF THE YEAR.

say it...

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR REMAINING TIME

As we journey through our week we have all sorts of calls on our time. We face the need to earn a living, care for others, stay fit, keep the house tidy, enjoy hobbies and socialise. But all the time we are being presented with choices. Firstly we can choose which of these activities we build into each day. Secondly we can choose to do them separately or together – taking the opportunity to combine them. Thirdly we can choose how we view them. We may have to do these things – but do we see them as fun or a chore?

Now think hard about what's in your diary for the rest of this week. You'll quickly realise it is going to be made up of different combinations of the following four types of activity – working, learning, playing and giving (WLPG).

WORKING – Covers any form of paid or unpaid career, part or full-time employment, or self-employment.

LEARNING – May be both formal and informal, on the job, through experience, courses or old-fashioned trial and error.

PLAYING – Is enjoying yourself inside or outside work and is not solely confined to Friday evenings or weekends.

GIVING – Does not simply mean donating money, but giving your time, energy, talents and skills to purposes and people who need you.

It is the quality and blend of your working, learning, playing and giving (WLPG) that shapes your life.

You can make each day more enjoyable and worthwhile by blending your four key areas of activity – working, learning, playing, and giving.

If you keep these ideas in mind all week, you'll be thinking and feeling differently by Sunday. And you'll be well on the way to ensuring you have no regrets when you look back at your life.

The problem is that we usually see working, learning, playing and giving as distinct areas with few links between them.

LEARN TO BLEND YOUR WLPG

In the past it was common for people to see their whole lifespan as boxed off into four totally different sections. The traditional pattern was years at school followed by a lifetime of work and ending with a spell of retirement divided between playing and giving.



Today however, many people try to achieve a balance between these WLPG areas – dividing their time between working, learning, playing and giving. In theory, if a person divided their time equally, you could show it as it appears in diagram 1.

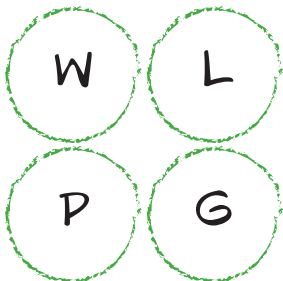


DIAGRAM 1

The four areas are equal in size and there is no overlap between them – each is simply balanced against the other.

In reality though, work dominates most people's lives (diagram 2) – that's why the WLPG pattern of a person in this situation shows W as the largest area.

That same person is just juggling the four areas and still none of them overlap. Balancing WLPG is a compromise – more time for one area means less for another.

This can soon lead to an imbalance. In fact this example is a powerful symbol of modern life where some people are in danger of becoming wage-slaves (with little or no LPG), just to keep up a lifestyle (the P) they have become accustomed to. The irony is that in our quest for the next 'must have', work monopolises our lives!

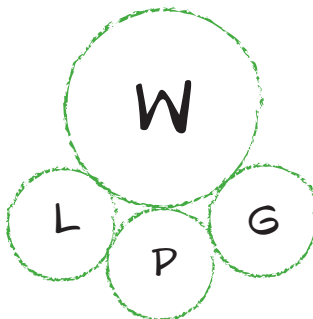
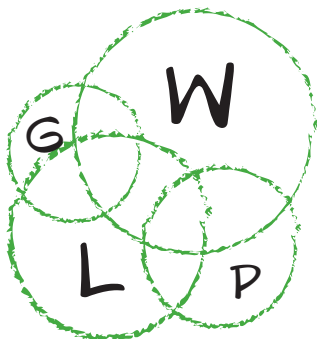


DIAGRAM 2

But there is another approach we can all take to our daily working, learning, playing and giving. Rather than simply balancing these four areas, we can look for opportunities to combine or blend them. And blending two or more of the four areas can really enrich the quality of your life.

The WLPG diagram below shows some overlap between working and learning, with playing and giving linking into both. It suggests that this person's work provides some learning opportunities and that both the work and the learning are a source of enjoyment.

The more you can blend two, three – or even all four of these areas – throughout your life, the greater the chances of becoming more fulfilled, employable and happy.



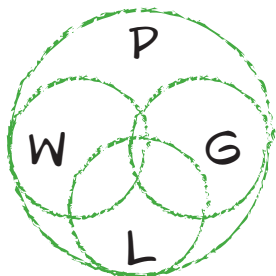
Remember, we are all unique – there is no set formula that works for everyone. Some people work to live and others live to work. For some, work is all about learning, playing and giving. For others, play may be with friends completely outside work. Some people may not have a work circle at all and over time the balance and blend will change. However, it is a well known fact that we contribute most when we're having fun, learning and stretching ourselves and using the skills we love and are good at.

So how are you going to allocate the rest of your week in terms of working, learning, playing and giving? How will they overlap? The sketches on the opposite page provide a few classic examples but the choice is uniquely yours.

Be open to possibilities. Rather than seeing working, learning, playing and giving occupying different time frames, see them as four different aspects of the same time frame.

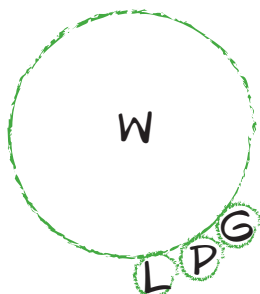
Be creative and remember to encircle your day the right way. For example you could approach today as being full of fun (with P enclosing WL and G) or as a day of giving (with G enclosing WL and P).

By making a conscious choice of how you hope to embrace the day ahead you'll dramatically change its outcome.



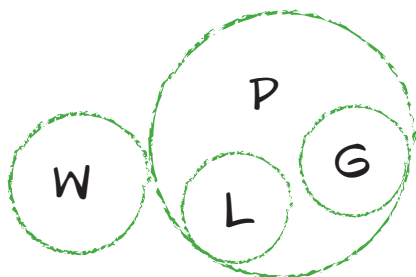
LIVING HAPPY

A sense of fun embraces the whole day



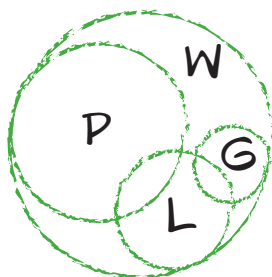
BURNED OUT

Unfulfilling work gobbles up life



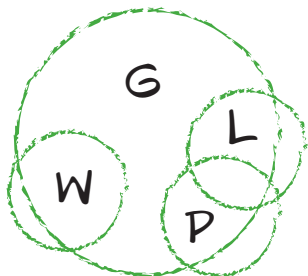
WORKING TO LIVE

Earning money to fuel a passion



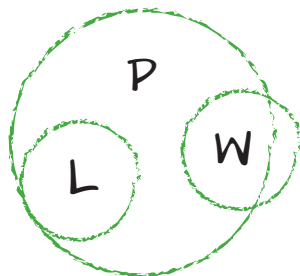
WORKAHOLIC

Passionate about work but no rest and play



GENEROUS

Making a difference is more important



SELF-CENTRED

All about me, no giving to others



mean it...

ASSUMING WE WILL BE LUCKY ENOUGH TO LIVE UNTIL OUR MID-EIGHTIES, WE ARE BORN WITH 40 MILLION MINUTES ON THE CLOCK AND COUNTING. THAT'S ABOUT 2.5 BILLION SECONDS!

The exciting thing is we do have the time to achieve all we hope for in life.

After all each of us is given exactly the same number of hours, minutes and seconds each day. What counts is what we choose to do with them. Just imagine each second of your life as a tiny grain of sand slipping away through a giant egg timer. The real danger is we wish those millions of grains of sand away waiting for the weekend, the summer holiday or even our retirement. We fail to use all that time in-between creatively and so waste bucketfuls of sand along the way.

Of course we all have pressures on our time... but we also have far more control over it than we realise. For example, let's say you hoped to spend a third of your time working, a third travelling and having fun, and the final third learning a new language.

This may sound hopeful, but you could easily go a step further. Instead of splitting your time three ways, how about blending the activities together? You might spend half your time working and the other half travelling and learning a new language. Does that sound impossible? Not if you get creative and start thinking outside the box... For instance you could try finding a job you are passionate about which involves travelling worldwide and provides the opportunity to learn a foreign language at the same time.

Remember those grains of sand are slipping through that timer... a handful has even fallen while you've read this page. Today you could have around 1,000 minutes available to you. This exercise will help you look at how you can creatively blend your working, learning, playing and giving to make the most of every single second so you'll have No Regrets on Sunday.

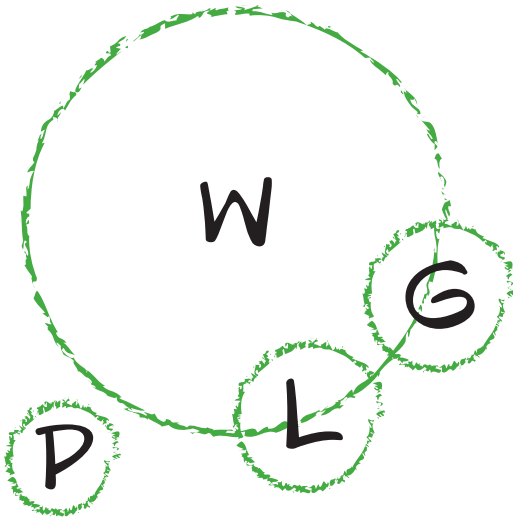
We are all given exactly the same number of hours, seconds and minutes each day. It's what we choose to do with them that counts.

STEP 1

Draw your current blend of WLPG. Draw four circles, considering:

THE SIZE OF EACH CIRCLE – This represents the time and energy you've put into working, learning, playing and giving respectively over the past week. The more time you've spent, the bigger the circle.

THE OVERLAP BETWEEN CIRCLES – This highlights the level of overlap between WLP and G. For example, how much learning is going on in work, how much of work is fun and is a form of giving. In the example below not much!



REFLECTION

ARE YOU HAPPY WITH IT?

What have you learned from the sketch? Does anything surprise or puzzle you?

DO YOU HAVE ANY OVERLAPS?

What's happening, who are you with, where are you and what are you doing when two or more circles intersect?

WHAT KIND OF WLPG ARE YOU HAVING TODAY?

Can you make any changes?

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS?

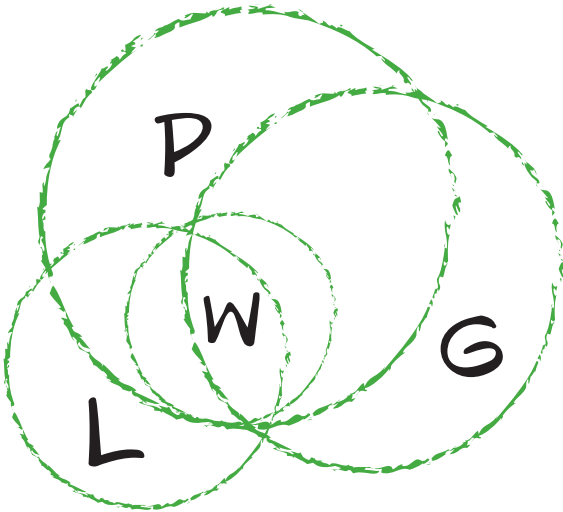
What will happen, who will be affected if nothing changes?

Any WLPG sketch you draw is absolutely unique to you and simply reflects your current situation. The important thing is how it will impact on you and other people if you allow it to stay the same for years to come. Whenever you have a pen in your hand, have a go at sketching out your WLPG.

STEP 2

Now draw your ideal blend for the future.

Think of an appropriate time span, whether it be six months, a year or five years in advance and fix a date in your mind. Now imagine yourself on that chosen day, having created your ideal WLPG blend. Sketch out that ideal, thinking creatively about the size of each circle and how they overlap. Depending on your character and circumstance you may wish to aim for your ideal or accept you have to compromise on certain aspects at particular stages in your life, eg giving is going to be big because I'm the main carer for an elderly relative. Remember to be as creative as possible.



REFLECTION

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT WHAT YOU'VE DRAWN?

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR CHANGES YOU'VE MADE IN TERMS OF SIZE AND OVERLAP?

WHAT'S HAPPENING WHERE TWO OR MORE CIRCLES ARE BLENDED?

GET A FRIEND TO SKETCH OUT THEIR VIEW OF YOUR WLPG AND SEE IF IT MATCHES YOURS (SEE STEP 4)

In Step 3 over the page you'll be asked to identify the factors that push you towards or pull you away from your ideal WLPG blend. Challenge yourself not to make 'reasonable excuses'. For example, if time and money are an issue, how much? If 'family commitments' are stopping you, have you really discussed possible solutions as a family?

STEP 3

Congratulations, if you have completed STEP 2 you should now know what your ideal WLPB blend looks like. Looking back to the journey you took from the first sketch in STEP 1, sketch out (as shown below) all the 'push' and 'pull' factors that influenced its shape.

The 'pull' factors are the things that conspired to pull your ideal blend apart, whether they be real or perceived, internal or external, within your control or out of it. The 'push' factors are the things that made it real. Try to be honest, eg if time or money is a barrier, how much?

