

Academic Life Coaching Student Workbook

Updated 3rd Edition



John Andrew Williams

Academic Life Coaching Workbook. Updated Third Edition.

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To contact John Andrew Williams about Academic Life Coach training or to book him for a speaking engagement visit www.johnandrewwilliams.com

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Dedicated to David Josephson

Acknowledgments

I would like to take the opportunity to thank a few people who have helped create the Academic Life Coaching Program. The first is my wife, Amois, who introduced me to life coaching and encouraged me to get trained. The second is Frank Phillips, the principal at St. Mary's School when I was its Latin teacher. Frank gave me the green light to try out these concepts on my Latin students as well as guided my early thinking about life coaching's role in education. I would also like to thank my Latin students for trying out these concepts and giving me feedback on what does and what does not work when using Life Coaching tools with high school students. I would also like to thank my former and current clients. It was your continued support and referrals that kept me in business for the past eight years as a full-time Academic Life Coach. I also want to thank Melissa Szobota at Columbia University and Chris Handcock at Eagle Hill School for your partnership.

And finally I would like to thank David Josephson, to whom this book is dedicated. David, thank you for the many hours of mentorship and friendship you gave me while I was an undergrad at Brown. You have made a huge difference in my life and modeled for me the impact an educator can have in the life of a young person. This workbook tries to mimic and expand what you did for me so many years ago.

Thank you.

JW

January 11, 2016

Portland, Oregon

The Power of Coaching

You hold in your hands a simple and powerful program that has helped thousands of students succeed academically, athletically, and personally. Yet the program is an accident. It almost never came to be. I just happened to be in the right place at the right time with the right idea and I was lucky enough to know it.

I graduated from Brown University with a degree in Classics and went directly into teaching high school Latin. Soon after I heard about life coaching. At first I was skeptical, I mean, “life coaching” sounds a little cheesy, and it is hard to describe what exactly a Life Coach does. But as I learned more about life coaching, I realized the concepts were not only useful but essential to living a fulfilled and effective life.

I remember sitting in my first course wondering, “Why did it take so long for me to learn this?” and “What if I had these skills in high school?” That thought became the genesis of the Academic Life Coaching Program.

When I returned to teaching that fall, I realized I had classroom after classroom of eager students willing to try out the concepts in their own lives. Essentially I had a laboratory at my fingertips with dozens of students each year helping me create and refine a body of exercises and concepts that really work.

*Now YOU get the benefit of those hundreds of students
who helped create and refine this program.*

When you complete this program you will:

- Apply your learning style to earn better grades
- Understand your motivation style and become more proactive
- Reduce stress by creating effective systems
- Boost confidence and excitement about your future

- Write more successful college applications because you will more naturally demonstrate the skills valued by admission officers

The body of work I developed has evolved into a team of coaches trained to deliver this program to help students attain a high degree of academic success. If you are reading this book, you are probably fortunate enough to work with one of these coaches. If you want to find a coach who has been trained to deliver this program, please visit www.academiclifecoaching.com.

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The Academic Life Coaching Program

Academic Life Coaching (ALC) is about exercising leadership in your life as well as in school, at home, and in your community. It is as simple as identifying what you really want and as complex as navigating challenging relationships. It applies concepts of positive psychology and sports psychology to your life. In short, it is a powerful tool to help ensure that you are living the life you want to live.

The ALC program works. It works because the concepts are solid and the coaches trained to deliver the program really know their stuff. I highly recommend that if you go through this program, you use a Certified Life Coach, especially a coach from a company such as Academic Life Coaching that specifically works with high school and college students. Having the help of a trained professional makes a big difference and it is worth the investment many times over.

The ALC program delivers 24 concepts over ten sessions. Each session is designed to last 45 to 50 minutes and to be completed with a Certified Life Coach. You can do this program solo as you will gain a lot of benefit from using these concepts, but much of the dramatic success of the program happens from the magic of working with a trained coach.

