

Skilled Reflection

Student0

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Abstract

This book asks and answers a series of questions about the nature of a productive life and its implications, as follows:

1. Self. What must I do (FOOD) in order to have what I want (CAKE)? Food is health, comprising maximum physical energy (fit) and mental energy (wit). CAKE is motivation, meaning and will to live (PRI).
2. Pri. What actions maximize cake in my life? Efficient fit and wit maximally used, before death (plan).
3. Ppl. What are people? Parallel universes dealing with identical problems, requiring words to establish connection and travel.
4. Bet. What actions result in CAKE? Steps taken now according to my plan (bets) and revision according to bet wins and failures (CHUD).
5. School. What now? Learn all your answers (student), along with other ppl (peers): go to school (IBC).
6. Words. What do I study? Minimize the difference between your PLAN (words) and HABITS, and minimize BET failures.
7. Revisions. When am I done? When BETs align with PRIs and address CHUD, and as soon as possible (BLITZ).
8. Epilogue. What is wrong with this book? It is mostly about idealized productivity, because it is written by one instructor obsessed with discipline and science fiction.

Note: If you are reading this, you have an early copy of the 2nd version of this book. This copy is missing a few key sections in addition to other edits which remain before making it public. Thank you for your patience in misunderstandings. I welcome any and all constructive feedback. Additionally, feel free to check back in for a revised and updated version if you please.

Introduction

Dear me,

1. Read this book because you're ready to.
2. You are going to die someday. This book is for you if there is something in the meantime worth maximizing.
3. Please engage your life. This book is meant to help you break through mental barriers, into action, starting right now.
4. Please get a pencil and note the date and TIME, right now: _____ - _____ (YYMMDD-HHMM).
5. The WORDS in this book are meaningful only when you apply them to your life.
6. If you wrote the date and time as requested in step 4, you have proven enough to yourself that you are open to trying new ideas. You are prepared to grow and continue reading.
7. If you left the line blank, you might tell yourself you are open to new ideas. You will be right when you complete the task.
8. Either write the TIME above or stop reading, and take a better action to improve your life, right now.
9. Every WORD you say to yourself is at best a PLAN for action, meaningless until you take that action.
10. Consider every WORD I write a PLAN to improve your actions.
11. Reasons for the PLAN are always less important than consequences of following them, often omitted.
12. What is important will appear, and what isn't will be forgotten.

Sincerely,
student0

Go Camping

13. This book presents seemingly obvious facts of life, and yet they are precisely what is essential to a deeper integration with yourself and between

people.

14. The first way to see this is to consider going on a camping trip, right now.
15. Unless this is routine for you, you will likely over- or under-prepare. Most people will be 1-3 hours late.
16. Whether you're an experienced camper or not, this is your only shot at a lifelong camping trip for yourself on Earth, and my guess is you are very likely late to your own life.
17. This is the book to assure you that you're not forgetting something or over-thinking your ambitions.
18. Your primary challenge is to find and repair the disconnect between your mind's image of TIME, and the one you are physically bound to.
19. If you fail, you will die in two worlds, the world you imagine you could have lived, and the one you did.
20. You'll read this book carefully, because you would like to not only pass, but ace your own life.
21. Part one of this book (The Garden) gives you all the general answers, and the basic tools for finding the answers particular to you.
22. Part two teaches you how to take apart and rebuild your tools, to whatever standard of a perfect self you choose to pursue.
23. The first task to master will resolve most issues of mis-perceived time (c1.18): Be exact about what you need vs. what you want.
24. Now, suppose you are hungry, and you must choose between finding FOOD or CAKE.
25. In this book, FOOD refers to needs and CAKE refers to wants.
26. You must practice this so much that you can instantaneously determine which part of your actions is FOOD and which is CAKE.
27. Then, no matter what you will need to plan or respond to, (however complicated the camping trip), you can trust you won't be late.
28. Because when you know what is FOOD and CAKE in a fluent and generative way, then planning and executing is a simple two step process:
 1. Get and prepare (pack) all FOOD.
 2. Get and prepare the best CAKE—that time allows.
29. Now, stop. Likely at this point you have slipped into thinking this is a book discussing a philosophy, but it is not.

- 30. FOOD vs CAKE is not understood and solved as a mental exercise in your living room, but by experiencing and paying attention.
- 31. What's more, you can discover more room for CAKE when you are so far from your living room that you don't even know where it is, because you're homeless and you don't have one.

Be homeless

- 29. The odds are you aren't and haven't been, and will very much avoid ever being homeless.
- 30. So consider any and all other surprising and scary experiences in your life.
 - 1. You couldn't find your car in the middle of winter.
 - 2. You went camping without waterproof gear and it rained.
 - 3. For weeks your shower only produced ice cold water.
 - 4. You were isolated in your house for two years during a global pandemic.
- 31. In the first moments, there is shock and terror, frustration and suffering. Your habit protests for a change in PLANS.
- 32. However small or profound the suffering or its threat, if you endure for long enough, there will be a noticeable shift in your HABIT. What you call suffering will change.
- 33. The more you pay close attention to your desires and needs, you will find yourself needing far less FOOD than you originally thought, in order to get more of the quality CAKE you really desire.

The Garden Narrative

- 36. The Garden foregrounds the things we often lose sight of when conceptualizing life GOALS: life is brief, and we are mortal.
- 37. It is a mental model of reality, designed to bring clarity.
- 38. Your Garden is your GOALS put on key IDEAS of this book.
- 39. You need the Garden to combat the other strength of your mind, its inherently idealistic nature, which sets you up for failure and suffering.
- 40. In these chapters, the second half revisits the key ideas in more formal language.

This book's FOOD.

- 41. WORDS in all capital letters are IDEAS that have specific definitions that differ slightly from conventional use.

42. For example, “WORK” is an IDEA referring to “careers,” but not ‘yard WORK.’
43. Do not overlook the nuances for these terms, they are the result of careful decisions about the FOOD and CAKE of the IDEAs.
44. Use the enumeration of ideas to cross-reference.
45. The item immediately above is “c1.45.” “c1” referring to this chapter, and “45” to the item number.
46. This will be taken advantage of in future revisions.
47. Most chapter concepts are a category of goals, and offer generalizable guidance for your plans.
48. Like food vs cake, the habits relevant to your goals can be closer to food, or excessive like cake.
49. In the context of definitions, they will be referred to instead, as “good” and “bad.”
50. For example, c8.60.

(PART) The Garden

SELF

Your Garden

1. Imagine your life takes place in a garden.
2. Visualizing your life as a garden allows you to ground actions and PLANS.
3. The mind analyzes well with visual space.
4. In this garden we'll consider all your biological needs – eating, sleeping especially – as literal.
5. Your plants are GOALS, and gardening is your PLAN.
6. FOOD and CAKE exists in the form of fruit from plants.
7. Whatever it takes to obtain your CAKE you can consider as an act of gardening.
8. Every one of your life ambitions, GOALS, is buried in the ground as seeds.
9. Finding a life partner, acquiring a car or promotion, or resolving a conflict with your childhood friend are all matters spread across the dirt in need of water, sunlight, and–most important–your TIME.
10. Other GOALS, like your favorite hobbies, or TV shows, take little WORK and grow almost anywhere.
11. Whether they are dear to you or weeds, if they take your TIME, they are PLANTS in your garden.
12. Except that they start as seeds.
13. And what do you do with seeds to make plants? You garden, dear human, you garden.
14. All actions toward a plant are according to PLAN.