PULL

COMMITMENTS

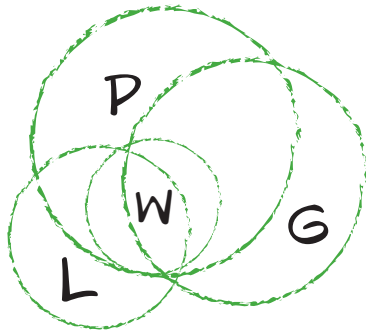
MONEY

WORRY

CONFIDENCE

TIME

AGE



PUSH

CONVERSATIONS

SUPPORT

COURAGE

RESILIENCE

CREATIVITY

RISK

REFLECTION

WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

HOW DID YOU OVERCOME IT?

WHO HELPED AND HOW?

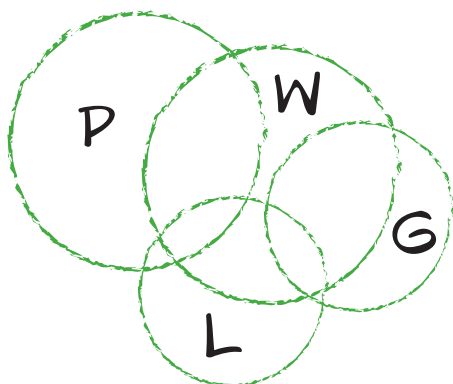
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO MAINTAIN YOUR WLPB BLEND?

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST SMALL STEP TOWARDS MAKING IT HAPPEN?

Before taking action, it might be worth reflecting on the bigger picture.

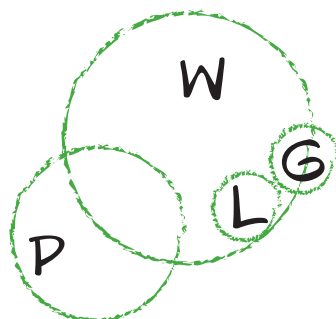
STEP 4

Remember your WLPG blend will undoubtedly have a connection and ripple effect to other people's lives. How you perceive your WLPG blend will be your reality. But do other people see you in the same light? You may wish to take a reality check and ask someone else close to you to sketch out their view of your current WLPG blend. Hopefully both sketches will be similar, but as the example below shows, there may be differences of opinion.



MY WLPG SKETCH

'I've got life in balance'



MY PARTNER'S VIEW

'You're focused too much on work and don't have any real fun with us'

REFLECTION

WHAT ARE THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SKETCHES?

WHAT CAN YOU DO DIFFERENTLY TO CHANGE?

HOW CAN YOU HELP THEM FEEL, THINK OR SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY?

Try playing around with the sketches. For example, how can you create a shared WLPG blend?

do it...

WE ALL WOKE UP THIS MORNING AND WILL GO TO BED TONIGHT – BUT WE’LL NEVER HAVE THIS DAY AGAIN.

We need to make sure we have no regrets and avoid feeling that time is simply slipping past without us noticing. So ask yourself: Where has the last week, month or year gone? And what practical step can you take to get the right blend of working, learning, playing and giving in your day? Here are some actions other people have taken – work on the one that appeals most.

- ☐ **START A WLPG JOURNAL** – Sketch out what your four circles represent for today then try it for a week. Jot down what’s happening at the biggest overlaps as well as the areas you’d like to change. Apply the lessons from each sketch to shape the next day.
- ☐ **TALK ABOUT WLPG** – Speak to one person who is affected by your WLPG. Ask them to draw their own sketch. See how you can work together to help each other.
- ☐ **REDUCE W TODAY** – Take a proper lunch, leave on time, don’t take work home. Perhaps take a day off or see if you can work from home for a day.
- ☐ **LEARN TO LEARN** – Find something you’d love to learn and build it into your day, eg an Open University module or a vocational qualification.

- ☐ **GIVE MORE** – Try simple acts of kindness – a warm welcome, positive feedback, a hug, or pat on the back.
- ☐ **CHALLENGE YOURSELF** – Try making the world a better place using a £5 note. Don’t give it away – but use it to make someone’s day. You’ll be amazed.
- ☐ **HAVE A WLPG DAY** – Write a list of all the W, L, P or G things you’ve wanted to do but put off. Pick one thing you can start making real now.
- ☐ **WORK TO LIVE** – Research ways you can find more flexible work to fund your passions, support your learning or free you up to give more.
- ☐ **FIND YOUR IDEAL JOB** – Write your ideal job description, find a person with that kind of job and ask them to talk about their work.
- ☐ **BALANCE THE BOOKS** – List all outgoings and see what savings you can make – this lets you earn less and avoid W dominating your life.

So what steps will you take today? Consider picking one or two of these suggestions to get you up and running and, when completed, the other ideas may provide you with further thoughts.

Goodbye,
Ruby Tuesday
Who could hang a
name on you?
When you change
with every
new day...

ROLLING STONES

done it!

In my corporate job, all work and no play was stifling my aspiration for a balanced lifestyle. So I took the plunge and set up my own business. Now I make decisions, work and learn with people who really matter to me. I've always got time and energy for my family, friends and voluntary work – that's real progress.

VIP
BUSINESS OWNER





PASS IT ON

Make a commitment to pass on your learning to someone else today. Who do you need to have more fun with, give more time to or simply be with today?

Try focusing on the person who is most affected by your WLPD diagram and take one small positive step today to help them to begin to create their own ideal blend.

WEDN

ESDAY

WHO

FIND A ROLE YOU LOVE
AND YOU'LL ADD FIVE
DAYS TO YOUR WEEKEND.

say it...

KNOW WHO YOU ARE AND WHO YOU WANT TO BE

When you looked at yourself in the mirror this morning what did you see? Who are you and what makes you happy? How do you see yourself at the moment – and who do you really want to be? To understand this you need to think about the many and varied roles you play throughout your life.

THE ROLES WE PLAY

Try imagining your life as an unfolding film in which you play a variety of lead and support roles. Each role gives you a new identity.

From the moment we're born, we're given a role the same as everybody else – the role of a child. We play that instinctively, crying and sleeping at appropriate (and often inappropriate) times. Although this role develops and grows over time, it stays with us throughout much of our life.

Depending on our family make up, background and the environment we grow up in, we also inherit a number of other roles at birth – brother, sister, cousin, step-child, twin, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jew and so on.

As we go to school we become a student, prefect, peer, star of the week. Work then starts to define who we are – our job title gives us a label to describe what we do – dustman, dentist, driver, designer, director, domestic and so on. Our role in our neighbourhood and local community may also evolve, as neighbour, volunteer, leader.

We all play a number of different roles in life – it's vital to understand which ones really matter.

If you don't want to end your life looking back with regret at your missed opportunities, it's vital to identify those roles that really make you happy.

The home provides a myriad of roles, from cleaner to cook; as do our interests – from football fan to fisherman, decorator to dancer or musician to mechanic. In our relationships too we play different roles, as friends, partners or providers.

SHAPING YOUR IDENTITY

Our roles in life are created by possibilities and problems we encounter every day – our identity is being shaped by our roles and the way we respond to those possibilities and problems. Whether these roles involve working, learning, playing or giving, they change as we go through life.

As infants we define our identity through name, age, and where we live and learn: 'I am... and I live at...'.

As we grow up, our identity is influenced by our peers and education. 'I am a member of this group...' or 'I am a student at...'.

Soon it may well become focused around work: 'I am a manager of...'. 'I am an accountant for...' or family life: 'I am a dad with two teenagers'. As we move towards later life some roles will overtake others in importance.

For example you might regard your role as a father as being more important than your role as an employee.

You may see yourself as a husband ahead of your work as a handyman.

But remember that the most important role we play is that of being ourself – an individual. Don't lose sight of the real 'you' underneath all the layers and baggage of your everyday roles.

COPING WITH CHANGE

Some of our roles will have a limited lifespan, after which it's time to change or let someone more appropriate take over.

Problems may suddenly enter your life and plunge you unexpectedly into a new role – as a hospital patient for instance, a carer for a loved one, a person with a disability, or a griever.

Our portfolio of roles is continually evolving through life; some we take up others we lose. At any one moment we may be playing a dozen different roles requiring different priorities at different times.

Some roles will feel more comfortable than others. Many we may take for granted and not appreciate until they disappear or become under threat.

For example if we are made redundant or retire, our role as a colleague and the accompanying social contacts we take for granted may disappear overnight.

FINDING YOUR TRUE ROLE IN LIFE

What really matters about all these many and changing roles is whether they are purposeful, fun and fulfilling for us.

The key question is: Have we forgotten who we really are?

Have we lost our true identity, and lost sight of who we want to focus on being in the future. If you met someone for the first time in a bar and they asked 'Who are you? Tell me a bit about yourself'. What would be the first thing you'd say? The key to answering these questions and having No Regrets on Sunday is to understand which roles matter most in the bigger picture and why.

Which roles do you need to put more energy into? And how can you perform best in them for the longest time possible?

THE PRESSURE FROM OTHER PEOPLE

The way other people view us can also have a dramatic effect on how we prioritise our roles.

Have you met the HAVes, DOs and BEs?

The HAVes define who you are by the material wealth resulting from your roles – what you earn, the type of house you live in, the car you drive, where your luxury holiday is this year, your favourite possessions.

The DOs define success by what you do for a living – your status, profession, qualifications.

The BEs accept you for who you are – a parent, carer, volunteer, homemaker, they place value on you not the costume you wear.

It's important to think about who you spend time with. The HAVes, the DOs or BEs?

Challenge yourself today to play the important rather than the urgent roles in life. We all have choices. What's more important – sending yet another email or spending time with the kids?

Who needs you most, your friends or your Hoover? What are your dominant roles today and are you happy playing them?



CHILD
FRIEND
PARTNER
MEMBER
NEIGHBOUR
CITIZEN
VOLUNTEER
WIDOW
CARER
LISTENER
STUDENT
EMPLOYER
HANDYPERSON
BOSS
MENTOR
MYSELF
COLLEAGUE
SHOPPER
HOME-MAKER
CHAUFFEUR

PROFESSIONAL
ADDICT
POLITICIAN
JOBSEEKER
DISABLED
PRACTITIONER
CRIMINAL
COMMUNICATOR
EMPLOYEE
LEADER
LEARNER
SUPPORTER
COMMUTER
REFUGEE
GRANDPARENT
DIVORCEE
LOVER
BELIEVER
RELATIVE
RETIREE

BREADWINNER
INVESTOR
MANAGER
CHAMPION
TEACHER
ENTREPRENEUR
SINGLE
PARENT
STORYTELLER
ADMINISTRATOR
TRAVELLER
TEAM PLAYER
PUBLIC SERVANT
BUSINESS PERSON
EXPERT
BROTHER
SISTER
GIVER
TRUSTEE
COOK

DIRECTOR
EXPLORER
ASSOCIATE
FUNDRAISER
SOCIALISER
SPECIALIST
CONSULTANT
ADVOCATE
CLEANER
INVENTOR
DEVELOPER
COACH
MEDIATOR
PIONEER
PATIENT
CUSTOMER

mean it...

THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE

Imagine you get home from work and slump down in front of the TV. But tonight, instead of watching your favourite soap or a football match, you find yourself watching an omnibus version of the story of your life to date. Which roles have you been playing so far in your life?

1. Look at the list of roles opposite and think about all the roles you've played in the last month or so.
2. Pick the main 7 roles you play at the moment. The things that take up most of your time. List them in the first column of the storyboard over the page. Feel free to add or change the title of the roles to suit your situation.
3. Next, think about how much time and energy you put into each role. In column 2 rank them from 1 to 7 (1 = the most, 7 = the least). Use your gut instinct but avoid equal rankings.
4. Now look at how important each role is to you at the moment and rank them from 1 to 7 in column 3.
5. Finally, put yourself in the shoes of the person related to this role. If they were asked how well they see you performing this role, what would your score be and why? Write your scores in column 4. A* being outstanding through to F – a complete flop!
6. So what's this telling you about the roles you are playing in life? Are you spending prime time on the role you feel is most important and is your performance rating in it A*? Where are you doing well? Where are the tensions? Where could you do even better? What changes do you need to make?

There are six billion of us on this planet and we have only two things in common. We are all born, we will all die. But, sandwiched between those two events we will all play a STARRING ROLE. That role is... our life.

MY STORYBOARD

ROLE	TIME/ ENERGY	IMPORTANCE	PERFORMANCE

Remember, we all look at life through our own lens. The challenge is that at any moment we only see 50% of the true picture – whatever’s right in front of our own camera. And even when we turn our camera round, there will always be something else going on behind it.

To get a more accurate view of this exercise, you could ask others what criteria they use to judge your performance and how they score it.

In other words find out what their camera angle can show you. This may prove an interesting discussion. But always remember the truth is often complicated and may depend on your viewpoint.

The truth is only seen by that bigger camera looking down from above at the whole picture; the camera that picks up the broader thread, makes connections between scenes and sees how the story unfolds and finally ends. The next stage of this exercise gives you a chance to operate this third camera.

HAPPY EVER AFTER?

Imagine you’ve captured from above all the footage that makes up a film of your life. Now fast-forward the story to the final act of the final scene.