The timing of the program is important. I do not recommend going through all the sessions in a weekend or rushing the program. I have found it best to spread the sessions out to once a week or once every two weeks. It is important to take time between sessions to put the concepts into action and really try them out in your life. You want the

program to have a long-term impact, and stretching out the learning over a few months is a great way to ensure you are really changing habits, not just learning interesting and useful concepts.

The 4 Cornerstones of Academic Life Coaching

The ALC program has four cornerstones that comprise the program. These cornerstones provide a foundation for students to thrive, not just academically in school but throughout their life. If something is not working as well as it could, one of these four cornerstones is missing. The ALC program helps students put all four in place.

First Cornerstone: Academic Systems

The first three sessions of the ALC program focus on providing a foundation for creating sustainable systems to improve grades and reduce stress. To begin, you will determine your learning and academic thinking style as well as your motivation and personality type. You will use valuable tools and exercises to put what you learn into practice. You will learn how to create systems that make your life easier and how to identify the little changes that can make a big difference.

Second Cornerstone: Personal Fluency

The second part of the program focuses on increasing your self-awareness and building your fluency with your thoughts, emotions, and habits. We each have an internal language and dialogue made up of empowering or limiting beliefs, assumptions, and perspectives. When you learn how to speak and interpret this internal language, you will soon discover what actions you need to take to be more fulfilled, effective, and less stressed. This segment of the program is a constant train of “Aha!” moments that build interpersonal skills and a strong foundation of personal fluency.

Third Cornerstone: Leadership and College

The third cornerstone is personal leadership that naturally leads to the ability to create an outstanding college application. Leadership is not necessarily having a “leadership position” such as being the president of a club or captain on a sports team. Leadership is more about having a vision of what’s possible, what you want to create, and the impact you want to have on your community. College admission officers are looking for positive examples of leadership. They want leaders—individuals who have the vision and the ability to create experiences for others to take part in and share—at their campus. From a leadership point-of-view, you are able to look at yourself and your action differently. You also add more meaning and fulfillment to your life. Leadership is one of the most important skills you can develop. The third cornerstone of the ALC program is designed to help you understand your particular brand of leadership.

Fourth Cornerstone: Support Team

The final cornerstone is present throughout the program, and at times, especially the first, fourth, and final session, you will take part in consciously designing your support team. Asking for help can be a challenge. For many it represents the admission that you can not figure it out on your own or that you are not enough on your own. School teaches us that asking for help when it counts, such as on a test or quiz, is cheating. Of course cheating is wrong, but outside of school, asking for help—especially when it counts the most—is a characteristic of strength. Learning when and how to ask for help effectively is an important skill that leads to creating a network and community of people who are committed to supporting you and providing help when you need it most. In time, you will also give back and help others; and really, this kind of giving and receiving is an important element to fully participating in your community.

The program is designed to be completed after ten sessions. It is a complete program, and yet, like life, we circle around to deal with issues and challenges that we have dealt with before. The purpose of this workbook is twofold. The first is that it is a structure and a guide for you to work on with your coach, learn the concepts, and integrate the ideas in

your life. Secondly, it will serve as a reminder for you to refer back to as you continue to use these tools in your life. It is both a guide and a reminder. In my own life, I cycle through the sessions, and each time I do, I add the understanding of all the concepts and sessions I have recently completed to my life.

On the one hand, the program is linear: you learn the concepts, apply them to your life, and you get great value for your effort and time. On the other hand, the program is cyclical. You have the opportunity to circle back through the sessions with an ever deepening understanding of your personal fluency as well as which tools and concepts that work really well for you. You begin to combine different tools and become creative in solving the challenges you meet in your life. It is a beautiful process; at its core the nexus of your life has changed. No longer are you a passive participant reacting to the demands placed on you by others, but rather you become a proactive creator of your life path. Once you make that subtle but fundamental shift, your life takes off to a level that goes well beyond your dream.