15. All actions toward your SELF are to be considered literal in the garden metaphor.
16. For example, if you need to eat, or go to the bathroom, you physically go to the place and literally do the deed.
17. (There will be no defecating on plants, or a defecation plant in this garden.)
18. Thus, in the garden you are still a normal human bound to a normal space and time, capable of: 18.1. acting according to bodily need, 18.2. moving about space, and 18.3. gardening. Today
19. Today, you are looking out across the entire garden.
20. What has already been planted? What will you add and how much TIME will you devote to those GOALS?
21. Every seed you plant – even an abstract one like passing a course or making a friend– implies things in and out of your control like WORK and weather, or beyond your awareness, like what your boss loses sleep over.
22. Meditate on the final products of your garden.
23. Is there a more important plant that deserves your TIME today?
24. Meditate on the priorities of your WORK. Do two plants grow better when together?
25. Make a quick and accurate assessment, but don't sit here all morning thinking about it.
26. A garden is for working in, to get the FOOD and CAKE you need.
27. What do you need to cultivate, today?
28. What do you want to cultivate in this life?
29. First, you want what your body and mind best respond to. Many of these seeds will be obvious.
30. It is up to you how curious you are for what better life is possible.
31. The day is too short to try everything, and many things are not worth trying.
32. There is not always harm to planting something that does not grow, but sometimes there is.
33. You could run out of space, TIME, or energy that could have been devoted to better crops;

- 34. You might get a weak yield for trying to grow something not suitable in your climate, or
- 35. find you have no taste or stomach for the fruit.
- 36. In the garden, the COSTS of GOALS are grounded in their most basic sense: TIME and attention.

Core Concepts

- 37. The following are core concepts for application beyond the Garden. GOALS
- 38. A GOAL names an ideal future reality, comprises a PLAN to increase its likelihood, which has COSTS to exercise it.
- 39. These three things encompass all cognitive activity related to reality.
- 40. Everything that could be true or in your hand, but isn't right now, is a GOAL.
- 41. It is your GOAL if you aim to increase its probability.
- 42. A GOAL can be finite or persistent, singular or recurring, or realistic or not.
- 43. If you will need to do something before it is in your hand, it requires a PLAN.
- 44. A PLAN is any combination of WORDS where the writing or reading of them aims to improve the chance or decrease the COST of achieving your GOAL.
- 45. Most PLANS are instructions (INSTR) for learning, making, changing, reminding. 45.1. Product INSTR are a PLAN to maximize satisfaction and minimize liability. 45.2. For example, lamp INSTR will likely suggest not to put it in water.
- 46. A DOC is a PLAN for GOALS to complete a linguistic product 46.1. Example DOCs include a resume or epitaph on a tombstone.
- 47. LESSONS are a PLAN template for thinking. 47.1. Read and complete LESSON steps in order.
- 48. TOOLS are physical or mental objects that help you accomplish your GOAL.
- 49. What is materially required—muscle energy, cash, brain power—is COST.
- 50. All COSTS can be reduced to TIME.

- 51. COST is any action that has a direct exchange.
- 52. COSTS often are secondary objectives within a PLAN.
- 53. For example, you might buy a TOOL (COST). SELF
- 54. Every day, as a human, you spend TIME and attention just meeting basic needs: eating, drinking, pooping, and sleeping.
- 55. These actions are subgoals of maintaining SELF, the category of basic human GOALS.
- 56. FOOD is the necessary and sufficient material to satisfy these needs.
- 57. CAKE is anything (else) fulfilling, that you are inclined to pursue, including the reason for living.
- 58. The GOALS of SELF are what's necessary and sufficient to obtain and manage FOOD and maximize BET outcomes. 58.1. Separate FOOD from CAKE. 58.2. Be careful not to mislabel CAKE as FOOD. CAKE may appear sufficient but ask yourself if it is necessary. 58.3. Build routines for health and fitness, physical safety (shelter), a sound mind, healthy relationships. 58.4. Master the SELF (survive well).

Home

- 59. HOME is the collection of materials and TOOLS needed for SELF.
- 60. Within a HOME related actions are grouped into rooms.
- 61. For example, a kitchen, is for eating, storing, preparing and disposing of FOOD.
- 62. HOME also includes all physical material and resources you own, including MONEY, and environment and basis for HABITS.
- 63. A good HOME is clean and ALIGNED for FOOD.
- 64. A bad HOME facilitates bad HABITS and takes more TIME to maintain.
- 65. All your life can be very well characterized by a series of purely numerical data:
- 66. Event timestamps associated with a location.
- 67. The average movement over time, consider as HABITS.
- 68. The average location is HOME.

Priorities

Your Calling, Part I

1. Your calling,
your highest priority,
is yours to name.
2. If you overcome your DOUBTs,
and see reality plainly,
you will want peace.
3. But we all have DOUBTs, so
you want some form of
dignity and affirmation.
4. Tell me your calling, student,
and subtracting from peace,
I'll tell you your DOUBTs.
5. On mastering my book
your life will be regimented
to afford your calling.

Cake of Cakes

1. In your garden you have the seeds and sprouts of the best you could want,
and the most important of what you need.
2. There are two important things to keep in mind, however clear things
may seem right now.
3. The first is to always leave room for your goals to change, if and when
you achieve them. Think of what you can grow from the seeds of the best
apple in your crop.

4. The second is that much of what you could achieve, you won't, before the day is over, nor before you die.
5. Before there was a garden, you lived as if you wouldn't die. At least some of your GOALS assume *tomorrow* is a good time to start.
6. I did, at least. The list of my GOALS grew like a wild vine and I found myself overwhelmed by what else I wanted, and yet an inability to equalize various goals.
7. The very difficult task of your priorities, at their core, is to establish the optimal intersection of finite time and infinite, ever-changing desire.
8. For example, sleep. About 4 hours daily is a vital priority for everyone (FOOD), but sleeping in on the weekends is not (CAKE).
9. In your garden, you are limited in what you can do in one day, and in one lifetime.
10. Even if you build machines to work fields that stretch out to the horizons,
11. you can only eat so much in a day and a lifetime.
12. How do you most want to spend your time?
13. If your GOAL is to obtain something you do not yet have and have never tasted, be careful. It may not satisfy you how you imagine.
14. Suppose your goal takes 300 hours of labor.
15. You might spend 10 years accruing the time on task, or immerse yourself and achieve your GOAL in under 1 year.
16. To avoid let downs, better to achieve your GOAL as soon as possible.
17. Today, you grow the best apple you can,
18. yet having tasted it, you might discover a more refined GOAL is closer to your heart.
19. Whether this apple is FOOD or CAKE, the more you align with yourself, the more you will see your GOALS differently than you first conceived of them.
20. Leave time in your life to achieve the next GOAL.

Death and Sickness

19. Many PPL believe in seeds with special powers, like true love, or winning the lottery.
20. One seed grows the duration of your life, which you rarely notice but are often aware of.
21. When you eat it, the sun sets for the last TIME and you bite the dust. It happens to all of us.
22. Think about this, but don't dwell on it.

Bad days

23. Maybe you are sick, down or depressed.
24. Then today, do not look out onto your field as a day to WORK.
25. Today your field gives to you, and you should take what you need. This is what it is for.
26. Do not beat yourself up for what you cannot give today. This assumes your field is only meaningful for its future.
27. And before you're well again, remember this moment well, so you may
28. prevent the urge to be disappointed the next TIME you are less than productive.
29. If you must WORK to feel worthwhile, WORK to budget for a fact of being human:
30. you are always sometimes less than productive, and occasionally your setbacks come in unfortunate forms, at inconvenient times.