It’s been a rollercoaster ride, with all sorts of twists and turns, brilliant successes and forgettable failures, tears of joy as well as tears of sadness. It’s had an amazing cast with fantastic supporting actors and wonderful locations. But most important of all it ends up happy ever after.

So what does happy ever after mean to you? When the lights go off for the final time, what roles would you like to be remembered for and why?

Looking back at your life with No Regrets on Sunday, think about all the roles you would love to be remembered for.

Now choose one role you would like to develop or create.

TIME TO CHANGE THE PLOT

You may now be conscious that you need to re-arrange or re-write your roles in life, whether this be an immediate scene change or a gradual rehearsal for a more important part you wish or need to play. To do this, it may be time to change the **PLOT**. So think of one role you'd love to expand or improve and use the following process to help you shape it:

PICK

What new attitudes, behaviours, values or skills do I need to pick up?

LOSE

What negative baggage or behaviour, commitments or roles do I need to lose?

OPEN

How can I be more open to new possibilities? Who can help me?

TURN

What twists and turns may face me, and how can I turn them to my advantage?

Remember, it's up to you to play the starring role in your life story – no-one else. Keep to your own script, and never lose the plot!

Pick one role that jumps out at you immediately and do something practical that will change your **PLOT**. Focus clearly on one small step. It may be as simple as having a conversation, saying no or creating some 'me time'. Don't worry about playing the ideal role the first time round – practice makes perfect.

do it...

Probably the most important role any of us will play is the 'leadership role' in our own lives. If we don't play it, who will? And if we don't get it right for ourselves, how can we help others?

So what can you do today to play your starring roles and have No Regrets on Sunday? Here are some suggestions for how you can change the plot. Just one simple scene or script change can make the difference.

- ☐ **UNDERSTAND YOUR ROLES** – Recognise what they mean to others. Ask family and friends "How can I be a better neighbour, colleague or friend... in your eyes?"
- ☐ **DISCARD OLD ROLES** – Drop anything that's no longer enjoyable and can be done better by someone else. Focus on roles you really love.
- ☐ **GET YOUR PRIORITIES RIGHT** – Focus energy on things that really matter. Postpone the washing to spend quality time with friends. Leave work early and surprise your parents with a visit.
- ☐ **REDISCOVER OLD ROLES** – Pick up old hobbies again. Re-start that language or the book you had in mind.

- ☐ **RE-INVENT YOUR ROLES** – For example, instead of just sitting with an elderly relative, take them somewhere new. Or join a group that interests you both.
- ☐ **BE PRACTICAL** – Find one thing you can do today to play your role better, eg enrol on an IT course, try a parenting course or phone a friend you've lost touch with.
- ☐ **RECOGNISE YOUR BEST ROLES** – Don't bother volunteering as a school governor if you hate meetings! Where are your unique skills, values and passions most needed?
- ☐ **SPOT OPPORTUNITIES** – If you love caring for children, consider part-time work in a nursery, volunteering with a children's charity or fostering.
- ☐ **RECHARGE YOUR BATTERIES** – If you're stressed, you won't perform effectively in any role.
- ☐ **KEEP CHECKING** – Reassure yourself you're making progress but keep checking your roles are right for this stage of your life.

So what steps will you take today? Consider picking one or two of these suggestions to get you up and running and, when completed, the other ideas may provide you with further thoughts.

Wednesday week,
she loved me
Wednesday week,
never happened
at all

THE UNDERTONES

done it!

Totally lacking in self-confidence and belief, I used to play everything safe. Then a friend who volunteered for a group of adults with learning difficulties invited me to join her one evening at the club. That turned into a routine and week by week my confidence has grown as I take on greater responsibilities. Now I'm a full time carer for David too.

AUDREY
VOLUNTEER AND CARER





PASS IT ON



Make a commitment to pass on your learning to someone else today. Who, from all of the roles you play, would benefit most from a bit more of you today? And which bit of you are you going to pass on – a helping hand, wise words, a listening ear, simple smile or warm heart?

THUR

SDAY

TALENTS

YOU'RE A UNIQUE PERSON WITH MORE
SKILLS THAN YOU THINK.

say it...

YOU ARE UNIQUE

When you turn on the radio and surf the stations, have you ever marvelled at the way every piece of music is so different – from hip hop to house, country to classical or rock to rhythm 'n' blues?

Yet amazingly all music is created from the same seven core notes – the big difference lies in the different ways they are combined. Again, when you survey the huge variety of books on the shelves of a bookshop, from fiction to non-fiction, science to sport or business to biography, does it strike you that every one uses just the 26 letters of the alphabet? – it's simply their order that changes.

And when you look around at the myriad of posters, images, photographs and pictures – from painting by numbers to Picasso – do you realise that they are all made up from just three primary colours blended in different ways?

The same applies when you look at people and the talents or skills they possess. In fact we all have similar families of skills to play with at our fingertips. And what makes each of us unique is the way in which we combine them.

SPOTTING YOUR PRIME SKILLS

With so many combinations of skills at our disposal we need to identify which can be the most useful to us. Luckily there are two clear clues for spotting these prime skills.

Use your talents and skills to get what you want in life. Spot the skills you love using – and are really good at – and apply them in areas that make you come alive.

You're now half way through this book and should be gaining a new perspective on life. If you're taking in these new ideas, you'll look back on your week with much more satisfaction when Sunday comes.

And if you can put some into action in the coming weeks, you'll have no regrets at the end of your life.

The first clue is how much we love using a particular skill – whether we’re good at it or not. We can easily spot a skill we love because time simply flies when we’re using it. (If we’re stuck using skills we hate, time drags and we end up clock-watching and wishing it was time to stop or go home).

The second clue lies in how good we are at a skill. The better we are at something – whether it’s laying bricks, dealing with figures or running a business – the more likely someone is to pay us for doing it.

So your prime skills are simply those you love using and are best at. In fact you love them so much you might still use them even if you weren’t being paid to do so.

IT’S YOUR CHOICE

Now consider these three questions:

- 1 From your portfolio of over 500 skills can you spot those seven you love most and are best at?
- 2 Are you making the most of these skills for a purpose that you are passionate about?
- 3 Are you proactively seeking and creating opportunities in your daily working, learning, playing and giving to maximise your prime skills in the future?

We asked thousands of people these questions. Most fell at the first hurdle – they’d never sat down and thought about their prime skills. That explains why so many people tell us that they feel under-employed and undervalued in their jobs. The easy way out is to blame your employer but ultimately it’s our choice to discover the skills we love and where we can use them.

Each of us is unique in the particular way we combine our prime skills with something we are passionate about and which matters to us. Wouldn’t it be great to answer Yes to each of these three questions. Just imagine what it would mean if everyone we knew answered yes, yes, yes!

Think how productive our workforce would be, what wonderfully positive relationships we’d all enjoy and what strong communities we would all live in!

LET YOUR SKILLS SHINE

Imagine your skills as a unique set of diamonds. They shine in the light – but lie forgotten when shut away in their case.

The same applies to our skills. They’re always there, but we sometimes lose sight of them. We need to use them to bring some sparkle into our lives.

CHECK THAT MINDSET!

So what's stopping you from seeing clearly the precious gifts you have to offer life – your own prime skills. And why aren't you making the most of them for a purpose that you are passionate about?

Perhaps you are saying to yourself 'I can't, that's all well and good but... I have no choice' or even 'I can't be bothered'.

This is where you need to check your mindset and remember what you've learned on Monday about changing those old habits.

Remind yourself that in the end it is up to you and you do have choices. This is where what we talked about on Tuesday can help.

You may be able to find a way to use those skills you love if you look at your WLPG and create ways of blending those four key areas of your life – your working, learning, playing and giving.

Think about the choices WLPG provide. Your ideal may be to get paid for your prime skills but that plan may not be possible at the moment.

So Plan B could be to learn more about your skills and develop them further.

And why stop at Plan B?

Plan C could be to use them more in a social context while Plan D might be to explore voluntary work opportunities.

Once you start thinking, the possibilities are endless.

Finally, remember what you learned in yesterday's exercises about the changing roles you play in life.

So why not think about all the roles you play in your life and hope to play in the future.

How are you going to use your prime skills to play your part effectively throughout the rest of your week?

As the example opposite shows, one of the most valuable ways of boosting your confidence, letting your skills shine, developing new talents and creating new possibilities is through volunteering.

It's free, purposeful and gives things back with interest. If you had two hours free this week, who would you love to give it to? If you don't have any time available, try making the most of what you're already doing – it could be a project opportunity at work or helping friends and family.





mean it...

PLAY YOUR PART

To play your full part, make your own unique contribution and have absolutely no regrets in life you need to pinpoint your prime skills, stay focused on them and combine them in various ways. Like the core notes that combine to make up every piece of music imaginable, we are equipped with a core family of skills and talents which we can combine in countless ways to bring harmony to our lives. Today's exercise will provide you with two simple steps to Play Your Part in Life:

STEP 1 – Starting today on the right note

STEP 2 – Striking the right chord

STEP 1 – STARTING TODAY ON THE RIGHT NOTE

- 1 Think of all the 'magic moments' in your life so far – your big successes, the happy times, those singular moments where time has stood still and you've really come alive. Explore all aspects of your life – your working, learning, playing and giving. Think too of your moments of despair and the challenges you've overcome. Use hindsight to recognise that some of our greatest gifts in life come poorly wrapped. If you have time, you may want to jot these down.

- 2 On the following page look down each of the six families of skills and tick in the first column those you absolutely love using. Use your ideas in Point 1 to trigger the skills you enjoy. Don't worry about how good you are at them at this stage. It's all about enjoyment.
- 3 Now go back to the skills you've ticked and in the second column tick all those you are good at. These are your prime skills.
- 4 In the third column tick any skills you need to develop further. This may be to make you more employable in the future, perform better in your role or get you closer to your ideal work/life blend.
- 5 Feel free to create a seventh family of your specialist skills not covered within the skills portfolio.
- 6 Finally, you might want to highlight any 'bum notes' – those skills you absolutely hate and need to dump, delegate or delay using at all costs.

So how are you going to start on the right note today? In the next hour which one prime skill could you use more and how?

Where do you need to practice more (your development skills)? Which tunes do you need to stop playing (your 'bum notes')?

MY SKILLS PORTFOLIO

EXPLORING SKILLS	EXPLORING	LOVE USING	GOOD AT	DEVELOP
	Investigating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Identifying possibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Generating alternatives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	INTERVIEWING	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Questioning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Listening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Selecting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	OBSERVING	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Assessing people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Comparing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Learning from data	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	LEARNING	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Reflecting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Experimenting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Improving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	RESEARCHING	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Gathering information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Collecting and recording	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Drawing conclusions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	SOLVING PROBLEMS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Analysing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Seeing patterns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Developing solutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	REALISING POTENTIAL	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Uncovering personal strengths, passions and purpose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Seeking feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Taking action	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CREATIVE SKILLS	THINKING LATEROALLY	LOVE USING	GOOD AT	DEVELOP
	Taking fresh perspectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Using intuition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Seeing new angles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	DESIGNING	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Implementing new ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Developing products	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Drafting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	MEDIA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Using multi-media creatively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Exploiting different media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Art and design	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	ADAPTING	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Enhancing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Translating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Combining	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	CONNECTING	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Seeing links	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Synthesising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Building on ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	CREATING	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Innovating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Developing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Conceiving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	VISIONING	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Imagining the future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Seeing the whole picture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Turning failure into success	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

ENTERPRISE SKILLS

LEADING

Directing people
Planning and targets
Driving change

LOVE USING
GOOD AT
DEVELOP



NETWORKING

Support community
Growing relationships
Sharing your talents



STRATEGISING

Forecasting
Researching
Business planning



SELLING

Negotiating
Influencing
Following up



SELF-MANAGING

Motivating self
Seizing opportunities
Promoting self



CHAMPIONING

Advocating
Pioneering
Promoting new ideas



MARKETING

Assessing needs
Generating possibilities
Enhancing profile



PEOPLE SKILLS

RELATING

Creating rapport
Building relationships
Valuing others

LOVE USING
GOOD AT
DEVELOP



COMMUNICATING

Presenting
Listening
Liaising



HELPING

Supporting
Volunteering
Sharing



EMPOWERING

Encouraging
Developing others
Inspiring



MANAGING

Realising potential
Optimising
Co-ordinating



UNDERSTANDING

Having perspective
Empathising
Valuing differences



TEAMWORKING

Working collectively
Sharing skills
Balancing interests



MORE OVERLEAF

PROCESSING SKILLS

PROCESSING

Carrying out procedures
Following instructions
Working structurally and systematically

ADMINISTRATING

Overseeing
Completing
Delivering

MAINTAINING

Controlling quality
Managing information
Updating

COMPUTING

Utilising up-to-date
IT packages
Technical IT skills
Setting up IT systems

WORDS & PICTURES

Writing
Drawing
Translating

REVIEWING

Performance
Evaluating
Action planning

FINANCES

Budgeting
Accounting
Auditing

LOVE USING
GOOD AT
DEVELOP

○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○

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PRACTICAL SKILLS

OPERATING

Precision working
Using machinery
Using multi-media

CO-ORDINATING

Multi-tasking
Organising
Delegating

SENSING

Hearing
Seeing
Touching

FIXING

Servicing
Repairing
Maintaining

WELL-BEING

Exercising
Relaxing
Thinking positively

PRODUCING

Crafting
Making
Constructing

NURTURING

Tending
Growing
Fostering

LOVE USING
GOOD AT
DEVELOP

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STEP 2 – STRIKING THE RIGHT CHORD

Remember, it's not the single notes that define the tune we play in life, it's the combination of notes that counts.

