



End of Year Activities

Life teaches good lesson, Listen closely. Take notes. Study those that live good example. Seek peace and pursue it. Do justice. Love mercy. Walk humbly. There are a myriad of approaches to extract the most out of life. Here is one that emphasizes a personal mission that gives and receives. It has worked for me for a few decades.

What Matters Most

The first area to attend during end of year assessments, meditations, and plans is the roles that define you. What has life, circumstance, trial and error, and triumphs taught you about yourself. Who are you good at being? You will serve somebody. Who is that?

It does not matter what the world does to prioritize my roles. It matters most how they are balanced in me. Living them consistently is living in integrity. Each is lived through me to my God, myself, and others.

Take time to align your definition of self and roles first to the Creator, second from the Creator to humanity, third from the Creator realizing the gifts to which you have been born and have developed, and fourth work really hard to reduce what you feel is your message, your call, the distinction you bring into the universe.

To the Creator we might be worshippers, prayers, active, inactive, lost, connected, passive, assertive. Where are you in relation to Him?

From the Creator to humankind, we might define our service as our occupation, title, volunteerism, family role, friendship role, community activities. Examples might be spouse, parent, child, friend, executive, plumber, social worker, board member, sports enthusiast, etc.

From the Creator realizing gifts, we've learned a little. What is it that you love to do well? Organizer, sales, administrator, coach, teacher, analyst, programmer, writer, speaker, helper, encourager, benevolent, leader. Any of these and more tend to form a group of gifts that form you.

What is your call? Take time to consider. What comes through in most interactions in life? For me, I reduced my call to one word. Prayer. That took a few months of early morning meditation and musing to realize I begin and close every interaction with every person either silently or vocally in prayer. It just is who I am. And encourager. I try to exit every interaction with encouragement. A friend that I have not seen for 15 years came up to me yesterday. He was a child then and is in his late twenties now. As he reached out his hand, he told me that when he was little it impressed him that I did not just shake hands but held the person for a minute, looked them in the eye and communicated support. He has integrated that into his lifestyle since then. He's right. He noticed something about my heart call and motivation to pray and encourage. What is something like that about you?

Visions and Dreams get into our deep mind and heart. Identify visions and dreams that have built in you over time. They might be concerning family, occupation, community, friendships, or business. What impacts have you wanted to make.



Message: Values That Have Me

Our next area of identification is values clarification. This is critical. What are the underlying values that are important? This is not the place to judge your effectiveness in reaching wonderfully integration of those values, but defining them clearly as targets. You may be flailing. You may be a great example. But define them so they are in front of our conscience. Let them form your conscience and subconscious.

These don't have to be long. A word. A phrase. Even a paragraph if it fits.

Honesty

Integrity

Compassion for the less fortunate

Joy

Dignity

Preparedness

Punctuality

Fun

What is your list? You might want to take a little time to expand on the most important ones or even put them in priority order. However, watch out! Values that are well considered won't stand for being prioritized. True values work together or not at all.

One of my values that is formed in a sentence is

Peace is to be sought after in every relationship with passion.

Values guide us in difficult moments. If I seek peace and pursue it, it is hard to hold unforgiveness, bitterness, and grudges. When I am misunderstood, misused, misinterpreted, betrayed, cheated or pushed to the side, I am looking for peace not conquest. What are your thoughts about your values?

Mission

Here is where we get to the strategic portion of our meditation and planning. What is our mission? What are the activities to which we attend on a regular basis to see our Matters and Message expressed? This is not your action plan for the next 18 months, but the big rocks from which you derive your planned Markers / Goals.

Over a lifetime of working on this annually, you will expand your understanding and clarity. Don't try to be too expressive up front. Get a list. Over the years, expand on it. Here are some of mine. Make your mission your mission.



Family is an important nucleus. Make it work.

Extended family is important. Spend time with them.

Extend loyalty, respect, dignity, love, joy, peace, fair treatment, compassion, forgiveness to those I meet.

Develop safe and healthy relationships with intention. Block against the unhealthy and abusive and manipulation and don't let them get too close.

Protect that I love financially, relationally, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.

Live a productive life that I gain more than I spend so I have enough to share and some to save.