Attention and time

31. Think of what's happening in your garden this very moment: nothing, while you're sitting here thinking.
32. Reflect only enough to improve your actions.
33. The GOAL of PRI is to manage the set of GOALS in your life.
34. All GOALS rely on a single, limited source of attention, and existence: you.
35. Attention.
 1. At its best, this limiting fact drastically improves the reality of PLANS and GOALS.
 2. At its worst, it is the most common oversight responsible for bloated CHUD.
 3. GOAL importance (PRIS) partly depends on context.
 4. Group GOALS by shared actions, places, or times. Make/group/keep, order, reduce in the order presented in Figure 4. "A place for everything, everything in its place"
 5. ALIGN SELF and CAKE
 6. Adopt all your GOALS to REALITY ("above," e-you will die).
 7. Think about the sum of your GOALS,
36. Ask what it would take to change (if possible), and whether change is worth it.
37. Savings occur anytime you complete an action that serves various GOALS.

1. An example is Grouping. (See Fig. 3)
 2. Apply to IDEAS, PLANS, GOALS, or HOME things.
38. TIME is the constant (or denominator) for FORCES, FORGETTING, PRI, and LIB.
1. Do not ignore TIME.
 2. Estimate durations accurately for GOAL accomplishment.
 3. Study TIME to learn reality, SELF, and their LINK.
 4. Continually assess whether GOAL benefits outweighs costs of TIME.
39. Maybe it seems unnecessary to represent WORK satisfaction and relationship quality in terms of carrots and tomatoes.
40. When you get bored, ask yourself why attempting to understand and define yourself bores you.
41. What is happening in your life, and what is in your control if these are unclear?
42. If you are not reflecting on your life, your garden is a foggy labyrinth, and you are a drunk gardener wearing oven-mitts.

PPL

1. Just like you, others are trying to figure out what goes in their garden.*

* **You could think of people as seeds in your garden, but this is an over-application of seeds; and its unnecessary.** 2. Maybe they are your friend, and need help with some unruly vines, or maybe you just like their apples. 3. Sometimes, PPL will contribute to your goals, as if bringing water to crops you didn't recognize need them. 4. Sometimes PPL will try to water your crops when they don't need watering. 5. Sometimes visiting their garden will bring up your morale, or get you a bag of apples to take home. 6. Sometimes you'll need to water some crops that need to be watered, because the sight of their neglect cannot be ignored. 7. Keep in mind that the challenges that sometimes overwhelm you are the same kind others deal with, but not always the same amount and at the same time. 8. How are PPL affecting your garden?

WORK

6. Where do you get seeds for FOOD from and how did you know to plant them?
7. From other PPL, right? No silly, you don't know how to garden a sandwich!
8. Lucky for you, many of the most important crops you want are already grown, prepared and handed to you—in exchange for money.
9. Money is traded for maintenance of, or insurance for SELF and CAKE, like apples, miracle medical procedures, and a toilet to take your poop somewhere else.
10. WORK is performing a specific task on a collective garden, like an institution's in exchange for money.
11. You'll WORK about 80,000 hours in your life.

12. Whether or not you like it, or it directly fulfills garden needs, WORK is made to serve NORMS, not you.
13. NORMS are all actions assumed of (or about) the “average” person. They are the web of FORCES of all actions of all PPL, including WORK, religion, popular attitudes, and DOUBTS.
14. Relatedly, NORMS assume you will WORK for money for goods.
15. Language, agreed usage of WORDS, is made from NORMS.
16. NORMS push against individuality (except where it provides a lucrative job opportunity).
17. A FORCE is any cause of change.
18. A FORCE underlies every action involved in a GOAL, yours or otherwise.
19. There are forces within your control, and forces outside.
20. MAINTENANCE is the COST of FORCE to neither move toward nor away from a GOAL.
21. ALIGNMENT is when NORM or natural FORCE causes your GOAL to be more likely.
 1. To ALIGN is to adjust your GOAL to be more like another force, usually one acting against your GOAL.
 2. Study how forces WORK against you.
22. Relationships (RLTP) are GOALS about PPL (PPL).
23. Good ones are aligned with your GOALS.
24. Bad ones COST more.
25. A RLTP is a reciprocal pair of BETS, yours of them, and vice versa.
26. RLTPS, especially family members, coordinate many GOALS for SAVINGS.
27. Pick WORK and RLTP that maximize your other PRIS including possibly one that maximizes TIME and money to apply to other PRIS.
28. Pick friends the same way.
29. Consider your actions and choices about PPL carefully.
30. Maximally ALIGN with NORMS with least compromise to PRIS.
31. ALIGN (get along) with PPL.

The Classroom

Note: If this section is confusing, revisit it after “Ed.”

33. (No one chose to be born.)
34. Everyone begins life with their own unnamed and unanswered problems.
35. Books can only tell a student what the answer is not (quite).
36. The gap between problem and book answers is left for the student to “apply.”
37. A better approach would be to let the student define the problem through their reality and life GOALS.
38. Let them write the PLAN and teach them only what is needed to succeed.
39. Imagine a perfect course exists, designed to teach you to fulfill your specific ambitions.
40. Every aspect of what you NEED to know, that is known and communicable, is the only thing written.
41. Everything that cannot be known but must be discovered or practiced, is laid out as a set of instructions, described in the WORDS that maximize the learning opportunity, and your progress.
42. Rather than a course in a classroom, the perfect class is a manual to reference as you live your life, or at least until you’ve internalized its contents:
43. when to take a break to strategize your decisions, lessons on what opportunities to watch for and resist, and so on.
44. Any social role you wish to take on, artist, engineer, therapist, insurance salesperson, reliable partner, is customized intimately, curated perfectly for what you need.
45. Any relationship or interpersonal skill that is realistically possible for you is preceded with the guidance and education that prepares you emotionally to choose the right experiences that set you up to be most likely to find and make the most of opportunities to share yourself with another.
46. People, are the part of a theory of life that require the most care, and least words.
47. Unlike the nature of our actions which play unconsciously and imply bets,
48. Common, bad people activity is the habit of over-emphasizing mutual bets, and

49. which fall out of alignment with actions.
50. Instead, consider a relationship to be only the actions that are reciprocated;
51. and call this the relationship ‘contract.’

BET

1. You can't help but think how to make your life better.
2. You can take control of your life, or you can let the world BET for you.
You can commit yourself to finding out which thoughts are right or leave it to chance to have better life.
3. A commitment is the first step, but far from the last.
4. If you want your dreams to become real, listen to your DOUBTs.
5. Then test them.
6. Winning means your reality is one step toward your GOAL.
7. Losing is the wake-up call to be more realistic.
8. Betting is a protocol to guide you to reality, and, if you're lucky, your dreams might fit in.
9. How real will your dreams get before you die?
10. A stranger comes to your garden at the end of a long day, chopping his jaw. You look up.
11. "No really, consider it, right now. Imagine the most realistic, attainable, best life you could have.
12. Imagine taking the first step and then stay with the thought. Listen to the fear that surfaces.
13. For the moment, never mind how the world has gotten in your way.
14. How are you in your own way?"
15. He seems to be in your way. He's staring past your wet forehead.
16. "See your DOUBTs with curiosity. Now BET on what you tell yourself you believe. BET on overcoming them."