1. Highlight your top seven prime skills and prioritise them in terms of how much you'd love to use them in an ideal day. The first one is the one you love to use the most, even if you weren't paid to use it. If you don't have seven prime skills, don't worry – simply look at all the skills you love using.
2. Consider each of your seven prime skills and ask yourself the question: 'To what extent does my work maximise this skill?'
3. You may want to repeat or change the exercise, asking the broader question: 'How far does my life as a whole maximise this skill?'

For some people this exercise reinforces how closely work matches their prime skills and they become aware of how much they take for granted. For others it has been a dramatic realisation that it's time for a complete career or life change.

So what are you going to do to begin striking a better chord today and how will you orchestrate the rest of your week? For many of us the answer lies in playing in the right place to the right audience – you might be taking a chance by playing heavy metal at a Women's Institute fundraising event and risk being arrested if you did the same in a quiet library.

Remind yourself that you are an extremely talented, unique individual. It's now time to play your part as loudly as you can today.

Remember it's your unique combination of skills that helps you play your part in life. So try to create working, learning, playing and giving opportunities that blend your prime skills together.

It may be negotiating a secondment in marketing to utilise your exploring, creative and processing skills or volunteering to help organise a summer holiday to develop your planning, fundraising and caring skills.

do it...

You're an amazing person with a unique portfolio of over 500 skills and talents. But what are you doing today to use and develop them? By starting just one of the following actions you'll create momentum for the rest of the week:

- ☐ **MAP OUT YOUR SKILLS** – Collect evidence of, and review your skills portfolio. Start a 'Smile File' of photographs, certificates and achievements to remind you of the skills you've gained through working, learning, playing and giving.
- ☐ **REALISE YOU HAVE MORE SKILLS THAN YOU THINK** – Ask friends and colleagues where your strengths lie. Look for patterns in their comments. Don't wait till leaving a job to get a reference, ask your manager now.
- ☐ **FOCUS ON STRENGTHS** – Find one activity today that uses one or two skills you love using most and are really good at. Sacrifice TV time to help a friend develop IT skills. Or volunteer to design a newsletter for a charity.
- ☐ **SET YOURSELF A GOAL** – Pick a skill you love using but wish to develop and rate yourself from 1-10. How could you improve? Who would score higher? How can you learn from them? What opportunities does today offer to increase your score? Can you enrol on a course? Make this a daily habit.
- ☐ **FIND SOMEONE WITH COMPLEMENTARY SKILLS** – Even creative people need practical support.
- ☐ **STAY EMPLOYABLE** – Research the internet, read journals and talk to top people about future possibilities.
- ☐ **BLOW YOUR OWN TRUMPET** – Who do you need to talk to or email today about your achievements and how you'd like to use your skills in the future?
- ☐ **STRETCH YOUR COMFORT ZONE** – Take on the next challenge now – it may take months or years to achieve it.
- ☐ **DUMP YOUR BURNT-OUT SKILLS** – Spend five minutes listing skills you hate using and drain your energy. Delegate that work or find a project where they matter less.
- ☐ **FIND FRESH RESPONSIBILITIES** – Your WLPG will suggest hundreds of ideas, eg a part-time business to build entrepreneurial skills.

So what steps will you take today? Consider picking one or two of these suggestions to get you up and running and, when completed, the other ideas may provide you with further thoughts.

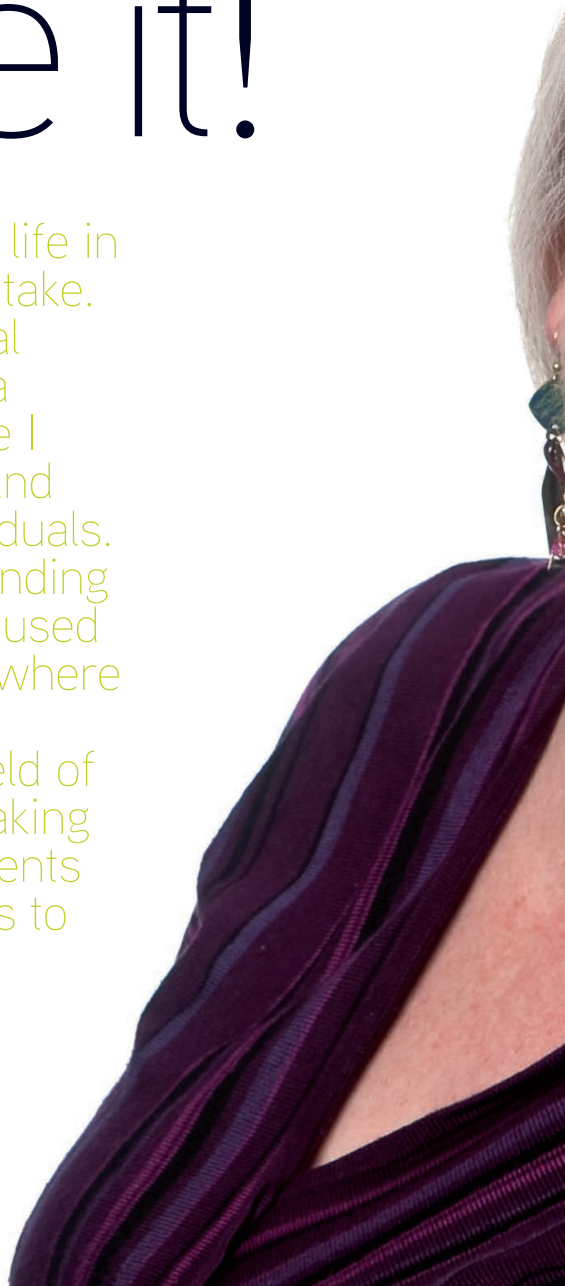
Thursday's Child
All of my life
I've tried so hard
Doing my best
with what I had

DAVID BOWIE

done it!

Starting my working life in the police was a mistake. Bound by institutional regulation, I craved a hands-on role where I could use my skills and genuinely help individuals. I never gave up on finding that ideal role – and used all my talents to get where I wanted to be. Now, specialising in the field of employability, I'm making best use of those talents by helping individuals to fulfil their potential.

RUTH
UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND
LEARNING FELLOW





PASS IT ON

Make a commitment to pass on your learning to someone else today. Go out of your way to find someone new who may benefit from your talents. They may be less than a minute's walk off the beaten track you tread each day – perhaps a neighbour just 10 seconds from your door or a colleague on the floor above. If you're conscious of all the lives around you, possibilities will jump out.

FRIL

DAY

FULFILMENT

YOU CAN ACHIEVE JUST ABOUT ANYTHING
IF IT MATTERS ENOUGH TO YOU.

say it...

FULL OR FULFILLED?

Everyone looks forward to Friday: Friday traditionally marks the end of the working week and the beginning of the weekend, a time to do all the enjoyable stuff that has been squeezed out of the previous days.

It's worrying to think that millions of people will spend 40 years of their working lives literally wishing their week away and saying thank goodness it's Friday.

Friday night then finishes in a flash, Saturday is spent recovering and Sunday finds people planning for the next week ahead.

Many of us also spend more time planning a two-week holiday than the other 50 weeks of each year. Is time simply passing us by as we sleepwalk through life or are we making the most of it? Is each week totally 'full' or truly 'fulfilling'?

Ok, we all have those mundane chores to do, whether they be the cleaning, DIY or bill paying, but just think what a Friday night would be like if we had five days of fulfilling activity woven in beforehand.

So how can you bring more fulfilment into your day? Simple – you just need to wake up to the things that bring passion and purpose to your life, and spend more time and energy on the things that are really meaningful to you. Focus on things that are worthwhile, rather than worthless.

Ensure that you bring more fulfilment and meaning into your life by making the best use of your talents and skills.

The key to fulfilment lies in recognising the skills you love using and are really good at. Then you need to discover how to apply them to a purpose you're passionate about to gain the pay-offs that matter most to you.

Luckily we can combine our passions and purposes in many different ways – through our working, learning, playing and giving. For example, we can link our passion for music with a charity dear to our heart by playing at a fundraising event. Or we can connect our enthusiasm for sport with a real motivation to empower young people by coaching the local children's football team.

It's the combination of our passions and purposes across the whole of our lives that makes each of us uniquely fulfilled. It is the small daily activities as well as the bigger life changes that make all the difference. Probably the smallest step you can take is to look at yourself in the mirror and think about what brings a smile to your face.

BE TRUE TO YOURSELF

Enjoying the simple things in life is often what gives us the greatest pleasure. However, peer pressure and the media can often give us a skewed outlook on life. There may be some of us who know in our heart of hearts that we are spending more money than we have on things we don't need to impress people we don't even like – all in the search for so-called happiness. Happiness is very personal. What does it honestly mean to you?

We are human beings and, when life's all about having or doing, we can lose sight of simply being.

Like changing our clothes, we may change jobs, profession, homes and cars but underneath we remain the same.

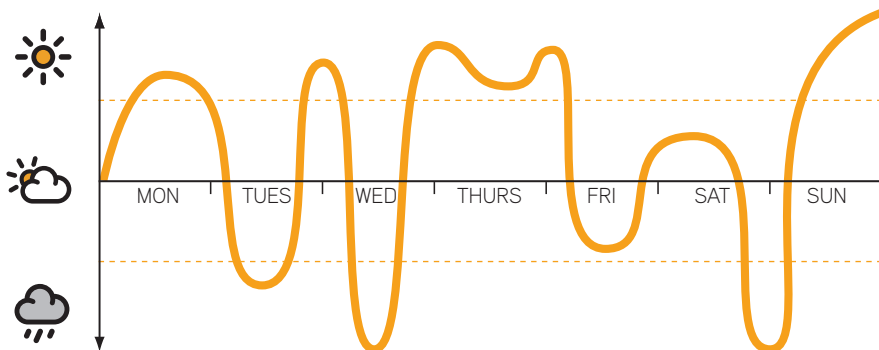
Have you lost the capacity to simply be and enjoy being yourself? Here are some simple questions to prompt you:

- How many times did you smile last week?
- When was the last time you laughed so much your ribs ached?
- Have you stopped today and been thankful for the simple things in life?
- Did you get up this morning full of enthusiasm for the day ahead?
- Are you focusing on what you don't have – or happy with who you are?

If you struggle with any of these questions, it's time to ask yourself 'What does true fulfilment and happiness mean for me?' and 'How can I create more of it today?'

FIND YOUR FULFILMENT FACTOR

Imagine drawing a graph of your levels of happiness over the past week, month, year or even life as a whole. Just like a weather chart it will have its highs (sunny periods), its lows (dark clouds of depression) and its cloudy days (when nothing really happens).



Glance up at the sky... there will be a unique arrangement of clouds, sunshine, blue or grey sky. And it will never look quite the same again. This pattern of change occurs in our lives too.

The clue to bringing more fun, happiness and lasting contentment into our lives lies in the way we think about and manage each of the three segments – the highs, the lows and the cloudy days. Let's start with where most of us hope to spend the majority of our time – the highs.

HOLD ON TO YOUR HIGHS

When you look at the high points in peoples' lives, it's amazing to see how quickly their happiness chart starts plunging down again.

All too often our magic moments are brief intervals of blazing sunshine that don't last long enough. Whether it's dancing with friends on a Friday night, an amazing academic achievement or

a personal passion that briefly brings you alive – they are momentary. To get more fun into our lives we all need to look creatively at ways of getting more highs in our week and making them last longer.

The 'Mean it' section challenges you to do this by finding purposes and passions that are fun, energise you and have a lasting meaning.

DON'T OVERLOOK THE CLOUDY DAYS

When you ask people 'How has your day been?' the commonest answer is 'not too bad'. In other words it could be a lot worse, but it's not really that good either.

In weather terms it's a cloudy day with the odd patch of sunshine. But without those cloudy days in our lives it's almost impossible to go from the lows to the highs. And it's these dull patches that we often simply take for granted.

They're full of people and things that are so familiar we've almost forgotten them – like the beating of our heart, the air we breathe, the water in the tap, the people who provide for us every day, whether it's parents and partners or the postman and the plumber who look after our needs.

If you don't appreciate what you already have, how can you expect anything else?

Buy a diary and at the end of each day list three things you're grateful for. You'll be amazed how positive this can be.

For each thing you are grateful for, try completing this sentence "I am grateful for... because..." The word because will help you consider why you really value things.

Keep this going for a week, a month, a year or for a lifetime and you'll not only have a record of what you are thankful for but also be able to spot patterns which reveal your true passions in life. For example, which of the following F words would be used most frequently – family, friendship, fun, freedom, fulfilment, fame, fortune, faith, fitness...or simply life's fundamentals?