Network the community. Make multicultural friendships and encourage others to do the same.

Markers: Goals Realized

Once you've considered **Matters, Message, and Mission** move on to **Markers**. This is two sections of your work. First review and rejoice with the Markers in life you have already realized. The family you have. The business you built. The groups in which you participated. Big events that are happily meaningful. You can get tied down by mistakes and misses. Don't. This is about celebration of what is good. In the next section of **Markers: Goals Ahead** you can lament misses and set fresh goals.

Building a life map here can be a great help. What is that? It is a list of events you remember good and bad that are important. Arrange them on a chronological timeline. Give each one a number + or - 0 to 10 as to impact. It's okay to identify hard points, just don't dwell on them. If you ever want to do this exercise in a guided or coached session, give me a call. Sometimes we dig up some real pain and need an encourager to walk us through. I've led hundreds of people through this exercise.

Started school +5 I've enjoyed studying ever since.

Graduated 8th Grade -5 Meant leaving lifelong friends going into the next adventure

Moved from one state to another -10 - really impacted my attitude for several years. A source of deep anger that had to be rooted out later.

First real job +8 Helped define my career path

Graduated high school -2 - not really much of an event.

University Graduation +10 did it.. wow! Worked full time and went to school full time with major hearing disability. This is gdreat.

Married +10 - still going 45 years, 4 children, and 7 grandchildren

Turnaround at Hospital assignment - +10 - convinced me of my ability to manage and engineer change



Turnaround at clothing retailer - +10 – boosted my skillset in turnarounds and high performance team building

Thyroid Problems - -5 Yuck

Get it? You might have some fun trips, car wrecks, abusive incidents that need sorting. Deep negatives many times help us reach high positives through overcoming. When you're done with the life map, pull out the goals achieved and pat yourself on the back. Put some minor goals in there also. Don't get too hung up on what seems big now. The small items might mean more to you in five or ten years.

Markers : Goals Ahead

Okay, that your base foundation. Matters, Mission, Message, Markers: Goals Achieved give you the considerations into setting your next goals ahead. I like to keep this at 18 months. Life is too short to look out too far and too long to worry about. You might be an extreme planner and have 3, 5, and 10 year goals. In some places, I have 20 year goals, but I focus on the next 18 months.

Organized your goals into a One Page Miracle. Dr Daniel Amen has an extended version of this, but I like simple.

Physical

Spiritual

Mental / Emotional

Relational

Physical goals include financial goals, career goals, business goals, fitness, eating, etc.

Spiritual goals include community impact, activities around congregation and Creator, personal mindset. Being involved in work with meaning. Enjoying the beauty and fun of nature.

Mental / Emotional goals include maybe overcoming an addiction or depression or fear or becoming mentally and emotionally stronger to help others or just having a wonderful balanced life.

We've developed an entire set of workshops around this area to help folks define a balanced and healthy life mission of a better life forward where we cover areas of core value and lifelong learning and strengthening.

Relational goals help us remember our reason. Vacations, family events, involvements in community can go here and keep us balanced. Too often we get caught in the pursuit of the physical goals and miss the reason we have them is to enjoy life and enjoy others.

Once you have a list of those Markers: Goals Ahead, you are almost done. For each goal it is good to define Milestones: Deliverables and time activate the plan. How will you measure progress. Success is the progressive realization of a worthy goal. Victory is achieving the goal. Success along the way keeps us moving. Here is an example.



Marker Goal: Expand SOLUM outreach to 30 more rural counties

Milestone Deliverable:

Raise \$250,000 to fund all aspects by June 2024

Hire and train an assistant administrator by March 2024

Hire and train a training coordinator by March 2024

Build a list and contact 100 new counties and offer services by July 2024

Marker Goal: Family Fun all Year

Milestone Deliveables:

Spouse Birthday Dec 8

Child one Birthday March 30

Child two Birthday July 31st

Grandchild Adoption Day – Feb 8th

My birthday – Feb 8th

Memorial Day family time

July 4th Reunion

Labor Day family time

Thanksgiving

Christmas

Get it? Now you work on it. Give me a call if you want to visit in any area or find you want to do a workshop or get some life coaching.