17. But you mostly only think of frustration and say, “I appreciate the suggestion.”
18. “Let’s both BET. Name what you believe you can accomplish tomorrow, in terms of what you think holds you back most.
19. If you make it happen before sun-up, you’ll be over the most daunting hurdle between you and your outcome.
20. And I’ll give you the equivalent of your harvest, today. If you fail, you leave me today’s harvest.”
21. “Okay,” you say. You’ll show him.
22. “The rocks on the far field. They’re on a slippery slope. To build the home I want, I need those rocks, but I’m afraid of falling. I’ve collected every rock on my land and I need those rocks. Tomorrow I’ll finish my foundation with rocks from the slippery slope.” BET
23. A BET is a PLAN template for reconciling REALITY with CHUD, to accomplish GOALS.
24. Betting is confronting costs, habits, UNKNOWNs and DOUBTs that stand in the way of your wants and dreams.
25. The TIME that passes and the status of your GOAL when it runs out are an intersection of reality: the world and you. To name them, is to shed CHUD.
26. Every IDEA you hold is a BET with a rolling deadline, idiosyncratic successes, and revisions.
27. BET wins shorten your PLAN, and the distance to your GOAL. Losses should guide revisions to your CHUD.
28. To BET, name: 28.1. a step in your PLAN, 28.2. a deadline to achieve it, and 28.3. the C.H.U.D. for that duration.
29. Blitz to revise and win, and log your actions.
30. When the deadline arrives, take stock. 30.1. Compare your action log to your PLAN. 30.2. Identify CHUD factors that best explain discrepancies. 30.3. Revise PLAN, updated with CHUD factor predictions. 30.4. (Record TIME to do the next BET or GOAL, Revise, etc.) 30.5. Start the next BET or GOAL.

Back to the Garden

31. The next morning you woke to a field in disarray and a letter. You had worked harder than you planned, and still fell short of your GOAL.
32. “If you did more than you would have without the BET, you won something, including evidence that there is some commitment in you to make your dreams come true.”
33. The biggest reward is not positive: accept you failed,
34. and partly due to a miscalculation.
35. Therefore, likely other parts of your PLAN are misguided, and your GOAL is further than you estimate.
36. If you disagree, let’s BET again. First, take a minute to learn from your planning mistake.

C.H.U.D.

37. Even if you make a PLAN and BET on it, you can fail.
38. Why don’t we achieve our GOALS?
39. Here are the four critical aspects of success,
40. and by extension, clues for why we fail;
41. CHUD encompasses the changes in you, the world, and your GOAL for you to achieve it.
42. COST [See Chapter 2]
43. HABITS are your dominant tendencies (FORCES). 43.1. HABITS are your most likely and reliable FOOD or CAKE actions. 43.2. Bad HABITS are FORCES working against your GOALS. 43.3. Good HABITS are ALIGNED with GOALS.
44. If you have not arrived at the GOAL, there are UNKNOWNs.
45. A train might stop you from arriving on TIME.
46. From a planning standpoint, it is unclear if you can control UNKNOWNs, but you can estimate them.
47. Failures to accurately estimate reveal DOUBTS.
48. DOUBTs are the difference (error) between your PLAN’s estimate of reality, and Reality.
49. Explore and learn where the line of control is, expand control productively, and let go of unhelpful attempts to control.

- 50. Good DOUBTS temper an optimistic PLAN.
- 51. Bad DOUBTS fuel bad habits and fantasies.
- 52. Fear, anxiety, and jealousy, reflect overestimation of UNKNOWNs.
- 53. Resistance to change due to arrogance and ego reflect underestimation of UNKNOWNs.
- 54. To be distracted from or bored of your PLAN is 54.1. anxiety about your future. 54.2. discomfort toward present reality. 54.3. distrust in your past.
- 55. Most of these issues, if deep enough, require therapy.
- 56. Or the Intellectual Bootcamp.

(PART) The I.B.C.

Education

Intellectual Bootcamp

1. On the computer screen: Consent and Commitment
2. Hi. 2.1. Is there a better version of you? 2.2. Are you capable of moving toward it? 2.3. Are you ready?
3. If your answers are yes, then you are a student.
4. To live a better life, you will commit to change your actions.
5. First, you will learn what changes are needed. Admissions
6. This is a boot camp whose purpose is 6.1. to train adults to think harder, clearer and more effectively. 6.2. to produce intelligent solutions for personal and social puzzles. 6.3. to have a higher cognitive discipline. 6.4. to instill shared CAKE about reason, thinking and discourse. 6.5. to empower.
7. It is a training program designed to break down bad habits of thought, and build good ones while immersed here, a culture of rational thinking isolated from the outside world.
8. Here you will relentlessly confront your ideas about the world, with instructors drilling intellectual skills (writing essays, arguing for ideas, and developing proposals for action).
9. You will be trained to move toward your GOALS with focus, even in the face of perceptual, physical, or emotional distractions.
10. Over TIME, students could expect to cultivate a sharper focus on cognitive objectives, resilience to distractions and challenges.
11. If you graduate, it will be with the ability to identify, develop, and communicate ideal critical, rational arguments, positions or PLANS (orally or written) given the available knowledge, finite TIME, and resources at hand (reference material, teamwork).
12. you will also learn a code of behavior for being a community leader,
13. collaborating or competing with an irrational world.
14. The central requirement for applicants will be a commitment to better understand the SELF and world.

Student

15. Students are PPL with IDEAS from EXPERIENCE toward selfish GOALS.
16. Lessons depend on students' prior knowledge.
17. A STUDENT 17.1. has a GOAL that can be better named and planned. 17.2. requires TIME away from BETTING. 17.3. admits not knowing but capable.
18. Students learn to represent their knowledge in WORDS; to prefer better, alternative WORDS. A student sees the impersonal as more reliable both for selfish GOALS and social ones.
19. A bad student studies to avoid action, or for its own sake.
20. A Student WRITES IDEAs and GOALS to their INSTRUCTOR.
21. Your GOAL is clear. You want 21.1. The strength needed to 21.1.1. take the right steps and 21.1.2. make a habit of it, 21.2. keen eyes to 21.2.1. estimate the destination and 21.2.2. correct course, and 21.3. a focused mind to steady the foot. Agreement
22. This is an in-person immersive experience.
23. You only really learn what you need to know to be who you really want. You won't learn unless you cannot escape needing it; in a dedicated environment that fosters acquisition, minimizes interference.
24. Whether you're here for the 7- or 30-day experience, you will WORK hard every minute.
25. For every minute of lesson on my TIME, students are to provide two minutes of writing, either toward others' learning or in direct application toward their GOAL.
26. Dedicate to identity growth. Be: 26.1. Quiet, except when tasks require verbal response. 26.2. Receptive to WORK and feedback provided by the instructor. 26.3. Committed to producing genuinely inspired ideas, working quickly, and seeking improvement. 26.4. Respectful that all are equal in voice, and aim to describe solutions with collective CAKE. 26.5. Receptive and responsive to prompts and observations (from peers and/or instructors) especially CHUD, vague language, and cognitive bias. 26.6. Motivated to describe solutions that benefit others, when possible, including peer-review.
27. Now, what is it you'll learn? 27.1. Precisely and only what is needed to trust a clear picture of what your life is. 27.2. First, how to make a PLAN, a map of who you are, and who you want to be; 27.3. Repeat Part one of this book, until your PLAN is good enough to be wrong, and truthful enough to hurt.
28. This will be the beginning of change, and the first test of your commitment.
29. Your performance is evaluated simply: whether or not you
30. end up eating, sleeping, thinking, talking, and acting differently.