LIFT OFF FROM YOUR LOWS

There is nothing more certain than the winds of change in our lives will bring depression and despair at times. All of us face those periods in our lives when it doesn't just rain but it pours.

But like plants that need both sun and rain to grow, and like the seasons which bring frost and decay to make way for warmth and rebirth, we all are shaped by our highs and lows in life.

In fact most of the happiest people in life have gone through major pain to get there. And the most successful have been riddled

with rejections. What sets such people apart though is not the number of lows in their lives – it's the way they've learned from them and responded.

We'd all agree that at our lowest points we feel absolutely miserable and inconsolable. And these may last for days, weeks, months or years. The only way from our lowest point is... up!

Time is a great healer and when the time is right, our pain will be transformed into personal growth. Those lowest points provide three purposes in our lives:

Firstly they provide us with a contrast. Without lows we cannot truly appreciate the cloudy days or the highs.

Secondly they provide us with the knowledge that, on reflection, we do have the confidence to manage change and the capabilities to respond to challenges in our lives. We've been there, seen it, done it, and felt it before.

Thirdly they might provide us with clues to our future purpose in life. For example, people who have personally experienced drug abuse, anti-social behaviour, cancer or relationship breakdowns are often well-placed to offer advice to others.

Finally, remember happiness is like the sun. It still goes on shining even though for us it may be cloudy or night-time.

The real question is 'Are you blotting out your sun until Friday night – or letting it shine all week through?'



mean it...

BUILD YOUR OWN RAINBOW

When there's both sun and rain about, we all love glimpsing a rainbow to lift our spirits.

Of course you'll face showers as well as sunshine throughout your life and luckily there's a way to build your own rainbow.

The secret is to find out what passions and purposes make you come alive.

Then you can set about filling more of your week with them – whether through your working, learning, playing or giving. And you'll soon find the outlook looking so much brighter.

What brings purpose and meaning into your life? What are the issues you feel really passionate about?

1. Using the A-Z prompts over the page, circle the passions that jump out at you. Which really get you fired up and seem most fun? Feel free to add more. What are your hobbies, interests, favourite talking points, specialist knowledge?
2. Select the top three that are most meaningful and/or exciting to you, and place them in priority order. These will give you clues over the fields within which you can use your prime skills. Now ask yourself what opportunities for working, learning, playing and giving are open to you in each area.

A blend of purpose and passion should give us fulfilment.

Our passions are often embraced within our highs, and our purpose often emerges from our lows.

It is at moments where this sunshine and rain combine together that we build our own rainbow.

MY PASSIONS

A

Accounting
Acting
Advertising
Agriculture
Animals
Antiques
Archaeology
Architecture
Art
Astronomy

B

Babies
Baking
Bands
Beauty
Books
Brewing
Broadcasting
Building
Buying

C

Careers
Caring
Cars
Charity
Coaching
Comedy
Computers
Conservation
Cooking
Counselling
Creativity
Culture

D

Dancing
Decorating
Design
Diets
Documentaries
Disability
Drama
Driving

E

Education
Elderly
Electronics
Energy
Engineering
Entertainment
Environment

F

Family
Famous people
Fashion
Films
Fine art
Fish
Flowers
Food
Fun
Furniture

G

Games
Gambling
Gardening
Geology
Geography
Gifts
Golf
Gossip

H

Hair
Health
Holidays
Homes
Hygiene

I

Image
Information
Internet
Interior design

J

Jewellery
Jobs
Jogging
Jokes
Journals
Journeys

K

Karaoke
Karate
Keep-fit
Keyboards

L

Landscapes
Languages
Law
Leisure
Life coach
Love



3. From the list of concerns below, tick the ones that personally matter most to you. You or someone else you know may have been touched by one or more of these issues.

Which three would you place (in priority order) above all the others and why?

4. Then list any organisations that represent or support the passions and purposes you find so important. How can you work, learn, play or give with them to maximise your prime skills. ?

5. Take one creative step today towards combining your number one passion and purpose.

MY PURPOSE

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ADVOCACY | <input type="checkbox"/> ECOLOGY | <input type="checkbox"/> PHOBIAS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ANIMALS | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARTS | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> POPULATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AIDS | <input type="checkbox"/> ELDERLY | <input type="checkbox"/> POVERTY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ALCOHOLISM | <input type="checkbox"/> ENERGY | <input type="checkbox"/> PRESERVATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BEREAVEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> ENVIRONMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> REFUGEES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BREAKDOWNS | <input type="checkbox"/> EQUALITY | <input type="checkbox"/> RECYCLING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CANCER | <input type="checkbox"/> EXTINCTION | <input type="checkbox"/> REGENERATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CARE | <input type="checkbox"/> FEAR | <input type="checkbox"/> REHABILITATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHILDREN | <input type="checkbox"/> GLOBALISATION | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHARITY | <input type="checkbox"/> GREED | <input type="checkbox"/> RESOURCES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CITIZENSHIP | <input type="checkbox"/> HEALTH | <input type="checkbox"/> SAFETY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CLIMATE | <input type="checkbox"/> HERITAGE | <input type="checkbox"/> SPORT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY | <input type="checkbox"/> HOMELESSNESS | <input type="checkbox"/> STRESS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CONFLICT | <input type="checkbox"/> HUNGER | <input type="checkbox"/> SUICIDE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CRIME | <input type="checkbox"/> ILLITERACY | <input type="checkbox"/> SUSTAINABILITY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CRUELTY | <input type="checkbox"/> JUSTICE | <input type="checkbox"/> TRADE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DEATH | <input type="checkbox"/> LEGISLATION | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DEBT | <input type="checkbox"/> LONELINESS | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEMPLOYMENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISABILITY | <input type="checkbox"/> MIGRATION | <input type="checkbox"/> VIOLENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISASTERS | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> WAR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISEASE | <input type="checkbox"/> OBSESSION | <input type="checkbox"/> WASTE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISCRIMINATION | <input type="checkbox"/> OBESITY | <input type="checkbox"/> WELFARE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DIVORCE | <input type="checkbox"/> OFFENDERS | <input type="checkbox"/> WILDLIFE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DRUGS | <input type="checkbox"/> PEACE | <input type="checkbox"/> YOUTH |

Here are a few prompts to help you:

WORKING

What jobs or roles would enable you to enjoy your passion or purpose?

LEARNING

How could you find out more about your passions or purpose either formally or informally? Who could you learn from?

PLAYING

Where can you just do them for fun? What clubs, societies or interest groups exist?

GIVING

Who could benefit most from these passions and purposes? What voluntary opportunities are available locally, regionally, nationally or globally? If nothing exists, do you need to create your own?

To help you explore as many creative possibilities as you can, find out something about your passion or purpose.

Don't be afraid to pick up the Yellow Pages, surf the internet or phone a friend to explore avenues.

Most of us have causes we feel strongly about, and will champion them in different ways.

The impact of our contribution will depend on how we can best combine our skills and talents with the purposes that we are passionate about.

Circumstances will probably dictate how much we can give at any one time. Ask yourself now and every day, 'how can I make a difference?'

do it...

Life is too short to spend it being miserable. Today is the time to get out of the routine of wishing your week away. It requires discarding old habits and learning new approaches.

Here are some simple ways to build fulfilment into every day and not just Friday. Whatever the weather outside and however strong the winds of change, you can always choose how you feel inside.

- **FRAME YOUR DAY AS PLAY** – For the next hour make Playing the largest of your four WLPG circles. At work, college or home keep fun in mind.
- **SHINE A LIGHT ON WHAT YOU DO WELL** – Analyse your day with a focus on the good stuff. Apply the lessons learned to other activities and life will become far more fun.
- **VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME AND TALENTS** – Giving your time and talent to causes that matter to you lets you put things in perspective and appreciate what you already have.
- **FIND YOUR FULFILMENT FACTOR** – Sketch a graph of the highs and lows in your life so far. Do any patterns emerge? How can you sustain the highs and learn from your lows?

- **FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS** – Spend your time on what's important to you – your passions. Avoid too many roles, simplify life and learn to say no to others.
- **AVOID CYNICS** – It's too easy to get into a downward spiral and become negative yourself.
- **TEAM UP WITH FUN** – If you were 'Director of Fun', who would be in your team? Look for projects or secondments where you'll work with positive people.
- **PUT FUN FIRST** – Surprise your partner with a fun night out and don't just rely on TV or DVDs for entertainment. Play board games as a family, entertain friends or just chat.
- **PUT LIFE INTO PLACE** – List all the places you find fun to be in and try to spend more time in them.
- **CHOOSE YOUR MOOD** – Whatever happens, you always have a choice. Don't wait for the weekend – dump those negative thoughts and enjoy yourself today.

So what steps will you take today? Consider picking one or two of these suggestions to get you up and running and, when completed, the other ideas may provide you with further thoughts.

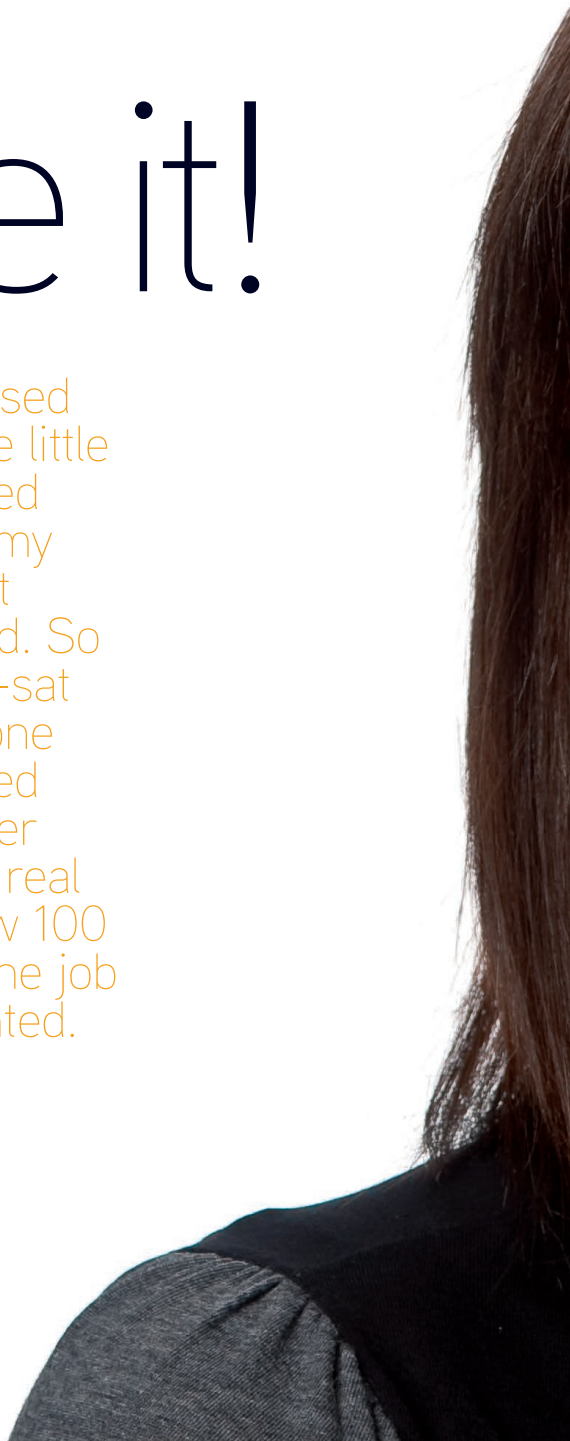
I don't care if
Monday's blue...
it's Friday
I'm in love

THE CURE

done it!

I was stuck unenthused in a job that gave me little satisfaction. Thwarted by one failed exam, my ambition to be an art teacher never waned. So I single-mindedly re-sat (several times) the one elusive exam I needed to get me into teacher training. That was a real struggle, but I'm now 100 per cent fulfilled in the job I always knew I wanted.

EMMA
ART TEACHER





PASS IT ON

Make a commitment to pass on your learning to someone else today. Whose day are you going to brighten up today? Anything goes! You may buy an elderly neighbour some flowers, write a thank-you card to a friend or make a kind comment to a friend or stranger. How can you use your passions and purpose to help people come alive today?

SATU

RDAY

SUPPORT

WANT TO CHANGE SOMEONE ELSE'S
LIFE? WHY NOT START WITH YOUR OWN?

say it...

REMEMBER THE PEOPLE WHO REALLY COUNT

We may have lots of exciting ideas for the future – ideas that we know will leave us with no regrets when we look back on our life. But if these ideas are to become reality, we need to keep working at them.

Our experience shows that even with the best intentions, only five to ten per cent of people have the drive to take control of their lives on their own and keep the momentum going.

The fact is that all of us need support to overcome obstacles and reach our goals. And we find it from different groups of people.

The sooner we recognise the value of support from others, the better our chances of making our wishes come true. If we lack support we should never be afraid to ask for help.

At birth we're greeted by the midwife and there's a team of medical specialists to see us safely through the rest of our week.

When we are children, people feed us, pass on their values and watch over us. As we begin to learn, we gain advice, guidance, encouragement and support from teachers, coaches and peers. When we start work we get support from employers, colleagues, mentors and role models.

