

# Making It All Work Summary

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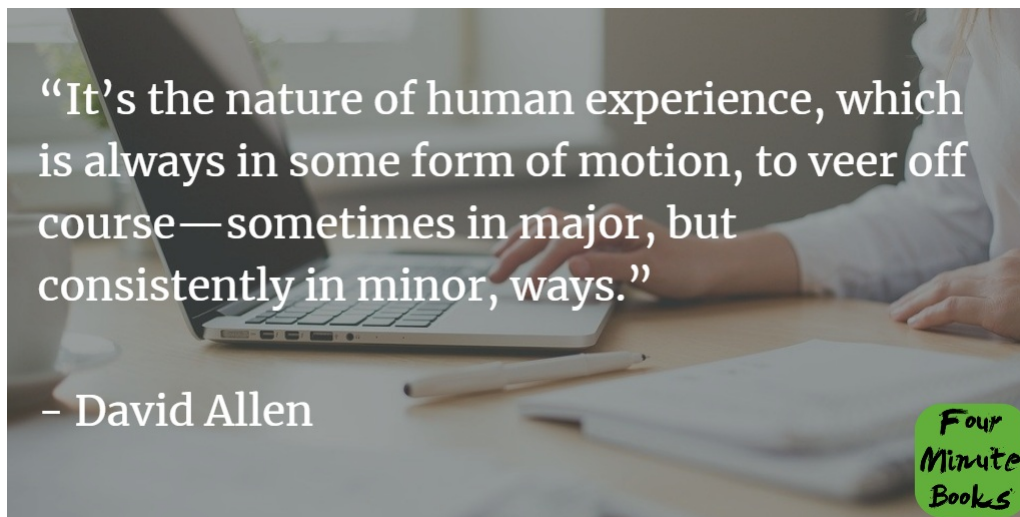


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**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Making It All Work* explains how to balance your daily tasks with your long-term goals to bring them all together for a happy and productive life.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



If you're like most people, an email pops up and you read it immediately. Next thing you know, you're deep in the mire of distractedness. You wonder how you got there, but more than that, what all this busy work is for anyway. After all, isn't it hard to tell if an email is important unless you open it?

The trouble is, with so much information and opportunities coming at us at increasing speeds, it's hard to tell what's meaningful and what isn't. Although this is frustrating, you don't need to worry that you're the only one that feels this way. Many of us struggle to see the forest through the trees.

But there is hope. *Making it All Work: Winning at the Game of Work and the Business of Life* is David Allen's follow up to *Getting Things Done*, and will help you get clarity and purpose in daily tasks *and* your overall goals.

Here are the 3 most interesting lessons I learned about having a more productive life:

1. Having both the mind of a dreamer and the abilities to work hard each day are necessary to reach your full potential.
2. To make daily tasks meaningful, divide them into projects and focus on the goals that they help you achieve.

3. If you want to figure out your life in the long-term, define your values and path by asking yourself the big questions.

Do you want to be productive daily and throughout your life? Read on to find out how!

## Lesson 1: To realize your full potential, combine hard work each day with the courage to aspire for greater things.

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Do you tend to think of yourself as a doer or a dreamer? Maybe you fluctuate between both, but most of us generally fail in one of these ways or the other.

Another way to think of these ideals is by defining them as difference between perspective and control. **Perspective is how well you can see the big picture, while control is how you organize your daily process in connection with the long-term.**

Some of us are great at seeing the big picture. I have a family member that is like this. They always see things on a bigger scale than just the day to day. When it comes to the details, however, this person doesn't see them as clearly. If you're like this you may also have a lot of ideas, but struggle to implement them.

I'm better at the control side of things than perspective. Getting into the finer components of a larger picture is my strength. But I lack in my ability to see things comprehensively and imaginatively. There are days when I get caught up in updating the look of a spreadsheet but struggle to get my marketing plan nailed down.

The sweet spot really is having a balance of perspective and control. Another way to think of this is managing daily tasks in a way that is in line with your overall goals. Let's take a look at how to do that in our other two lessons!

## Lesson 2: Divide your tasks each day into projects and focus them on your lifelong vision for yourself.

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Do you ever feel busy but take a harder look at your day and wonder what you actually accomplished? It's easy to get caught up in the little everyday tasks we have to do and lose sight of the bigger picture.

**Allen gives three tips to make sure that what you do each day is important:**

1. Identify your **responsibilities** and take care of them.
2. Organize tasks into bigger **projects**.
3. Always keep an eye on your **goals**.

Personal responsibilities might include taking care of your relationships, finances, or health. Organize them into categories and subcategories to gain greater clarity. One example of this that I use is mapping out my health into three sub-categories of diet, exercise, and rest. Keep them simple, all you need to do is be aware of them for them to make a difference.

Next, look at those smaller actions as part of bigger projects. These should be the kind that get you to a higher goal and can be done in less than a year.

The final component is reviewing your long-term goals to see that your projects are helping you make progress toward them. Usually these are the kind that you finish in one to three years, and are more strategic.

## Lesson 3: Get the big picture for your life by asking the big questions to identify what means the most to you.

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Have you ever been walking through the forest and wondered where you really are? It's always interesting to look at a map because the elevated view it shows is so different from the view in front of us. There are sometimes many different paths that lead to various places. Without knowing which one we're on, it's hard to tell where we'll end up.

Imagine, though, the clarity of seeing the paths of life ahead of you and knowing where each would lead. If you had that knowledge, it would be easy to determine if you should go back to school or look for a better job, for example.

We know that we need to let ourselves dream big, but doing it is sometimes a little more tricky. But, getting above the minutiae of daily tasks might be as easy as asking yourself a few deep questions.

**Look ahead a few years and ask yourself where you'd like to be.** Do you see yourself finally finding love? Are you hoping that your new business idea will take off? When you figure out what your ideal future life looks like, make a list of everything that includes. Identify your values by asking how you'd like people to remember you. Also include the bold questions like "is my career fulfilling?" and "do I want to have a family of my own?"

This plan is your elevation-level view, with the specifics of your dreams as those end-points on your life map. Make sure to review this list often to check that you're on the right track.

## Making it All Work Review

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I want to say that Making it All Work sounded a little repetitive, but maybe that's just because I know and practice these principles daily. Either way, I really enjoyed this book. These principles will help anyone get a grasp on what's important in the long-term and how to center daily activities around those long-term goals.

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## **Who would I recommend the Making it All Work summary to?**

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The 45-year-old office worker who feels like there's something more to their life than filling out reports and making copies, the 29-year-old who is afraid of going into their 30's without having fulfilled many of their life goals, and anyone who is looking for better work-life balance.