Roles

31. Think, student.
32. Do not take notes, simply pay attention.
33. Everything I say is meant plainly.
34. If you get confused, forget it, and pay attention to right now.
35. Our GOAL here is thinking. Thinking happens in your heads.
36. Right now your job is to think about the truth you see in what i say.
37. A student has two roles to think in: Reader and Writer.
38. Read, student.
39. A reader is a listener and observer.
40. Reading is the same as listening to an instructor,
41. except that the speaking pace doesn't determine how fast you have to think, or remind you to
42. pay attention! 42.1. Your attention cannot be trusted on its own, 42.2. so lose distractions 42.3. like your smart phone. 42.4. You will befriend the simplest scientific instrument, a clock. 42.5. The clock is a cue to think. 42.6. When it goes off, get back on task. 42.7. The clock will babysit your unreliable attention.
43. Your GOAL in reading is to isolate the truth from the lie. 43.1. Try reading this sentence: 43.2. "Everyone is best off running weekly until they die." 43.3. You're thinking, "this can't be true for everyone, so it's a lie." 43.4. Not so fast. 43.5. There are many components to this idea, and likely many that you believe are truthful. 43.6. Often a lie becomes true just by changing the pronouns in the text. 43.7. Consider this revision: "I am best off running weekly until I die." 43.8. Perhaps now the WORDS are more truthful to you.
44. Doing this makes a clear relationship between your belief and the author's.
45. Becoming smart is the discipline of understanding how you relate to others.
46. When reading, dismiss only what you fully believe is an intentional lie.
47. More generally, read to assess your BET on the WORDS reflecting TRUTH.
48. Whether to a single WORD, a line, chapter, or book.
49. Assign WEIGHTs (0 to 9) to what you read, to complete this prompt:

50. I BET this is true for: 50.1. 0 = not even the author. 50.2. 1 = only the author. 50.3. 2 = the author, me, and a few others. 50.4. 3 = Us and 30% of everyone else. 50.5. : 50.6. 9 = Us and about 90% of everyone else.
51. For every assertion and assumption you read, begin assuming it is a “9,” working backwards according to evidence you hold.
52. The following mini lesson illustrates the risk at hand—involuntary comprehension, and the benefit at stake from deliberate reading.
53. Consider the following quote, “Change your thoughts to change your life.”
54. Comprehension is involuntary. 54.1. You cannot help but recognize meaning when you read. 54.2. This means that you likely thought the quote was largely unrealistic.
55. Reading as proposed here, is strongly voluntary.
56. For example, reread the quote, this TIME assuming it is reasonable, serious, and valuable.
57. The statement is the core assumption to this book, and any psychological theory.
58. For example, Freud’s talk therapy was, in his TIME, the radical idea that WORDS could fix PPL.
59. Therefore, do not waste the opportunity to consider a truth that could change your life by failing to entertain a simple assumption. Writer
60. How will your life look if you put it on paper? Like a bunch of WORDS.
61. How do you change it? By deleting the WORDS with lies, and replacing them with better WORDS.
62. The right WORDS will change your actions and your life. To live a better life, starts with your WORDS.
63. push-writer In order to do something about thoughts, we need to think on paper. [You’ll write a lot. You’ll delete a lot. You’ll get good at writing.]
64. BET on WORDS. A writer invests TIME and energy to map feelings onto WORDS.
65. Good writing is discovering, curating, and applying insight. Bad WRITING has an author; ad hominem
66. Revisions also make you a WRITER. When you revise WORDS (yours or others’) to maximize your BET, you are a writer.
67. Separate thought and SELF (author), by BETTING explicitly.

- 68. State your assumptions, do not justify them. -is-STYLE-bad
- 69. Replace “I am.” with tag WORDS.
- 70. Strive for COMM-CONTENT and brevity; Write only valuable BETs, or WORDS that manifest valuable BETs. Prioritize understanding over original writing.
- 71. WRITING for LIB-PPL, relatable, depersonalized, objective WORDS, minimizes ROT, maximizes PLAN utility. Instructor
- 72. I am instructor, a guardian of 72.1. True IDEAs and 72.2. WRITER of a general PLAN (this book).
- 73. An instructor READS, and enforces BETs on LINKs toward a PLAN.
- 74. My GOALS are to 74.1. Minimize student effort and TIME to write. 74.2. READ for cognitive biases, illogical appeals, and imprecise language, and WRITE feedback that is dispassionate and neutral, yet invested and True. 74.3. Reward arguments based on (Truth:) REALITY, SELF, and CAKE. 74.4. Reward IDEAS shared (vs kept).

WORDS

Cognition

1. Like any book, this book uses WORDS to describe the world and its conditions.
2. This chapter is about the act of describing, itself.
3. This chapter can be reduced to the following problem and solution.
4. WORDS said (out loud or written) and understood (heard or read) are not usually what PPL mean.
5. They do not reflect what PPL want or need.
6. By engaging the gap between WORDS and reality, you increase SELF-awareness (BET).
7. Better WORDS mean more practical understanding and expectations, more complete desires, and
8. the capacity to make a concrete PLAN for achieving your GOALS.
9. This will naturally include healthier communication and more rewarding relationships.
10. A community with better WORDS has clearer idea sharing, synthesizing, developing, teaching and learning.
11. Speaking your mind is difficult.
12. A memory system dealing with language is tasked to translate thoughts into the right WORDS from thousands.
13. It is prone to inaccuracies.
14. Similarly, a listener focused on comprehending, is not likely to monitor all the incidental priming effects of WORDS on a memory system.

15. WORDS said and heard impact both parties' beliefs and behaviors.
16. These effects are each discussed in terms of how WORDS can be used for the better or worse. Kinds and Uses
17. Saying WORDS is a very small physical action, to describe real actions and consequences.
18. Hearing and understanding a WORD are also a small action, that engages with WORDS— a description about the real world.
19. The issue is that descriptions can be more and less right, more and less helpful, and we have little guidance on how to use them.
20. Every WORD itself is a BET on hypotheticals, which can be true (reality) or false (fantasy).
21. You can think through far more situations with WORDS, than you can (or should) act out.
22. Your GOALS can be described in WORDS, and WORDS can be easily crossed out and revised.
23. A PLAN is a BET on a winning arrangement of WORDS that result in the GOAL.
24. WORDS efficiently simulate possible worlds.
25. Good WORDS maximize productivity of thought, move you beyond pitfalls of CHUD, direct attention to PRIS, and predict reality; improve decisions and make you smarter.
26. By thinking about all WORDS you experience (LIB), you can take control to limit your WORD use toward more productive ones, improving READ and WRITE decisions, increasing focus and TIME for GOALS.
27. Bad WORDS keep CHUD expensive, and waste TIME.
28. The COST of an individual WORD is tiny, but we say tens of thousands per day (Levelt).
29. Reading, thinking, saying, and writing a WORD perpetuates that WORD's IDEA over others, either moving you toward a GOAL, or your HABIT.

Speak/Write

30. Speak, write, initiate or respond only in limited duration and WORDS dictated by intended outcome.

- 31. Use WORDS empirically, with a comparison group (vs) and quantity in mind.
- 32. Ideas are more important than authorship.
- 33. Do not use a WORD that is more of a Lie.
- 34. Say the truth or be quiet.
- 35. Use WORDS for decisions, not emotions.
- 36. Use WORDS to facilitate PRIS. Do not write PLANS you won't follow.
- 37. Stop talking when action (or listening) is needed.

Listen

- 38. Listen / read when you need to learn / connect.
- 39. Limit duration/WORDS needed to assess consent.
- 40. Distrust ego, and take nothing personally
- 41. Investigate the empirical CAKE of WORDS.
- 42. Revise to believe, and revise PLANS into ones you'd follow.
- 43. Remove / ignore style.
- 44. Assert boundaries against exaggerated WORDS or unreliable ones.

Meanings of Words

- 45. An EXAMPLE is an individual, particular event or object, of reality. An example with consequence is a USE-CASE. An example in-principle is a HYPE (hypothetical/hype).
- 46. WORDS are one of two types: 46.1. LINKS: WORDS that give relationship between EXAMPLES, IDEAS, describe ACTIONS, ROLES, and transformations 46.2. IDEAS: WORDS that refer to EXAMPLES. 46.3. An IDEA is a set of criteria that LINK EXAMPLES as similar (vs not). 46.4. The most basic IDEA classifies EXAMPLES as A or not-A. "blue" is an IDEA that certain colored things are BLUE (A), and all other colors are not BLUE. 46.5. Good IDEAS group EXAMPLES in a way that directs attention toward PLANS and GOALS. Bad IDEAS distract. 46.6. The right LINK between ideas is the foundation of every thought, recipe or terrible calculation.