Day by day different people appear to help us along the way. When we face change or transition, there are people to provide comfort, advice, information and contacts.

Right from the time you were a child in the playground there have been people on the bench who were there for you – people who matter most and play the biggest part in your daily life.

If you recognise and value the support these people provide, you'll discover how they can help you make all your wishes come true.

When life's challenges knock us off course, friends give us emotional support.

Throughout our daily routine all sorts of invisible people keep us happy, comfortable and secure – from the train driver who gets us to work to the person stacking the supermarket shelves or the street sweeper.

Most important of all – right through our lives we know we can rely on our nearest and dearest to simply love us for who we are. When we look back on the Sunday evening of our life, our qualifications, status and possessions will evaporate into thin air.

What will remain and endure is the value of all those people who've been there for us.

WHO SITS ON YOUR BENCH?

Remember the playground and all the exciting possibilities it held for you as a child? There were swings, roundabouts, seesaws and slides – all sorts of fun and fulfilment combined with challenges, fears, bumps and bruises.

And life itself is just like that – we face all kinds of ups and downs, balancing acts, obstacles and often go round in circles.

But there's one simple object often overlooked in the playground – the bench – and it's one of the most important.

That bench is placed to give a good view of the whole playground and often surrounded by such helpful things as prams, toys, packed lunches and bikes.

It provides a resting place for those who care deeply for us. So who sits on your bench? Who is ready to jump up and encourage you when you're stuck? Pick you up when you fall, hug you when you cry or guide you when you are lost?

In the future who will help you when you fall off the swing, get bumped off the seesaw or spin off the roundabout?

Think about the following questions:

Who are the people who've made the greatest difference in your life to date?

Why have they made such an impact?

How have they influenced your purpose?

Have you thanked them?

Who else do you need on your bench to fulfil your potential?

What relationships (new or old) do you need to grow?



WHO'S BENCH ARE YOU SITTING ON?

Everyone needs a little help from their friends – and that means there are six billion other people out there in the world, most with their own bench of supporters.

And there are links between all of us – in the special care baby unit for instance, the baby needs the consultant to survive, the consultant relies on the nurse, the nurse on the nursing support and so on. But all of them would be out of a job without the baby!

Our parents devote their lives to caring for us as children and hopefully, in return, we care for them as they grow old.

We may depend on people from the other side of the world for our clothes, call centres and football teams – and they in turn provide wealth and happiness for their families and communities.

The danger though, in our consumer society, is that we let our egos swallow up everything around us. We may become so self-centred we lose touch with other people.

To play our part and make the world a better place, we all need to re-connect with what really matters to us. And this means sitting on other people's benches – whether it's with your family, your friends, your colleagues, your neighbours or those who need your help.

What you give you will get back with interest.

It would be reassuring if every time you faced a challenging situation you could rely on somebody to join you on your bench and offer some helpful advice. It's actually quite likely that this is happening to you anyway!

Is there somebody challenging your mindset and supporting you in the roles you play? Or perhaps helping you to blend your WLPG and enabling you to lead a more fulfilling life?

Sometimes all you need is someone to value you, your skills and your talents: Someone who is prepared to work with you to create an inspiring vision for your future.



RIDING THE
UPS AND DOWNS



GETTING LIFE
INTO BALANCE



GETTING A GRIP
ON YOUR SKILLS



JUMPING OFF
THE ROUNDABOUT



TAKING
THE PLUNGE



BUILDING BACK-UP
ON YOUR BENCH

mean it...

BUILDING BACK-UP ON YOUR BENCH

Imagine we all have a bench in the playground where people come and go to look after us through the ups and downs of life. In this exercise three invisible friends will help you to build back-up on your bench. Their names are WHY, WHO and WHEN.

Why do I need support?

Think about the greatest challenges you are facing. Which of these broad categories does it fit into:

☐ RIDING THE UPS AND DOWNS

Do you need help responding to the highs and lows that change brings? Eg encouragement when you're low or a helping hand to keep the momentum going.

☐ GETTING LIFE INTO BALANCE

Do you need help to creatively blend your working, learning, playing and giving? Eg help with time management or someone to push you that little bit further.

☐ GETTING A GRIP ON YOUR SKILLS

Do you need help to review, discover or develop the skills that are essential to your future? Eg employability skills, skills to overcome obstacles or simply skills you'd love to hang onto.

☐ JUMPING OFF THE ROUNDABOUT

Do you need help with job, career or life focus? Eg to stop you flying around in circles or just a push in the right direction.

☐ TAKING THE PLUNGE

Do you need help to take the plunge and turn ideas into actions? Eg to take that first brave step or simply to stop worrying.

Try to articulate an overarching reason why you need support and how it will help ensure you end up with no regrets, eg I need to find a job that fulfils me.

In our lifetime we may have tens of best friends, 100's of supporters and 1000's of contacts in our wider community. But what help do you need today, who can help you, and when are you going to make contact?

Who can help me?

Be clear about the practical outcomes you hope to gain from the support.

Try to be as specific as possible. For example – who can:

- Boost my confidence so that I can leave my current job?
- Encourage me to unlock the skills I love using?
- Help me to identify new opportunities in my local area?
- Become role models and mentors?

To help you out, below are a number of different families of characters in the playground of life, each offering different types of support. Read through their traits and think about how they might be a useful person to have on your bench

SAFEKEEPERS – Always around and looking out for you, their primary role is to keep you safe – to stop you falling, becoming hurt or getting in trouble. They avoid change, uncertainty and risk and always think logically about potential consequences and plan for practical realities.

EXPLORERS – Constantly encouraging you to try new experiences, anything is possible with explorers. It's all about that leap of faith. If you don't do it, who will?

CARERS – When we fall from great heights, get knocked around, hurt by others or feel fragile and sick, the carers give us a big hug, wipe away the tears and bring warmth and reassurance. In a loving and understanding way they are great at making us feel better.

DEVELOPERS – Developers focus on taking us out of our comfort zone, rather than giving us comfort. Instead of dwelling on our knocks and troubles they motivate us to raise our aspirations, look forward and set new goals that will stretch us. For developers there is no gain without pain.

CONNECTORS – These people sit on the bench and love gossiping – they know everybody and everything that's going on around them. If they can't help out they know somebody who can. Connectors are often extrovert with good interpersonal skills. They are great networkers and excellent at making links between people and understanding the power and the politics.

INVISIBLE PEOPLE – These people play vital roles but we often never see them so they are taken for granted – the health and safety officer who checks the playground equipment, the manufacturer who made them, the gardener who mows the lawns or the park keeper who collects the litter. We all need to be conscious and thankful of the 'invisible people' supporting our daily routine and maintaining the quality of our lives.

BRIGHT SPARKS – Bright sparks are great at generating new ideas, providing fresh perspectives and creating novel ways for doing things. They have great imagination and are people who turn climbing frames into spaceships and roundabouts into magical mystery tours. They are great to have around when you need to think outside the box.

WISE OWLS – Wise owls have usually experienced many highs and lows, know what its like to overcome obstacles and can help you to regulate your speed on the roundabout of life. Like many youngsters have their grandparents to look after them in the playground, we all need to draw on the wisdom and experience of people who have been through similar challenges.

BULLIES – Bullying, whether physical, emotional or financial, is unwelcome and unacceptable in any playground. But, from time to time some of us may need someone to nag and cajole us into action. Injecting a bit of tension into our lives can sometimes act as a catalyst for a change of direction.

PLAYMATES – Most of us see belonging to a group or tribe as important to our social lives. We all need friendships, people to share fun and interests with, as well as exchange skills. We need people in work and play who we get on with and ones who'll bring a smile to our faces when we're down.

USE THIS CHECKLIST

Every character will have a different perspective on the problem and different ideas for moving forward – they may even take you in unexpected directions.

Bearing in mind your overall challenge, use the checklist below to tick the characters best placed to help you out and what specific support you need from them.

Match the right back-up on your bench to a particular situation. Remember that this list is certainly not exhaustive and you may well recognise other characters from your own playground.

The help you need will change frequently too, so it might be an idea to keep this list to hand.

Having ticked the type of help you need, make a list of all the people you know who are best placed to provide it. Then anybody else who could possibly help (spread your net as wide as possible). The following page may help you if you get stuck.

SAFEKEEPERS

☐ Security

☐ Realism

☐ Planning

EXPLORERS

☐ Courage

☐ Confidence

☐ Possibility

CARERS

☐ Love

☐ Understanding

☐ Reassurance

DEVELOPERS

☐ Motivation

☐ Coaching

☐ Growth

CONNECTORS

☐ Contacts

☐ Knowledge

☐ Specific help

INVISIBLE PEOPLE

☐ Survival

☐ Support

☐ Sustainability

BRIGHT SPARKS

☐ Creativity

☐ Freshness

☐ Energy

WISE OWLS

☐ Guidance

☐ Experience

☐ Perspective

BULLIES

☐ Challenge

☐ Nagging

☐ Pressure

PLAYMATES

☐ Fun

☐ Friendship

☐ Teamwork

IT IS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT WE ARE ONLY EVER SIX CONNECTIONS FROM ANYONE IN THE WORLD. IF YOU NEED HELP, WHICH OF THESE PEOPLE OPPOSITE WOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE IT, OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO COULD? USE YOUR CONTACTS ACROSS YOUR WORKING, LEARNING, PLAYING AND GIVING TO MAP OUT A HIT LIST.

For example, an old boss may be able to give you some contacts, your friends' dads may know someone to talk to or a former classmate may be in your ideal job. Now prioritise the list. Highlight two or three people that can make the biggest difference. If you're struggling, it's always good to include a 'connector' person who knows everybody.

When am I going to connect?

There's no better time than the present. Pick up the phone or send a quick email now before your safekeeping self stops you.

Start with someone you know, like and respect. Diary in some time over the week ahead to build back-up on your bench. It may seem strange at first, but once you get into the habit, all sorts of wonderful possibilities will emerge.

Like plunging down the slide, it's scary at first, but you'll be so glad you did it. Take that plunge today and you'll be amazed where it leads you.

WORKING

PRESENT COLLEAGUES

Team, division, organisation

PAST COLLEAGUES

Including former boss(es)

PEOPLE IN YOUR SECTOR

Suppliers, customers, competitors

LEARNING

PRESENT AND PAST CLASSMATES

School or college friends, people you've met on courses

PROFESSIONALS

Teachers, trainers, lecturers

MENTORS/ROLE MODELS

People who have inspired you

PLAYING

FRIENDS

The address book

FRIENDS OF FRIENDS

Asking people whether they know someone else

SOCIAL CONTACTS

People you've met at parties or clubs and societies

GIVING

FAMILY

NEIGHBOURS

WIDER COMMUNITY

People you come into contact with each day

Try combining characters

Remember that each character will have a different perspective on each challenge and possibility you face. One character is no better or worse than another. But it's the way you combine them that counts – you need to bring in the right support at the right time. The Explorers and Developers will encourage you to go beyond and go for it while the Safekeepers will tell you not to take risks.

The Bright Sparks will ask 'have you thought about ...' while the Connectors will suggest people you could speak to. Meanwhile the Carers will tell you that everything's going to be OK while the bullies will warn you you'll be in trouble if you don't act a certain way.

For example, if you were considering setting up your own business, there would be little point talking to your father first if he'd always been in a job for life and never taken risks (a Safekeeper). But having spoken to role models who had already set up their own business (Wise Owls) and gained confidence and contacts (from the Developers and Connectors) it could be worth speaking to your dad about plans to lower the risk.

The broader the range of characters on your bench, the more creatively you can combine them for each new challenge and possibility.

ASK YOURSELF FOR HELP

Imagine each of the 10 playground characters is always on call ready to step forward whenever you have a problem to solve or possibility to explore. Imagine your conversation with each and then use your intuition or logic (whichever feels right) to choose the best course of action. When you master this creative habit, you'll bring out particular characters for particular situations. If you think this sounds crazy, just remind yourself of all those conversations going on in your head before important meetings, after nights out or during massive arguments!

Whose bench are you sitting on?

Imagine in a 100 years time there is a plaque to celebrate your life on a bench in your favourite beauty spot. What would be written on it? What would you be remembered for? The size of your house, the speed of your car or the people's lives you have touched? Think carefully about what talents and qualities you have to offer the world, who needs your help most and when it's time to move on to a new bench.

Try not to spread yourself too thinly. Focus your energy on where you can make most difference but have fun at the same time. Take the plunge today to build back-up on your bench. And more importantly commit yourself to support one person who needs your help – in the playground of life they may be struggling to keep their balance, stuck on an obstacle, or simply going round in circles!

do it...

