

As a student balancing classes, extracurricular activities, and part-time job, I frequently feel caught up in a whirlwind of deadlines and obligations. Covey's second habit, "Begin with the end in mind," truly resonates with me. It's made me pause and focus on what genuinely important in my life beyond merely getting high grades or padding my CV.

After some introspection, I believe my core is mostly principle centered. I seek to base my decisions and actions on enduring principles like honesty, compassion, and personal growth. This center seems natural for me since it provides a strong basis that isn't dependent on external affirmation or shifting circumstances. When I match my choices with these key beliefs, I experience a feeling of honesty and purpose.

Breaking down my life into several roles, here are some goals I wish to attain from my principle-centered perspective:

**Professional Role (As a student and future professional):**

1. Develop a deeper grasp of my topic of study by engaging in meaningful discussions with teachers and classmates, going beyond just memorizing data for tests.
2. Seek out internship opportunities that connect with my ideals and allow me to contribute constructively to society.
3. Cultivate strong ethical decision-making abilities to prepare for future career challenges.

**Personal Role:**

1. Establish a consistent self-reflection practice, such journaling or meditation, to keep connected with my basic beliefs and personal progress.
2. Build and nurture relationships based on mutual respect, honesty, and support.
3. Develop a balanced lifestyle that values physical and mental wellness with academic endeavors.

**Community Role:**

1. Volunteer consistently for topics I'm passionate about, utilizing my talents and knowledge to make a concrete difference.
2. Initiate or participate in campus projects that promote inclusion and social justice.
3. Foster a feeling of community within my dorm or student organizations by creating events that bring people together and encourage meaningful connections.

Reflecting on these goals, I realize they're significantly different from what I could have listed before contemplating Covey's idea of beginning with the end in mind. Previously, I might have concentrated more on short-term successes like taking specific classes or securing a renowned internship. While those things are still important, seeing my aims through the lens of my principle-centered core helps me see the wider picture.

For instance, in my professional capacity, I'm now looking beyond just achieving good grades. I want to genuinely connect with my studies in a way that prepares me to make ethical, intelligent judgments in my future employment. In my personal life, I'm valuing true relationships and self-awareness over transitory social prestige. And in my community role, I'm searching for methods to generate lasting beneficial influence rather than merely accumulating volunteer hours for my résumé.

This adjustment in perspective hasn't made my life easier - if anything, it's made me more aware of the intricacies and responsibilities I confront. But it's also given me a clearer sense of direction and purpose. When I'm concerned about an upcoming exam or unclear about a decision, I can return to these principle-based goals and utilize them as a compass.

Covey's theory that our centers affect our daily decisions, actions, and motives holds true in my experience. By actively choosing a principle-centered strategy, I find myself more resilient in the

face of disappointments and more cautious about the chances I pursue. It's a continuous process of alignment and re-alignment, but one that I hope will benefit me far beyond my college years.

Word count: (573)

Reference:

Covey, S. R. (1989). *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*. Free Press.