Scientist

- 47. A scientist works to win BETS against the UNKNOWN. They are a professional writer, evaluated on two metrics: 47.1. For their MEMES of CONTENT. 47.2. The net benefit of their MEMES on GOAL outcomes.

48. A scientist-researcher is a WRITER, a data-collector and hypothesis tester.
49. A scientist-scholar is a READER, curating toward theory development and COMM.

Revisions

Skilled Reflection

1. [50,51,56,57] The GOAL of WORDS is to express ideas of maximum CAKE tomorrow.
2. Since few WORDS meet these criteria, start by revising toward fewer WORDS.
3. Make IDEAS clear and concrete.
4. Provide just enough CONTEXT to remember the basis of the key ideas.
5. Precision depends on purpose. 5.1. LIST. Name relevant ideas for GOAL. 5.2. WRITE a PLAN, (ordered LINKS). 5.3. DOUBT. Assert the strongest rebuttal to the PLAN. 5.4. BET. Improve IDEAS and LINKS by addressing weakness and clarity. 5.5. READ. Wager its CAKE (e.g., Relative to another PLAN).
6. When reflecting, reflect only on “how can I help my future SELF?” And impose TIME and WORD limits.
7. A bad doc is stream-of-consciousness.
8. Prompts elicit conflicts (truth) between SELF and NORM, to improve PLANS for your GOALS.
9. TIME and WORD limits WORK together to encourage a balance between reflecting on truth and describing it.
10. WORD limits combat needless WORDS and distracting tangents. A WORD limit keeps your attention.
11. A WORD limit is a proxy for its complexity.
12. Try to write the exact number of WORDS.
13. Good WORD limits require cutting out unhelpful WORDS, change figurative WORDS to concrete, ideally assertive and falsifiable.

14. For every PLAN you make: Assert a WORD limit before writing, to be reminded of your initial intentions, and be challenged to express ideas clearly. Become skilled at using only the fewest WORDS necessary, to reveal and clarify CAKE.
15. If you exceed the limit and there is no end in sight, stop and reassess.
16. The TIME limit dictates how precise your WORDS should be.
17. Use extra TIME to improve WORD choice.
18. For example, given a 50-WORD limit, 1 minute (1m, 50w) encourages free writing with minimal restrictions on quality of thought, while 4 minutes encourages more careful selection of WORDS.
19. LESSONS are an ordered set of prompts, usually three to four, up to 60 minutes and 250 WORDS. A prompt's WORD count is the number of WORDS to be added to your document.
20. Lessons target inconsistencies between reality and PRIS.
21. They are designed to be revisited and revised repeatedly.
22. A 0w prompt means revise, but do not increase the WORD total.
23. The first prompts in LESSONS are warm-ups to direct your attention. They ask for names of IDEAS.
24. The remaining prompts are for thinking, requiring you to make LINKS between your warm-up IDEAS. Done right, you will face some new truths.

REVISE

25. Revise WORDS to improve actions of yourself or others is REVISION.
26. REVISION is how we know reflection is happening, described here in VERSIONS (v#) of a response.
27. For example, consider the following revisions (v1-3) describing this brief argument:

1: "Nobody follows doctors' orders." 2: "My parents do, religiously." 1: "They're the exception." 2: "You're not exposed to minorities."

v1:

- a) 1 makes a false generalization.
- b) 2 illustrates a counterpoint, and 1 gets mad.

c) 1 dismisses it, and 2 gets mad.

v2:

d) 1 generalizes from WORK experience.

e) 2 argues with parents' experience, and 1 gets mad.

f) 1 dismisses and 2 get mad.

v3:

g) 1 argues outside 2's experience.

h) 2 uses personal experience, thinking it's impenetrable.

i) Failing and hurt, 2 insults.

28. The example aims to illustrate revisions which increase the amount of responsibility, control, and preventable future behavior on part of the writer, without much change in WORD count.
29. Good revisions better describe what we know to have happened, and predict what will happen (again).
30. Reality is what determines whether each version is better.
31. Revise prior prompt responses only to help your current prompt response.
32. If your GOAL deals with different assumptions about the truth, change the prompt to whatever gets you to write the most helpful WORDS for your GOAL. 32.1. For example, a prompt referring to University student experiences should be adapted for your non-University experiences. 32.2. A common (problematic) assumption is that you are emotionally ready to be SELF-critical. 32.3. Do not change the prompt so you can be lazy.
33. NOTES are general PLANS for REVISION. (Available on request.)
34. Peer revision is a powerful learning tool. Get answers from others. 34.1. Forget who provides REVISION and how much. 34.2. The peer WRITER has uncompromised objectivity, and liberty to employ Truth, however "harsh."

DOC

35. A Recipe is one of the best ways to arrange PLANS.
36. Lessons and instructions use a RECIPE format.
37. The RECIPE format highlights the IDEAS and LINKS of your point and minimizes excessive STYLE. 37.1. List key IDEAS. 37.2. Describe actions and transformations (LINKS).
38. Given an IDEA, estimate relevance to PRIS, problems, undeveloped PLANS, and SELF-MAINTENANCE.

- 39. Keep docs short enough that the title and CONTENT address only one thing.
- 40. Save selectively and
- 41. delete frequently.

Communication

- 42. RECOGNITION, reading familiar WORDS is easier than RETRIEVAL from memory, of WORDS to write. Is- savings on revision.
- 43. Only save docs that you BET will be useful enough later to save TIME, overall.
- 44. Once saved, we assume a DOC will be READ later, and provide CAKE. This is the primary type of COMM we engage in.
- 45. COMM is the exchange of WORDS from oneself to another. Other examples include a traffic sign, something you wrote and are rereading, a carefully crafted party invite, or a Lease Agreement.
- 46. The GOAL of COMM is to maximize that likelihood, by engaging in the inherent and practical problems that arise.
- 47. Writing a WORD creates a static record of a WORD.
- 48. The problem of COMM is the difference in meaning between READER and WRITER of the same WORD.
- 49. Even if you wrote the WORD, your later SELF may read a different meaning for that WORD.
- 50. No person is identical with a future or past SELF, with any other person, and all of these relationships are in part UNKNOWN.
- 51. GOOD COMM attempts to systematically reconcile these issues.
- 52. BAD COMM takes advantage of them at the COST of clarity and honesty.
- 53. PPL vary in how they apprehend the world, and therefore they can vary in
 - 53.1. precise understanding of meanings.
 - 53.2. TRUST (usually WRITER more than READER).
- 54. The real world is particular; each experience is an EXAMPLE.
- 55. A WORD describes a set of similar experiences.
 - 55.1. WORDS are never definite and certain in what they describe of the real world.
 - 55.2. A WORD's definition is a generalization.
- 56. As such, WORDS are
 - 56.1. less precise than reality.
 - 56.2. better designed to hypothesize and predict.

- 57. To improve COMM, study the difference between CONTENT and STYLE.

Styles

- 58. PRIS between PPL (WRITER and READER) differ.
- 59. Difference in PRIS alter CONTENT of ideas.
- 60. Good STYLE is change in WORDS to minimize change in ideas between READER and WRITER.
- 61. Versions describe identical CONTENT with difference in STYLE between them.
- 62. A PLAN for a DOC is an earlier VERSION of the (same) final DOC.
- 63. For example, you today vs you in five years.
- 64. COMM-PPL assumes READING and WRITING have no intrinsic GOALS.
- 65. A DOC's arguments for why to READ it are a STYLE called PITCH.
- 66. Pitch can be accomplished, for example, by 66.1. stroking the ego and intelligence of the reader. 66.2. framing attacks as agreeable observations.
- 67. The maximum common SELF-PRIS across PPL are the optimal arguments for PITCH. E-FOOD vs. CAKE.
- 68. PPL who do not distinguish FOOD from CAKE will not be persuaded by PITCH.
- 69. Therefore, they will be compelled more by lies.
- 70. BRAND is PITCH that distorts truth, a form of bad STYLE.

