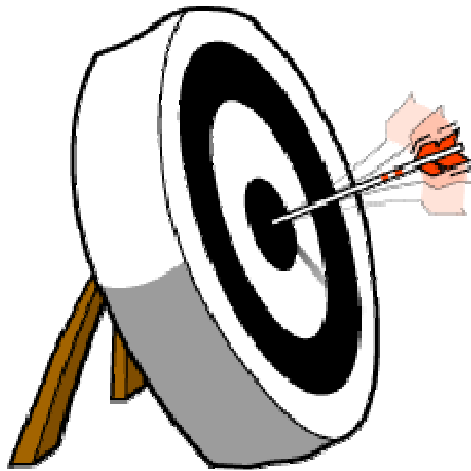


Life Growth Plan



Compiled by Pr Chris Kam
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Courtesy of The Navigators Business and Professional Ministries

Life Growth Plan

Live life, then with a due sense of responsibility, not as those who do not know the meaning of life, but as those who do. Ephesians 5:15 (J B Philips)

This is Apostle Paul's advice to the church at Ephesus. If anyone ever demonstrated sober intentionality in accomplishment, it was Paul. He is the one who wrote to the Corinthians the following words: *So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I fight to win. I'm not just shadow-boxing or playing around. 1 Cor. 9:26 (Living)*



This is a good time to reflect and do a personal inventory of our life. We learn from our past, take stock of our present and live for the future. As we come to the end of the year, we are aware that we make so much preparation for Christmas, but very little preparation for New Year's Day. Probably the reason that so many "resolutions" fail so quickly is that very little thought, conviction and prayer were used to arrive at them.

I started to be really serious about living life with a purpose in 1994 at the age of 34. Through prayers and thoughtful reflections, I wrote my vision and mission for life and envisage what my life would be like when I am 55 years of age. Short and long term goals were set. Interestingly, by 44, I have met up to 90% of my life-long goals, 11 years in advance. I am now in the process of re-tooling myself with a fresh vision. I came across this format for making goals. It is just one page. It covers goals that are short term, intermediate and long term. It covers goals in every relevant area of life. I like this format because it is only one page. It helps me focus on critical areas of development for the year. A copy of the form is the [last page of this document](#). Some folks really like using forms, and others run for the hills. No matter what is your type, please consider spending valuable time seeking to know how God is directing you into the future.

Proverbs 16:9 (Living)

We should make plans--counting on God to direct us.

Start by rewriting your vision and mission in life. Vision is centered around the process of what you need to be doing. Mission is the end result of what you will have done. Reinforce it with scripture. A vision statement should be very brief, memorable, powerful, and understandable. It should be unique to you, not generic for just about every believer. A mission statement(s) is lengthier, describing in specific terms what would happen. It is the force that will sustain you when your vision statement seems too heavy to endure, enforce or engage.

LIFE VERSE is a scripture portion that is your “all time favourite” which encompasses who you are and what you want to be. Don’t go ransacking the Bible for this, but allow the Spirit of God to influence you and guide you to a verse that is so precious and meaningful that you want to follow it and embrace it all your life.

Then take inventory of last year, praising Him for what He has done in your life so far. Then prayerfully set goals for next year and finally get a good friend to review them with you and pray with you over them. *Put this on your schedule now.*

1. Vision

Discovering God's Vision. What has he called me to do? "*The Lord will fulfill HIS purpose for me.*" Psalm 138:8

- a. My vision in life should be scripturally based.
Examples: Acts 20:24, Col 1:28-29, 1 Cor 10:31
- b. Worthy of giving my life to.
- c. My vision should affect my life in an observable way.
- d. My vision should be unique to me, as far as I can discern at the present time. God is incredibly creative.

(See also Rick Warren, Purpose Driven Life)

**2. First take INVENTORY of my current status:
(Write them down in a journal)**

- a) Am I bolder with sin now than this time last year?
- b) Do sins which once seemed great now seem insignificant?
- c) Is Jesus not as familiar as at the beginning of the year?
- d) Do I now spend more time talking to men than to God, and more time reading books other than the Bible? When a first class problem appears, do I run to friends, or to the Lord?
- e) Am I more interested now than a year ago in what God knows, or in what men think?
- f) Have I picked a favorite doctrine or group or fashionable discipline that I defend more than Jesus?
- g) Am I tenderer or harsher toward those who disagree with me? Am I more like the elder brother (Pharisee type) in the Prodigal Son story?
- h) Is there one who has made steps toward faith in Christ this year because of my ministry?
- i) Have I had a significant impact in the life of one believer this year? One unbeliever?
- j) Where am I? Stagnating, growing colder, unstable, enthusiastic, going backwards, bitter, tired?
- k) Where do I want to be? Helping others, effective in prayer, vital witness, example for others, equipped with the WORD, wise and effective, mature.



