



Reading Intentionally: A Proven Plan to Read Well and Read More

By

Keith Buhler

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## Reading Intentionally

Many people want to read more. You probably have many books on what David Allen calls your "someday, maybe" list. You know the benefits of reading for fun, for work, for personal development. You may have read a lot more before you graduated, or before your kid was born, or before that new demanding job. This book is for you.

This book does not tell you \*what\* to read. There are lots of good lists out there recommending classic novels, Pulitzer prize winning biographies, or the latest inspirational book. This book helps you form a plan for reading more and reading better. This book provides the structure – you supply the content.

Keith Buhler

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For my mom, who read to me before I was born

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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If there is some end of the things we do...will not knowledge of it, have a great influence on life? Shall we not, like archers who have a mark to aim at, be more likely to hit upon what we should?

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—Aristotle

1. Before you run a marathon, you work out. This book is your work out. Reading is the marathon.
2. This plan has worked for me.
3. This plan has worked for others.
4. Reading intentionally means you will enjoy reading more (or begin enjoying reading for the first time.)
5. Reading intentionally means you will improve your leadership (or become a leader to begin with.)
6. This book can be read in a week (1 chapter per day) or less.
7. This book can be read concurrently with other books on your reading list (see chapter 4 %).
8. There is no other book like this on the market.
9. This book has jokes.
10. This book allows you to join a reading community that is active, engaged, smart, and fun.
11. This book is for Moms, High school graduates, high school dropouts, college grads, college dropouts, busy professionals, book lovers, children, retirees, graduate students, pastors, teachers, and you.

# Chapter 1

## 1 Introduction: Why Read Intentionally

A classic is something that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read.

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—Mark Twain

### I. what this book is not

#### **This book is not about what you should read next.**

What should you read next? That, I don't know. Not only does the world contain untold millions of books, but reading decisions are very personal. (The only book I can unconditionally recommend to everyone at every time is the Holy Bible. Even then – which book? Start at the beginning? Read the Psalms? The Gospels? Revelation?) Even the same person should read very different books in different circumstances.

In this book, I assume that *you already know what to read*. You probably have a list of books you want read as long as your arm. If you don't consider yourself a "reader", you probably have a handful of books you know you'd like to read. Readers tend to have at least 50 books either written down or in their heads.

The question is this: can I read more and read better if I read intentionally? Leveraging a little bit of structure can have enormous impact on your reading life and your life in general.

This book is not about *how to read*.

Very little can be done to top Mortimer Adler's classic book on that topic, "How to Read a Book."

**3. not to ruin the fun**

**4. not to eliminate spontaneity**

**5. not to reduce online reading**

**6. How I started reading intentinoally**

## **II. What this book is**

Why read intentionally?

- Because there are many books you just haven't "gotten to" yet
- Because you keep your "to read" list in five different places
- It's practical. It works. It's helped me and it's helped others.
- It's more fun. It's not about turning a love into a chore. It's about taking the time to make sure you are reading the best books you know of.

## **Chapter 2**

### **2 Why We Read**

QUOTE

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— SOURCE

1. fun
2. leadership
3. relationship
4. growth
5. school's out
6. knowledge
7. empathy – get outside our heads

## **Chapter 3**

### **3 Why We Don't Read**

QUOTE

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— SOURCE

time! (Social media, TV, work, clutter) kids tired from work (especially if you read) never learned

## **Chapter 4**

### **4 Reading Intentionally**

QUOTE

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— SOURCE

This chapter lays out the plan for reading intentionally.

#### **Pre-List**

The first step is to create what I call the “Pre-List.” The Pre-list is a (first sketch) of how many books you read last year. The foundation of a customized and realistic reading plan is the clear knowledge of what you are capable of. Hence, the first step is not to plan but to observe.

I recommend looking back a full year. If this is overwhelming or just unrealistic, look back a month

What books did you read? The Pre-list should include books you started (but did not finish), read to the end, and should include e-books, anthologies, graphic novels, Bible books, textbooks, school books, books for work, novels, and so on. (See the Appendix for “What Counts?”)

#### **Dream List**

#### **The A-List**

#### **Get Started Today!**

## **Chapter 5**

### **5 Reading More, Reading Better**

## **Chapter 6**

### **Appendix: What Counts?**

## **Chapter 7**

### **Appendix: More Resources**

#### **1. What to read**

#### **2. Books about reading books**

1. C. S. Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism* Lewis' argument about what makes a book great will make you a great reader.
2. Mortimer Adler, *How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading*. Adler's thorough instruction, though dry at times, is absolutely lucid and useful.
3. Alan Jacobs, *The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction*. Jacob's delightful and rambly blog-post of a book will bring it all together.
4. Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. Postman's invective against the lost art of thinking through books is as helpful as it is painful.
5. Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451: A Novel*. Bradbury's love affair with good books will stoke your zeal and renew old loves.
6. Reader survey

This reading survey helps me address common obstacles to reading more and reading well. Take the survey here

4. E-books
5. Online books #### 6. Follow the blog

[Readingintentionally.com](http://Readingintentionally.com)

#### **7. Ten Quick Tips for Reading More**

1. Read for at least 2 minutes every day – a little bit goes a long way.
2. Make ONE list of books you want to read – consolidate your ten lists into one.
3. Read different books at different times – inspiring mornings, hard days, & fun nights.
4. Trust strangers – read the current #1 bestseller or previous Pulitzer Prize winner

5. Trust your friends – read for relationships.
6. Trust the democracy of the dead – read some of the best of the best of the best.
7. Don’t worry about your “comprehension” – it improves *as you read*.
8. Read what inspires, pleases, and delights you.
9. Read what enlightens, expands, and challenges you.
10. Read for fun AND for discipline (be intentional!)