Library

- 71. LIB is the explicit effort to maximize the use of what you WRITE, SAVE, and READ, by organizing it for best application, and providing feedback to help your future decisions to WRITE, SAVE, and READ.
- 72. The scope of LIB is the collection of your WORDS over a lifetime.
- 73. is post-WRITING cache to facilitate future production.
- 74. LIB is to docs as HOME is to possessions.
- 75. LIB aims to maximize the CAKE of WORDS you save, and ideally, reduce future efforts to PLAN and accomplish PRIS, through making the best of your thoughts easy to find.
- 76. A bad LIB is the sum of your WORDS, void of curation, none of which helped PLANS.
- 77. A good LIB is the closest approximation of SELF.
- 78. $\text{Library} = \text{sum}(\text{GOALS} + \text{PLANS}) / 1$
- 79. For learning what you don't know you don't know.
- 80. Potential risks include 80.1. writing, saving, and finding bad docs. 80.2. failure to save or find good docs.

- 81. Studying links will improve ideas.
- 82. PLANS, and anything else you write down, should be part of a PRI.
- 83. Facilitate RETRIEVAL: 83.1. Index (list) docs worth rereading. 83.2. Assign a number that indicates its relative importance (abs or relative weight). 83.3. Add tags and metadata for easier sorting. 83.4. Make and revise only for high-PRI GOAL(s). Record and study LIB RETRIEVAL patterns.
- 84. Note the TIME and date now, as you did in the introduction. Graduate
- 85. This is the end of the book.
- 86. Put it in your library.
- 87. Now return to your garden and WORK on your PRIS.

Reference system

- 88. Well, what LIB would be complete without
- 89. a reference index?
- 90. The equivalent of the Dewey system
- 91. mine is a reference of space-and-time: 91.1. Space: this book's chapter and line numbering, and 91.2. Time: v2.14 the current book version.
- 92. For example, a document that elaborates about trump would begin titled "c4.23 v2.14," giving the relevant chapter_number.idea_number in the version 2.14.
- 93. In that version of SR, 4 is the chapter PPL, and number 23 is the definition of RLTP. Trump, the article topic, is an example.
- 94. this is the header format for any subsequent document of an idea I write.

The Answerword

- 95. The complete set of PPL's LIBs is sufficiently exhaustive to describe all that matters in each and all lives.
- 96. The efficiently compressed content of this LIB produces a distribution of variation along a median LIB.
- 97. This is the content of the next book, "Answerword."
- 98. That book, then optimized to maximize the most learning, determines its STYLE.

Index of Definitions

- 99. below are the chapter and line numbers for IDEA definitions, alphabetical.
- 100. Okay you got me, that's a promise and this is a placeholder for a future version that fulfills the promise. Start the clock: 2022-03-09-2129

Epilogue

Reader Opt-in

1. Now you have read this book.
2. What were your numbers? (6.50)
3. Annotate 100 lines you would bet 1 dollar on each, and you are an IBC student. 3.1. Your bets would go to a general pool. 3.2. When bets on a line reach a critical mass, the pool of subpar bets is split among winners. 3.3. Cash is divided. 3.4. Also, points are recorded, to incentivize a deeper purpose: 3.5. A game, where the prize is 3.6. the collective revision and authorship of this book. 3.7. After x wins, your name appears on the title. 3.8. High scores are on the acknowledgements page. 3.9. This is the process and meaning of READER and WRITER; bound directly to material and action, IRL.

Your Calling, Part II

4. Tell me the missing chapter that gives peace instead of regimen, so that I may find mine.

Prequel to Answerword

comm-by-instructor0 to-instructors
i-"By the instructor of instructors, to instructors."

5. Listen up, you vibrating sacks of meat.
6. A teacher and student conspire in a radical co-dependency, mutually betting on the student's ability.
7. It is my job to sniff out why on Earth you are interested in this.
8. You are crazy for wanting to be a teacher.
9. Until you are, you have only one thing to teach:

10. You must teach me to believe you.
11. You will do everything to put the truth in front of me.
12. If I find out you withhold the truth, I will punish you with it.
13. You are a teacher when your student has paid for both your TIME.

Beginnings

14. If you need more examples to make more sense of this book, read the second, "Answerword."
15. If you need to stand beyond the limits of both, prepare with the third and last book, "Lastword."

(APPENDIX) Appendix: Lessons

Zero or One

As a human you are endowed with words. Too much so. The pervasive impulsivity of putting-to-words means you are often deprived of un-judged, raw feelings of reality. For a moment, forget those words. Let's engage with the manners of communicating using a vocabulary of 2.

Please answer each question with "0" or "1." Do not dwell on any one question. You may assume anything you like about your words, but the point of this exercise is to think about what is true without words, and how you might accept (or not) what another can or cannot know about you without words.

1. Which are you: 0 or 1?
2. If the person who knew you best guessed your answer, what would they report? 0 or 1?
3. What would you tell them you are?
4. What would the last dog you encountered say you are?

How do you feel about 5. lunch today? 6. the chair you are sitting in? 7. your fingers?

8. Where do you live?
9. When were you born?
10. What makes this question so simple that you can answer it with 0 or 1?
11. Is lying, or hoping, or reminiscing 0, or 1?
12. Have you been telling the truth to these questions?
13. Are you honest with yourself?
14. Are you here?
15. Do you know?
16. How do you know?

17. What would it look like if you didn't know?
18. What if you *don't know* if you know?
19. What are you certain of?
20. Is this annoying or interesting?
21. Are you ready to use words, yet?
22. Imagine you didn't know of language beyond 0 or 1. You didn't know a deeper connection with others was possible. The chance to respond to the following question is your 15 minutes of fame to the universe. What is your one bit of say, written on the ledger next to your existence, or on your tombstone: 0 or 1?
23. What's your average score? 0 or 1?
24. Has this been insightful?

If you wrote 1 for 24, congratulations.

Define Yourself

Routine and Ideal

- 65. You are how you act. Therefore, establish a baseline to know what it will take to get where you want to be.
- 66. One of the most common mistakes of planning is being overly optimistic in predicting outcomes.
- 67. This exercise is a remedy.
- 68. Task 1. 5m, 50w. Take five minutes to produce the WORDS that are most likely to accomplish your GOALS for the day. This may include describing the GOALS, the PLAN, and/or the DOUBTs.
- 69. Task 2. 5m, 50w. Copy those 50 WORDS and revise them according to the following instruction. 69.1. Replace “accomplish your GOALS” with “do.” 69.2. In 50 WORDS, what should you (or an all-knowing observer) BET on that you will do, today? 69.3. Regardless of what you assumed in Response one, do not write with the intention of ‘motivating’ yourself, but to simply describe your day. 69.4. If this is too hard, simply evaluate what you did yesterday.
- 70. Task 3. 5m, 0w. Compare your responses. Positive differences (more optimistic) in your first response reflect bets you are making against your habits.

SELF-750

- 71. How accurately can you describe yourself?
- 72. Relate to those who care, including your better SELF, by practicing the right WORDS.

SELF-past

73. Task 1. 20m, 250w. Look back on your life. What are your CAKE, and where did they come from?

SELF-future

74. Where are you going? Imagine your life plays out 74.1. Ideally. 74.2. Terribly. 74.3. Typically.
75. Consider 1. What could go right or wrong, 2. What it depends on and the likelihood. 3. Who you will be if it happens.
76. Create a “choose your adventure,” ordered by likelihood.
77. For example, (I will:) 80% make enough money to be content. 50% marry, and
- 50:50 ends well or in divorce, and 10% major accident leading to depression.