3. YEAR VERSE

Select a verse that can form the basis of my goals. This is a verse or passage that comprises the main needs in my life now.

Examples:

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NIV)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. [2] Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

In some cases, using a paraphrase or recent translation will yield nuances of the text that make application and meditation increasingly rich.

For example, Hebrews 12:1-2 in *The Message* is *Do you see what this means--all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it. Strip down, start running--and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. (2) Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed--that exhilarating finish in and with God--he could put up with anything along the way: cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God.*

Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. [2] Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Col. 2:6-7 (Living)

And now just as you trusted Christ to save you, trust him, too, for each day's problems; live in vital union with him. [7] Let your roots grow down into him and draw up nourishment from him. See that you go on growing in

the Lord, and become strong and vigorous in the truth you were taught. Let your lives overflow with joy and thanksgiving for all he has done.

Philip. 1:9-11 (Living)

My prayer for you is that you will overflow more and more with love for others, and at the same time keep on growing in spiritual knowledge and insight, [10] for I want you always to see clearly the difference between right and wrong, and to be inwardly clean, no one being able to criticize you from now until our Lord returns. [11] May you always be doing those good, kind things that show you are a child of God, for this will bring much praise and glory to the Lord.

Eph 5:15-17 (The Message)

So watch your step. Use your head. Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times! Don't live carelessly, unthinkingly. Make sure you understand what the Master wants.

Eph. 5:15-17 (NIV)

Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, [16] making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. [17] Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

OTHERS:

1 Tim 4:16, Isa 50:7, Prov 3:5-6, Psa 1:2-3, Matt 6:33-34, Prov 31:11-12, 2 Chron 12:14, Ezra 7:10, Col 1:9-10, 1 Tim 4:7-8

Memorize it and tie to your goals. Meditate on it each DAY!

4. WHAT GOALS to set?

Luke 2:52, *Jesus increased in wisdom, stature, favor with God and man.*
Likewise, I should develop four ways:

- a. Physical - (weight, exercise, grooming)
- b. Mental - (books, study, writing, business)
- c. Social - (friends, hospitality, family)
- d. Spiritual – (my personal walk, my spiritual growth (church small group) and my ministry (use gifts for God))



Divide into intake and output. Some people will stuff themselves with spiritual knowledge and never get around to sharing with anyone. Others will burn out and never receive any significant input. *If your OUTPUT exceeds your INTAKE, your UPKEEP will be your DOWNFALL!*

- 1) INTAKE: Quiet Time, Scripture memory, Bible study and reading, Church, Christian books & tapes, etc.
- 2) OUTPUT: witnessing, testimony, church responsibilities, establishing new Christians, fellowship, teaching, committees, etc.

5. HOW to set goals

- a. Write LIFE GOALS in each of the four areas, answering “What would I like said of me at the end of life?”
- b. Then write goals for next year in each of the areas. Particularly write goals where you need to accomplish a project, achieve a milestone, and break or make a habit. Avoid listing activities you are already accomplishing.
- c. Make your goals **B I G**. *Make a small demand and you get a small sacrifice; make a big demand and get a big sacrifice.* BUT keep them realistic.



d. Use Intermediate Goals to record what cannot be accomplished in the next 12 months.

e. Write my goals down and have a friend check it out.

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:

If one falls down, his friend can help him up.

But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

Eccles. 4:9-10 (NIV)

6. EVALUATE the quality of your goals.

a. Do all my goals fit into the context of my written, stated purpose for my life?

b. Have I been honest enough to set goals in every area of life, believing God is interested in the total "me": spiritual? recreational? professional? social? educational and intellectual? family relationships? financial?

c. Have I developed long-range, short-range, and immediate goals? Have I developed them in that order so that the long-range goal will pre-determine my other goals?

d. Can my goals glorify God or are they selfish?

e. Did I ask God for his wisdom and guidance before I attempted to establish these goals?

f. Would Jesus Christ be willing to be Lord of my life and preside over the reaching of these goals?

g. If I am thoroughly convinced these are God-given goals, then cannot I expect His power to work in the achievement of these goals?

h. Will they pass the three tests (courtesy of T. B. Maston)?

Ask three questions first:

- (1) How will this affect me?
- (2) How will this affect others?
- (3) How will this affect the cause of Christ?