If you have the right people around you, anything is possible. But you can't simply sit there on your bench waiting for people to come along. Finding the right support is a skill in itself and requires a bit of effort. Here are some suggestions to try:

- ☐ **SEEK THE RIGHT SUPPORT** – Write down precisely what you want, eg a list of the top five employers in your industry.
- ☐ **MAP YOUR NETWORK** – List school and college mates, colleagues, neighbours, extended family and friends of friends. Check your diary, Facebook, Friends Reunited etc. Who can help you today?
- ☐ **ASK FOR HELP** – Use your contacts – the more people you've helped, the more responses you will get.
- ☐ **BOOST YOUR LUCK** – Learn the art of speaking to strangers – in the supermarket queue, the bus or train etc. Just asking 'How has your day been?' might work as an ice-breaker.
- ☐ **BE IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME** – For example the front row at a conference where you could say hello to the key speaker afterwards. Today is the right time – so where is the right place?
- ☐ **PHONE A FRIEND** – As well as people sitting on your bench, you'll sit on theirs. Make time today to catch up with friends and family who might appreciate a call.
- ☐ **SPOT THE INVISIBLE PEOPLE** – Think of all the people who combine to help you through today. Do you know the name of your postman or milkman?
- ☐ **OUTSOURCE YOUR NETWORK** – Find someone who is more extrovert than you and ask them to work on your behalf (and offer them help in return).
- ☐ **USE AN INTERVIEW FOR INFORMATION** – Pinpoint someone doing what you'd love to do and ask if they can spare you a few minutes.
- ☐ **SAY THANK YOU** – buy a bundle of thank-you cards and send them to anyone who has made a real impact on your life, whether it's parents, friends, partners or mentors.

So what steps will you take today? Consider picking one or two of these suggestions to get you up and running and, when completed, the other ideas may provide you with further thoughts.

Saturday...
what a day,
groovin' all week
with you

ARTHUR HERBERT FONZARELLI

done it!

Since the age of 11 I have known that I want to be a physio. To help with my university application I needed work experience, but knowing no-one directly in the field I was daunted by the process. My family and friends got me off the mark with a placement at a local hospice – other opportunities soon followed. Everyone I contact seems willing to help me – I find that reassuring.

JOE
PHYSIOTHERAPY STUDENT





PASS IT ON

Make a commitment to pass on your learning to someone else today. It may be a member of your community whose life has been turned upside down; a colleague who is simply going round in circles or a friend who needs to take the plunge. Whose bench are you going to sit on today and what character are you going to play?

SUN

DAY

SATISFACTION

THERE ARE TWO REALLY IMPORTANT DATES IN OUR LIVES -
THE DAY WE ARE BORN, AND THE DAY WE UNDERSTAND WHY.

say it...

MAKE TIME TO RE-CHARGE

Sunday used to be a day for rest and reflection. A time to celebrate the magic moments of the past week and recharge ourselves for the coming one.

A chance to stop and ask those bigger questions such as why I am here, what motivates me, who matters most to me and what is true contentment for me?

It's a day when we can reflect on how happy our lives are, or perhaps consider what we want to change. Statistics show that many people choose Sunday to start thinking about this, with job-hunting websites seeing more hits than any other time in the week.

The worrying thing is this precious time is being gobbled up by the pace of modern life. Sundays are fast becoming an extension of the working week. Where now do we find time in the week for recharging the batteries and reflecting on our lives?

Having the time to talk honestly about the things that are important to us with the people who really matter is a vital aspect of our overall well-being. And providing the opportunity for others to do the same is often the greatest gift we can give.

Whether it's Sunday or some other time, the important thing is to find space in our hectic schedules to pause, reflect, and talk.

So give yourself time today to step back, look at the bigger picture, and ask yourself what you really want from the rest of your life.

Make sure you don't regret missing out on your dreams. You've now explored all the ideas that can give you what you really want and taken your first steps to escape from the treadmill and realise your potential.

This is one week you can look back over with a real sense of achievement. And if you put these ideas to work in your daily routines, you'll reach the end of every week – and your life – with No Regrets on Sunday.

TURN YOUR DREAMS INTO REALITY

Just think how brilliant it would be if we could re-design our week to ensure that all our hopes and dreams have come true. The big question is what are your hopes and dreams? And how are you going to make them real throughout the rest of your life?

It's such a big question that we usually avoid asking it in the first place and settle for what we believe is a reasonably OK existence – the path of least resistance. And the problem is we can then end up living to have regrets only when we come to look back at the end of our life.

The exciting thing is we already have all the necessary skills to plan the rest of our life. These are the very same skills we use to plan our holidays. We create a clear vision of where we want to go – whether city break or sunny beach. We know what we want to do when we get there – party, explore, chill out. We know who we want to go with – by ourselves, with the family, as a group of friends. We're great at researching the best deals. And most importantly we pack for the appropriate location. The only difference is, instead of planning for a trip away, we're planning for the trip of a lifetime.

So are you going to abdicate all responsibility and rely on the travel agent to book you onto the package tour to hell along

with thousands of other tourists floating aimlessly around the world?

Or are you going to organise your own trip of a lifetime? This could be a journey based on places you know you'll love, travelling with people you know you'll have fun with, and doing the things that really excite you. The choice is yours.

Imagine looking back in old age and wondering how that trip of a lifetime took such a wrong turning. What could you have done to save yourself from ending up so full of regrets?

SEVEN REASONS WHY OUR WISHES DON'T COME TRUE

1. **WE DON'T MAKE WISHES IN THE FIRST PLACE.** Without a picture of what we truly want, other people will spray-paint their wishes on your blank canvas. So take time out to list the top 10 things you'd love to be, do and have over the rest of your life. Keep this list handy and look at it every day.
2. **WE FAIL TO MAKE SPACE FOR THEM.** We fail to prioritise and leave the most important things until we've done what we think is really urgent. So take your wishes more seriously, schedule them into your diary and don't defer them at any cost.

- 3 **WE SABOTAGE THEM.** Imagine two voices, one on each shoulder. The voice on your left plays safe – it is fearful, sticks to the rules, hates uncertainty and sees change as a danger. It says ‘You can’t’, ‘Stay where you are’ or ‘It’s too risky’.

The voice on the right wants you to experiment and take risks – it imagines, explores, likes breaking the rules and is open to anything. It says ‘Go for it’, ‘Anything is possible’, ‘Think bigger’, ‘Time to change’ or ‘Why not?’.

Which voice is shouting loudest at this very moment? When making your wishes, turn a deaf ear to that voice on the left – it will just try to sabotage them. Ways to ignore it include writing down your first thoughts without analysing them, playing music, thinking big, using pictures and being as creative and imaginative as possible.

4. **WE’RE NOT CLEAR ENOUGH.** All our hopes and dreams are out there waiting for us to catch them and bring them into our life. Have you ever bought a new car and you suddenly started noticing lots of cars with the same model and colour? The fact is everything you are looking for is out there but you’re often simply not conscious of it. The clearer you can picture what you want, the quicker you’ll get there. If you’re crystal clear on what you want and careful what you wish for, you may well get it!

5. **WE DON’T TALK ABOUT THEM.** The more people that know what you’re looking for, the more people there are to look out for it. Share your hopes with your partner or look for your fairy godparent – someone who can actually help by encouraging, guiding, inspiring

or coaching you. Find people who are close to achieving your wish, eg helping to reduce world poverty, and ask them how they feel your skills and experience can best be used.

6. **THEY’RE UNREALISTIC.** Dare to dream, but keep your feet firmly planted on the ground. We’ve all pondered what we would do if we won a lottery jackpot – and we all understand it’s unlikely to happen. Always keep a sense of perspective in your dreams and you’re less likely to be disappointed.
7. **WE GIVE UP HOPE.** We can live about forty days without food, about three days without water and just a few minutes without air. But it’s hard to live for one second without hope. Our wishes can be washed away in an instant by a negative comment, a rejection or sudden loss of confidence.

The answer is to plan different routes for reaching what you wish for and to create a Plan B (even Plans C, D, E and so on if necessary!). Avoid sharing your hopes with negative people – they’ll infect you with their cynicism and lack of hope. Most importantly, trust in yourself. After all, if you don’t, who will?

Life gives us all our own personal Golden Ticket to ‘No Regrets’, but it comes to us totally blank. It’s up to us to fill in the detail of the journey. Make sure you enjoy every step of the way, and remember it’s never too late to change direction.



GOLDEN TICKET

ADM

mean it...

JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME

This creative exercise is one of the most exciting things you can do. It helps you create and live out your own Golden Ticket to the future. It draws together all your ideas and actions throughout the week. It builds on the positive mindset you've created; blends your working, learning, playing and giving; brings your ideal roles to life; boosts the talents you love; begins with fun in mind; and has support from your bench.

READY – Check you are prepared for the journey ahead:

- Don't leave your packing to the last minute. Give yourself the time and space this exercise deserves.
- Throw out any negative baggage – you are a special person and you've achieved an amazing amount so far.
- Fly high – don't limit yourself, get that helicopter view and remember anything is possible.

STEADY – Get a blank piece of paper and write My Golden Ticket at the top. Now pick a date in the future (It could be six months, a year, five, ten or twenty years ahead). Make it far enough away for you to be creative but also close enough to be of relevance. Five years ahead may be a good option. Write this date on the top right hand corner of your Golden Ticket.

GO – For the rest of this exercise, imagine it is now that date in the future. You've travelled in a time capsule to your future and you've had the most extraordinary and amazing journey of your life so far. All your dreams and hopes have come true and you have absolutely no regrets.

Now write down on your Golden Ticket your answers to the questions overleaf. Don't stop to analyse your thoughts – just go with the flow and be as big bold and imaginative as you can. Use sketches, symbols, doodles or anything else that helps you visualise your future.

WORKING

YOU'RE IN YOUR IDEAL JOB, WHAT IS IT?

What are you doing?
Who are you working for?
Where are you working?
Are you part or full-time?
Employed or self-employed?

WHAT DOES YOUR AVERAGE WORKING WEEK LOOK LIKE?

Where are you based?
Who are you working with?
How long is your working day?
You're using the skills you love – how, for what purpose?
You're passionate about your work – why?
It's really purposeful – in which way?

YOU'RE PROUD OF YOUR WORK, WHY?

What have been the most fun and fulfilling moments?
List all your major achievements, projects and experiences over the past few years: What impact have you personally made?

LEARNING

YOU'VE GROWN AS A PERSON – BUT HOW?

What formal and informal learning have you undertaken?
What mentors have you learned from?
What learning opportunities have you created – courses, qualifications, secondments?

YOU'RE MORE EMPLOYABLE NOW, WHY?

What new skills, knowledge and experience have you gained?
How are you combining your talents and passions in a fun way?
What specialty or expertise have you developed?
What are you known for?

YOU'VE TAKEN RISKS, WHERE?

In which aspects of your life have you taken a real leap of faith?
How have you grown in confidence and stretched your comfort zone?
With the knowledge that you couldn't fail, what brave step did you take?

PLAYING

FUN FILLS EVERY DAY, IN WHICH WAY?

You've had the most enjoyable years of your life, what have you been up to?

You've rekindled old passions, interests and hobbies – how?

You've been in places and with people that make you come alive – where have you been?

YOU'RE PLAYING YOUR PART – BUT HOW?

Which of the roles you are playing is most fun and fulfilling?

Your personal well-being is brilliant physically, mentally and emotionally – why?

YOUR SOCIAL LIFE IS EXCELLENT – WHY?

Who have you spent quality time with? What have you enjoyed as a family?

Which old friends have you got back in touch with? What new relationships have you grown?

GIVING

HOW HAVE YOU MADE A REAL DIFFERENCE?

You've given your time and talents to people you love – family, friends, colleagues, community – who have you given to and what have you given them?

You've supported purposes you're passionate about – in what way?

YOU'VE LEFT YOUR LEGACY, WHERE?

Where have you left a lasting mark?

If you passed away this day, what would you like to be remembered for?

Who have you combined with to make a bigger difference?

YOU'VE ABSOLUTELY NO REGRETS – WHY?

Why is it you're so fulfilled and content with the life you now have?

Finally, review the ideas you've created and add anything else, however big or small to your Golden Ticket. What else would you love to give to, and receive from the world?

Now imagine you have reached this future point with absolutely no regrets. You've achieved everything on your Golden Ticket and more.

Looking back at the journey you've taken to achieve your Golden Ticket, fill in the journal below, completing each sentence:

In achieving all my goals, the biggest obstacle I overcame was...

(Write down the most daunting obstacle you faced)

I overcame this by...

(You didn't give up, blame something or someone else. You took responsibility. What did you do?)

The people who helped me were...

(We all need people on our bench...so who made the greatest difference? Who was the first positive person you shared your Golden Ticket with? Or maybe even created one together?)

The first brave step I took was...

(Every journey starts with a first step. What did you do to begin to make it real? And remember the first step may be in your head!)

I kept on going by...

(Many of us start out full of enthusiasm but can forget our destination, get sidetracked by other people or simply let life grind us down. How did you keep the momentum going?)

Congratulations, you've now created an inspiring Golden Ticket to your future and have identified the first step to make it real. If you don't feel inspired by it, try the exercise again or work on a small bit of it that really excites you. The more times you do it, the bolder and more creative you will become.

Don't worry if your Golden Ticket isn't crystal clear. When asked what his vision of the future was, Walt Disney replied 'All I know it's fun, colourful and glitzy', the rest is history.

Focus on the bits of your Golden Ticket that jump out as the most exciting and meaningful to you, and be open to all the new possibilities along the way.