SELF-now

78. Task 3. 20m, 250w. Make a small table with three columns.
79. In the 1st column, leave enough room in the first column for a short text description, and a 1-2 digit number for the 2nd and 3rd column.
80. Think about a day and how much TIME you spend on various activities, averaged over 365 days in a year.
81. on-daily activities such as visiting the dentist should be factored in, accordingly.
82. List the activities in the first column.
83. List the TIME you spend (in hours), in the second column.
84. The total of your second column should be 24.
85. Task 3a. 2m, 50w. Choose a GOAL you named in SELF-Future with a probability of outcome that you would like to increase.
86. What change is needed in your daily schedule to make this increase?
87. Estimate the re-allocation of TIME required to achieve your GOAL, in the third column.
88. For example, if your GOAL is to lose weight, you may need to adjust TIME for exercise and eat, and other activities if you “need more TIME.”
89. Task 3b. 3m, 50w. List most likely reasons this PLAN fails, especially reverting to old habits.
90. Task 3c. 10m, 150w. Add steps to create and protect changes in your schedule.
91. Task 3d. 1m, [decide-date]
92. BET on this (Task 3b vs 3c). Set a date on the calendar to assess your commitment to this PLAN.

Student in School

Part 1: 10 year plan

This is a lesson in curriculum writing. Imagine a perfect course exists, designed to teach you to fulfill your specific ambitions.

What are your top 4 goals for the next 10 years? you could work on any part of yourself, move toward any goal you want.

Task 1. 3m, 40w.

list four goals, Each no longer than 10 words

Task 2. 3m, 40w.

Your current program requires things your 10 year plan does not. Courses impose a number of conditions on your life:

1. Fixed time: courses
2. Variable time: assignments
3. Uncertain time: studying

List four objectives, goals, course or program requirements that are most on your mind right now. Whether most frustrating, or most critical to you, even ‘impress my professor.’

Task 3. 5m, 50w.

Spell out the intersection between the two lists. Think of how each goal in the second list directly influences (or not) your 10 year objectives.

Explore the main ways these two lists relate.

For example, 1. If I don't get a B, I won't keep my scholarship, and will have to get a job which will likely lower all my grades.

Task 4. 15m, 100w.

What is the least you can do toward the course requirements and still achieve your long term goals? Consider cutting the work from list two, that doesn't overlap with one.

Examples:

1. Graphic design is fun but not necessary. I could drop it and still graduate.
2. If I get a D, I'll still pass, graduate, and be able to start my own business.

Add 100 more words to your description.

Task 5. 15m, 50w.

Negotiate ways to make direct progress on your first list while fulfilling the second list.

For example, my personality class requires a term paper. To align with my business goal, maybe the professor will let me write on "personality traits of Entrepreneurs."

Add up to 50 words, and revise.

Part 2: Two week plan

51. Often you will define experiences by your priorities and immediate desires.
52. Experiences out of line with your desires are dreaded, and those in line with them are eagerly anticipated.
53. For example, a college student dreads midterms and anticipates spring break. Each are about one weeklong, yet the feeling of TIME passing and the motivation to engage with challenges are very different.
54. Anticipations can create disappointment, so reduce speculation, especially its harmful effects on you.
55. Do more of what you like when you most need it, try to appreciate what you dread, as it is, including the suffering.
56. Task 1. 4m, 50w. List 4 GOALS to accomplish for midterms, before spring break
57. Task 2. 4m, 50w. List 4 GOALS for the best spring break you can imagine.

58. Task 3. 15m, 200w. There are only so many hours in a day. What aspects of SELF-care can you incorporate during your midterms to improve your sanity, and hopefully your midterm performance?
59. We know what happens if you don't. You're staring at your phone; you're reading random articles on the internet and wasting TIME.
60. Let's take that same honest realism and intentionally PLAN better alternatives: instead of garbage breaks, how about spring breaks?
61. In what strategic ways can you get a head start on your spring break GOALS, as a form of SELF-care and therapy during your marathon of midterm WORK?
62. Write out your midterm GOALS with SELF-care and/or spring break strategically built in.
63. Task 4. 15m, 200w. Now imagine that spring break more fully. You're spending TIME on one of your GOALS, when suddenly you remember something, you need to do for midterms.
64. Maybe you get an email from your instructor or boss, or there's a project that looms large.
65. What are you going to do to be okay with this intrusion? Would it help to allow some TIME to WORK on it, or is it vital that you embrace your needs and resist any urge to do WORK? 65.1. Regardless of how you might ideally respond, PLAN for SELF-compassion for when you might unexpectedly struggle emotionally. 65.2. Write out your spring break GOALS with midterm GOALS incorporated.

DOUBT

57. Imagine receiving the perfect email that meets your needs; addresses your fears, frustrations, paralysis. One that gives you the guidance only you could dream of.

Task 1. 4m, 40w.

58. List things the email should include feelings, tangible things, states, WORDS of wisdom, anything you need to hear.

Task 2. 4m, author name, revise.

59. Consider who could write this: a boss, a best friend, a stranger. Add an author and revise as needed.

Task 3. 15m, 200w.

60. Now write that email. Don't worry about how or why "they would say this." Focus on making sure the letter covers the things you NEED to hear.
61. Task 4. 2m, "your name." Plot twist. Russia sends long range missiles that take out U.S. infrastructure including the internet. The government issues a full lockdown, and you're home alone without Netflix.
62. Two days in, an email appears on your computer.
63. It's the letter! How is this possible? Slowly you realize, you must have written this letter. You did!
64. Add these WORDS at the bottom of your letter:
65. "Respectfully, (your name)"
66. Read what you need to hear, in the true leader's voice: yours.

Task 5. 15m, 0w.

67. Your original author may have had the authority, resources, or information you don't. For example, "Here's 20 thousand dollars to build your classroom."
68. Revise to make the letter practical.
69. Tip 1: For resources you don't have— money, TIME, influence— accept that indeed, you do not have power over these things, give up attempts to control, and welcome your feelings.
70. Tip 2: For guiding your behavior—decisions, actions, confidence— give permission to take action.

“Self-testing”

All of this book is a lesson in simulation, because this is a book with words in it, and words are simulations of reality. This lesson is an exercise to fearlessly take action. Since you’ll be writing, it works better if the “action” to take is, itself, a writing task. It could be an upcoming exam, or writing your will. The exercise works whether you are 75% done or 5% prepared to start.

Task 1. 3m, 40w.

Think about the challenging task you’ve identified. Finish a sentence like this: “The purpose of this task is to. . .” Perhaps “demonstrate my knowledge of the endocrine system,” or “communicate my values and divvy up my valuables.”

So that I don’t continue to prime your death, the remainder of this lesson will focus on the youthful experience of learning.

Task 2. 2m, 0w.

Picture someone who doesn’t struggle to do this task. They would score 100% or write the perfect paper/assignment. Assume they weren’t born able to do this. How did they get that skill? Edit the same 4 things to try to make them more concrete and tractable.

Task 3. 8m, 100w.

Assume that ideal performer writes a custom quiz on the very areas you’re struggling with. Write quiz questions that tests your learning objectives. For example, I’m working on a paper that deals with how talking happens in the brain. A question in my quiz is, “define the two contrasting theoretical positions in 15 words, each.”

Task 4. 2m, 0w.

Revise your quiz so that it would take about 30 minutes for your expert to complete, with questions that can be answered in 5 to 25 words. Add word and time limits for each question.

Task 5. 20-25m.

Take your quiz.