Apply three tests:

- (1) The test of secrecy (Would you mind if others knew?)
- (2) The test of universality (Would you be willing for others to do the same thing?).
- (3) The test of prayer (could you pray to God about this matter?).

Turn to three sources of light:

- (1) Light from within (a sensitized Christian conscience).
- (2) Light from without (wise counselors).
- (3) Light from above (God).

7. Principles to Maintain Balance

a. Realize you have a unique contribution to the world.

Don't do what others can do and will do when there are so many things that others cannot do and will not do. – Dawson Trotman

b. Keep time for God, your first and vital necessity.

c. Realize that serving God and His people will cost you something.

So I will very gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well. If I love you more, will you love me less?
2 Cor. 12:15 (NIV)

d. Learn to say NO and accept criticism for doing so.

- e. There will NEVER be a time when you will get it ALL done - when you will have enough time to pray as much as you think you should, witness as much, study as much...
- f. Do not confuse opportunity with responsibility. You will nearly always receive more invitations and suggestions than you can possible accomplish.

Don't forget to get a partner to help you reach your goals, or to help you shrink your intentions to something that can be accomplished. In some cases, a husband-wife combination works well, but not in all cases. Return to your written goals several times a year.

Give God praise and thanks when you see Him enable and empower you for doing his work.

GOAL IDEAS

Use these ideas to help set a FEW goals in each of the areas. Do not attempt to set massive goals in every area. Bite off a small chunk and then chew it. These items are idea starters for you.



Favor with God:

Intake:

Bible Reading: I will read the NT OT Entire Bible using the _____ version following the _____ plan. My reading will be done at _____.

Bible study: I will spend _____ hours per week in study on the _____ program.

Study Group for fellowship and my own development:

Scripture Memory: I will attempt to memorize ____ verses this year. Source of verses: _____ (Scripture Memory System, Quiet time, sermons, a verse from each book of the Bible, etc.)

Prayer: I will spend _____ minutes daily at _____ am/pm. Prayer format is _____.

Worship: Church _____ Other _____

Output

Bible study group for ministry to others: _____

Witnessing: My Most Wanted List (up to 10 names)

Community Service projects

Ministry Involvement

Person(s) I seek to establish in their faith:

Favor with Man: (Social, Accountability, and Character development)

My primary accountability partner is _____. We will meet or talk once a _____.

We have do not have a list of questions to ask one another.

*Hospitality plan. ____ of times per month with _____ (persons)
Create a guest list*

Other social involvement:

Character development:

My main strengths from God are:

Projects to develop strengths:

My main weaknesses that God wants to work with this year:

Projects to strengthen these weaknesses:

Conference(s) to promote my spiritual growth:

Family

Book to read on Marriage: _____

Conference or other activity to deepen our marriage:

Weekly Date night:

House projects needed: repair, maintenance, replacement, furniture, appliances, decorating

*Schedule of maintenance, cleaning, car attention, bill paying, correspondence,
Budget*

Spiritual needs of each child, and development plans for them

Daily / weekly / monthly focused time with children

Educational needs of each child:

Recreational needs of each child:

Relatives: Dates for visiting them. Relationship issues. Evangelism issues.

Vacation: time, cost, location, purpose

Prayer time: _____

Stature

Diet, exercise, personal appearance, sleep, recreation,

Physical checkup, weight goal _____

Mind

Career:

Daily prayer needs (purity, use of time, attitude, professionalism, faithfulness, integrity)

Progress. Promotion possibilities.

Development needed. Education, reading program, mentor, networking

Financial goals.

Reading: Type and number of books (Christian, career, artistic, imagination, history/biography)

Education: Learn to _____ ...

Television: Limit to _____ hours per week. Type of programs:

YOUR ACTIONS:

Now that I have made time to reflect, done a personal inventory and setting my goals in the attached form, what help do I need from the church to accomplish these goals? List down three areas that you would need some equipping, training or guidance in:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Note: They can be workshops, seminars, advice, counsel, personal consultation etc. Please talk this through with your accountability partner first and get his or her input.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Life Verse

Year Verse

My Vision in Life:

| Period | Mental | Social | Physical | Spiritual (in) | Spiritual (out) |
|--|--------|--------|----------|----------------|-----------------|
| LIFE: What do I want to accomplish over my lifetime? How would I want to be known? "Epitaph" | | | | | |
| INTERMEDIATE What can I do over the next 3-5 years toward life goals? These are goals that are too big to accomplish in the next 6-12 months. | | | | | |
| SHORT TERM: What must I do over the next 12 months toward life goals? | | | | | |