Keep thinking about how great you'll feel when you've achieved the best bits of your Golden Ticket but be prepared to keep everything real.

You are now at the critical stage of the process. As you begin the next week of your life, you have three choices:

CHOICE 1

Throw it away in an instant – like switching off a light bulb in your head. You simply give up on it before you start.

CHOICE 2

Push it away – waiting for someday sometime to arrive. “I’ll do it when the kids are older... when I win the Lottery...after the summer holidays... when I’ve retired...”. This is just as bad as throwing it away – ‘someday’ never arrives.

CHOICE 3

Make it real today – by doing something really simple and practical to live out part of your Golden Ticket in the next hour or so. Why wait days to live your dreams when you can dream up ways of living them today?

So which choice are you going to make today? If you’re worried about making your Golden Ticket real today, remember to use your imagination in a positive way.

We all have loads of imagination so use yours the right way – to create the dreams that will make your life worthwhile.

Here are five simple steps to make Choice 3 a reality:

1. Write down all your ideas
2. Believe you can achieve
3. Focus on the benefits
4. Plan small realistic steps
5. Finally, tell as many people as possible what you’re planning

Good luck, and enjoy the journey of a lifetime.

Take that step and be all you can be today. If you don’t who will?

Commit yourself to doing something different to make your Golden Ticket real, whether it is one simple change of attitude, one positive person you speak to or one practical step in the right direction.

You only have one life. It’s up to you to make the most of it.

do it...

If you don't have a dream, you'll never make your dreams come true. The trouble is we often fail to create a clear, detailed picture of what we want from life. So if you haven't created your Golden Ticket yet, take half an hour today. (You may find it easier for someone to read the questions out and write down your answers).

Here are some ways other people have managed this... try one that feels right for you.

- ☐ **DARE TO DREAM** – If you don't want to use words, draw a picture or cut out pages and key words from magazines to form a collage. Or record your ideas on a DVD or CD.
- ☐ **CREATE YOUR BUCKET LIST** – List all you'd love to have, do or be before you 'kick the bucket'. Now circle the one or two that motivate you most and start today.
- ☐ **START A NEW CHAPTER** – Imagine your Golden Ticket is a book. List chapter headings, write page one – and act on it today.
- ☐ **KEEP IT CONSCIOUS** – Put your Golden Ticket where you can see it daily (fridge, notice board, wallet etc!)
- ☐ **PROTECT YOUR DREAMS** – Banish all fear, worry, laziness and cynicism.

- ☐ **TAKE A REALITY CHECK** – Set a date to review your Golden Ticket. Is the WLPB blend right? Are my roles right? Am I maximising skills I love? Am I having fun? If any answer is no, revise your ticket.
- ☐ **BE HONEST** – Confront your obstacles. If it's time, money or commitment, ask how much. Or are these simply excuses?
- ☐ **SHARE YOUR IDEAS** – Tell friends, family and colleagues – that's more people to nag and look out for you.
- ☐ **DEVELOP DIFFERENT SCENARIOS** – Try creating many different versions of your Golden Ticket. Vary the time or scale of your ambitions. Start with a manageable vision, add bolder ideas then review each version.
- ☐ **MODEL SUCCESS** – Is there anyone who lives aspects of your Golden Ticket? Could they show how you could do the same?
- ☐ **NO REGRETS** – There's no better time to be happy than today so take a brave step now! Make it a habit and pass it on.

So what steps will you take today? Consider picking one or two of these suggestions to get you up and running and, when completed, the other ideas may provide you with further thoughts.

That's why
I'm easy...easy like
Sunday mornin'

THE COMMODORES

done it!

Driven by resentment, I had a point to prove to those who doubted my capabilities. Despite my disability I knew I could achieve anything. Sport was my passion and my persistence second nature. Once I had a vision of developing an environment where people like me could flourish. Now that vision is reality – it's called the Greenbank Sports Academy.

GERRY
SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR
AND DREAMER





PASS IT ON

Make a commitment to pass on your learning to someone else today. Do you know the hopes and dreams of your nearest and dearest? How can you raise the aspirations of people around you? What role can you play today in making their dreams a reality?



MARCH
TUESDAY

3

29

AUGUST
SUNDAY

7

10

The No Regrets way of life

MONDAYMINDSET

To finish the big week of my life with No Regrets on Sunday, how do I need to act and think differently today?

TUESDAYTIME

How can I creatively blend my working, learning, playing and giving today to have No Regrets tomorrow?

WEDNESDAYWHO

What roles do I need to perform better to have No Regrets on Sunday?

THURSDAYTALENTS

How am I going to combine the skills and talents I love using and am good at to play my part today?

FRIDAYFULFILMENT

How can I bring passion, a sense of purpose and real value into my life today?

SATURDAYSUPPORT

To have No Regrets, who do I need on my bench and whose bench do I need to sit on today?

SUNDAYSATISFACTION

What hopes and dreams, however big or small, do I need to work on today to have No Regrets on Sunday?

Congratulations. By picking up this book you've taken your first step to having No Regrets on Sunday.

By meaning it and doing it for the past seven days you've taken a massive leap ahead. By passing it on each day, you've carried others along the way. Now it's time for that final leap of faith – turning this process into a weekly lifelong habit. And remember, this is just the beginning of a lifelong commitment.

Here's a day-by-day reminder to help you reflect on your journey so far, plan your route ahead and take the next step forward.

(You may wish to use this structure to jot down reflections, sketch out ideas or list key actions).

Tell your story...

Remember, this book will not change your life; it's the person holding it that will make all the difference – and that's you! If you feel passionate about the ideas presented and share similar values, we'd love to hear from you.

TELL US YOUR STORY

Your story could be the inspiration that others are looking for. This book includes seven very short stories of individuals who have made small steps or giant leaps forward. So however, big or small your story is we'd love to hear what your journey has been about. Telling others of the lows – as well as the highs – will help others to learn from your experiences. Please contact us at:

tellmystory@windmillsonline.co.uk

PASS IT ON

Try to maximize the ripple effect by sharing what you've learned from 'No Regrets' with others; whether they are friends, neighbours, family members or colleagues. You could do this by sharing the day of the week that had the most effect on you, talking through where the penny dropped, discussing a major obstacle you overcame or simply buying someone a copy of the book.

THANKS

A massive thanks go to Helen Wakefield, co-director of Windmills, whose passion, energy and belief in No Regrets is second to none.

Together we would like to thank all at Alexander MacGregor for their creative design and commitment, our colleagues at Windmills for sharing the vision and to the Northwest Development Agency for supporting us. Finally, our thanks go to those who have piloted, provided feedback and believed in No Regrets. We hope you have none!

Now get involved

Our own Golden Ticket for No Regrets is to make a difference throughout the world by creating a media-based programme. To establish a network of localised workshops which allow individuals to share their experiences in a supportive environment, and influence educational curriculum to enable future generations to have no regrets in life. You may wish to:

BECOME A CHAMPION

To go a stage further and become trained and licensed to deliver No Regrets in your community, within organisations, professionally or with friends.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

If you have a passion to make a difference in the world but need some support, we may be able to help. We are also keen to collaborate with sponsors, mentors and volunteers to do this.

BE ALL YOU CAN BE

Remember, someday is not a day of the week. So, before you put this book down, take one brave step on your No Regrets journey today.

For further information visit our website at

www.windmillsonline.co.uk

or email us at **enquiries@windmillsonline.co.uk**

Good luck and enjoy the rest of the week.

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Designed and produced by Alexander MacGregor Ltd. Portrait & beach photography by McCoy Wynne.

What is Windmills?

Windmills works with open-minded people who are ready to meet the challenge of fulfilling their potential: To 'be all they can be'. We encourage individuals to be brave, think creatively, embrace a new mindset and, most importantly, to take active steps towards making a difference to their lives and the lives of others. Operating collaboratively, Windmills works on a project basis; delivering solutions which combine cutting-edge innovations with tried-and-tested techniques and resources.

We are a '3-Thinking' organisation committed to:

1. EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS

We enjoy working creatively with individuals from cradle to grave; from nursery children on 'Monday', young people making choices and transitions on 'Tuesday', individuals facing change 'mid-week', through to retirees planning for their 'weekend'.

2. BUILDING CAPACITY IN ORGANISATIONS

Partnering with a broad spectrum of public, private and third sector organisations, we help them with people development issues including talent management, out-placement, leadership and change management.

3. SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

Collaborating with local community groups and regional initiatives, Windmills seeks to make its mark by contributing to diverse issues such as curriculum development, graduate retention, faith based leadership, under-employment, volunteering and employer engagement.

We make the biggest difference and aim to leave a lasting legacy when each of these 3-Thinking strands combine. Our conviction to this 3-Thinking approach is demonstrated by the creation of The Windmills Foundation which encourages and enables people with a passion to make a difference and add their unique contribution in the world.



Windmills Portfolio



ART OF BUILDING WINDMILLS

Empowering individuals to take control of their careers using creative career tactics



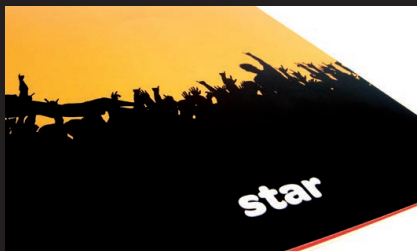
TALKABOUT

Enhancing the discussion at performance reviews



JOB SHOPPING

Equipping students with the tools and techniques to maximize work experience



STAR

Inspiring young people to take a fresh approach to be all they can be



IF ONLY

Ensuring young people entering higher education are employable when they leave



ART OF CRAZY PAVING

Making the most of voluntary experience and leaving a lasting legacy



JOB

Mapping out practical steps to successful job search, CVs and interviews



WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?

Providing a range of interactive life management resources and exercises



WLPQ

Blending working, learning, playing and giving to create an inspiring future



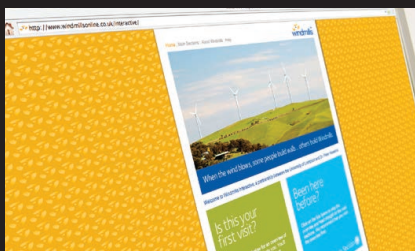
CARD SORTS

Stimulating thinking and conversation on skills, values and future action planning



PLAY YOUR PART

Bringing the Christian faith to life in a fun, meaningful and practical way



WINDMILLS INTERACTIVE

Releasing personal potential through a bank of on-line tools and techniques



About the author

DR PETER HAWKINS LEADS A PORTFOLIO CAREER. WITH HIS FAMILY AT THE HEART OF HIS LIFE, HE CREATIVELY BLENDS HIS WORKING, LEARNING, PLAYING AND GIVING.

WORKING – Peter is an international expert on career and life management. Author of seven books including the acclaimed *Art of Building Windmills*, he is a co-founder of Windmills Ltd. He has advised Government Ministers on employability and economic regeneration, consulted for the European Commission on lifelong learning and collaborated with over 100 educational, business and community-based organisations worldwide. He has creatively designed, developed and delivered a pioneering range of products, programmes and processes which enable young people and adults to realise their full potential. His clients range from the Association of Graduate Recruiters to Volunteering England.

LEARNING – An Engineering Graduate with a passion for people development, Peter has a PhD in Industrial Management. Over the past 20 years he has lectured across the world from Harvard to Cape Town Universities. He is an NLP Master Practitioner and has been mentored by inspirational leaders such as Charles Handy and Dick Bolles.

PLAYING – Although registered blind, his numerous sporting challenges include cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats, running the London Marathon and walking the Three Peaks - all for charities close to his heart. Based in Formby, 15 miles up the coast from Liverpool, Peter always enjoys 'Fun Fridays' with his family. His freedom and flexibility of work patterns allow him to drop off and pick his boys up from school and be an active part of the local community.

GIVING – Peter is passionate about empowering people with special needs. As leader and trustee for the Thursday Club, a charity for adults with learning difficulties he has acted as an advocate, befriender and helper for over 50 members and their families over the past 25 years. He is also Chair of Governors in a Toxteth-based special needs school and volunteers regularly to speak at various educational and community-based events. With like-minded partners, Peter has been instrumental in establishing the Windmills Foundation Charity.

DEDICATION – This book is dedicated to Peter's wife Helen, her mother Evelyn and his own parents Pat and Colin who have all inspired him to have no regrets.





THERE ARE ONLY TWO THINGS WE ALL HAVE IN COMMON: WE ARE ALL BORN AND WE WILL ALL DIE. THE TIME IN BETWEEN IS OUR LIFE – AND WE ONLY GET ONE SHOT AT IT.

Each of us is at a different stage in our life. Maybe employed, unemployed, stuck in a rut or facing major change. We may be married with family commitments or free and single. We all have different styles of living. We may care about big houses or big issues. For some making money matters most – for others it could be making a difference that counts.

Finally we all take a different approach to living out our lives, we may be proactive or reactive, focused or unfocused, positive or pessimistic. But whatever your situation or strategy in life, this book is for you. It will help you to help yourself.

All you have to do is commit one single hour a day for the next week. Can you afford not to?

You'll have no regrets.


windmills
www.windmillsonline.co.uk

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