Introductory Interview

4 Myths of Working with a Coach

How to Get the Most out of a Coaching Program

Core Motivation

Thinking Styles

The Introductory Interview

The introductory interview is your chance to meet your coach and experience first-hand what it is like to go through the Academic Life Coaching Program. Typically, this first meeting lasts an hour, and you will work through a few of the 32 concepts of the whole program.

In this interview you will address the four common myths of working with a coach as well as how to get the most out of working with an academic life coach. The Academic Life Coaching Program is designed to focus on you, your strengths, habits, performance, and fulfillment. With this in mind, you will also explore your core motivation and academic thinking styles in this first interview.

Busting the 4 Myths of Working with a Life Coach

When I first heard about life coaching, I was skeptical. Could it really deliver value? How does it work? What exactly does a coach do? These were just a few of the questions in my mind. I also realized that I had a few assumptions about coaching that turned out to be untrue. The following are the top four myths about life coaching and the Academic Life Coaching Program.

Myth #1: Working with a coach means something is wrong with me.

Reality: Coaching is designed to give you skills and tools that benefit everyone.

The top performers from professional athletes to business executives all work with coaches. If you really want to perform at the top of your game, you need to have an outside perspective to help get you there, and coaching—whether it is sports, executive, or life coaching—is designed to help people get where they want to go. In fact, the name *coach* comes from the British use of the word meaning *bus*. Literally, a coach helps you get where you want to go.

Coaching is not counseling. It is not about sharing your deepest fears or emotions while trying to diagnose a deeper problem. Coaching is focused on helping you create more positive, sustainable action in your life.

Academic Life Coaching is focused on giving you the concepts that help will help you navigate high school and college (as well as your college application).

Myth #2: This program is going to be a lot more work, and I already have too much to do.

Reality: All of your “coaching homework” is centered on the academic work you already have or integrated directly in your life.

Most students have busy schedules and this program will require you to learn new concepts. However, the work of this program is not reading a dozen additional books and writing more papers. The ALC program will offer you new ways to study and approach the work you have in a different and sometimes challenging way, but applying these concepts will gradually free up more of your time and energy for other passions or activities.

Myth #3: A coach is going to be a spy for my parents and is just going to get me to do what my parents want me to do.

Reality: Your coach will help communication. If you want your coach to hold something confidentially, you have that client privilege.

A good coach rarely tells you directly what to do. The magic of coaching is that the client and coach design the action steps after each session together. You get to choose how you use the concepts in your life.

As outlined in the professional ethics of a Certified Life Coach, confidentiality is a central part of the coach/client relationship. If there is something you do not want your parents to know, your Certified Life Coach will not share it with them except in the rare instance that it is information about something that may harm you or others.

Academic Life Coaches are trained to help you get where you want to go and to help your parents understand the best way they can support you. You get an opportunity to let your parents know the best way to interact with you in a way that benefits you both. The result is that you and your parents get more of what you both want: a peaceful and strong relationship.

Myth #4: Others will know that I have a Coach.

Reality: Your coach will hold your coach-client relationship confidentially.

Most people do not care if others know they are working with a coach. But if you do care and do not want anyone else to know that you are working with a coach, your coach will respect your wish. A Certified Life Coach understands the confidentiality of the coach/client relationship and will not share it with others and will keep private any of the information shared in a coaching relationship. You, however, are free to share with anyone you want that you are working with a coach as well as what you are learning.

Working with a coach is one of the best investments you can make of your time, energy, and resources. By far the best way to learn about coaching is to experience it. But before we jump in, here are some guidelines that will help make the program one of the highlights of your education.

How to Get the Most out of a Life Coaching Program

While there are no set “rules” for what helps and what does not in a coaching session, there are some guidelines that make a big difference in what you will get out of the Academic Life Coaching Program. At the center of the program is your relationship with your coach, your understanding of the concepts, and your ability to follow-through with the exercises between sessions. The bottom-line is that the success of the program is up to you, and just like in life, you will get about as much back as you put in.

Guideline #1: Trust Your Imagination.

Many of the questions your coach will ask you are designed to make you think about yourself and your situation differently. It is the coach’s job to ask hard questions that make you think deeply. Take your time and trust your imagination. Many of the exercises require mini-leaps of faith in thinking about what is true for you, and your coach is trained to help you pick apart the fluff from what is real. Trust yourself and trust the process.

One way to look at school and the ALC program is thinking about the kinds of tests and quizzes you have to take. Generally speaking, there are two kinds of assessments: those where the right answer is known (like on a math test) and those where the right answer is not yet known, but you know it when it clicks (like writing a fantastic college application essay). Many of the questions and exercises in the ALC program do not have “right” answers—and no one really knows the right answer for you—but in the process you will discover an answer that works for you. To get there, you have to trust your imagination and go with it.

As you learn to trust your imagination and dream bigger, you will not only realize how powerful your imagination can be but also how achievable your goals are.

Guideline #2: Get beyond Right/Wrong and Good/Bad.

The idea of right versus wrong or good versus bad gets in the way and slows progress. Instead of thinking in those terms, I encourage you to get away from hard and fast judgments. The words *right*, *wrong*, *good*, and *bad*, carry so much emotional baggage of judgment that it makes creating positive change and habits more challenging.

Instead of thinking in those terms, I encourage you to think in terms of things being useful, somewhat useful, or useless. Some habits are really useful. Some are not. When you avoid thinking about something being good or bad and instead focus on the usefulness it helps you make a positive choice without the extra step of dealing with the judgment and emotion of doing something “wrong” or “bad.”

Guideline #3: Adopt a Growth-Mindset.

From the point-of-view of a growth mindset, success and failure are merely feedback on how you are doing. Neither changes the fact that you are still going to put in work and go after mastering your subject or craft.

From such a perspective, if you keep moving forward and putting in effort, success is going to happen. Failure is going to happen too. Both are useful for learning, and if you are not having failures along the way, you are not trying hard enough nor will you achieve as many meaningful successes in your life.

The key to failure is to learn from it and recover quickly. The quicker you get back on track and move forward, the better off you are. The key to dealing with failure is developing resilience, quick recovery, and adaptability—the ability to learn from mistakes and be flexible to try something new.

Between sessions you will inevitably do some of the exercises really well and be dismal at others. Your job is to fully apply yourself and go from uncertainty and practice to confidence and mastery. If you fail along the way, recover, and keep moving forward.



Core Motivation

Finding what really motivates you is a tremendous tool in helping overcome challenges and do the work that most needs to be done. It is also a tool to develop your self-awareness and gain a better understanding of how to take advantage of your personality strengths and manage weaknesses.

As with any personality system, especially one that considers what really motivates you there is the concern that a system cannot possibly be descriptive and give an accurate picture of the richness of your personality or uniqueness. The concern is valid, and the core motivation tool is designed merely to give you a clearer insight into factors that influence thinking patterns and motivation habits. The tool points to the natural strengths of your core motivation as well as usual blind spots that limit and hinder your success.

The tool will also offer suggestions on the natural strengths of your core motivation when communicating and when leading. It will also suggest exercises that will encourage you to develop stronger communication skills and become a more effective leader.

Guidelines:

- To find your core motivation, read the nine paragraphs below. The paragraphs describe the nine different kinds of motivation.
- Everyone has a little of each. In different parts of our lives we can rely on different motivations. A few of these will seem to fit you best, focus on determining which. Find the top one or two that most fit.
- You can explore which parts of your top types fit you, and usually one core style will stand out.

- After you determine your style, your coach will help you learn more details about your core motivation and integrate what you have learned into the Academic Life Coaching Program.

Core Motivation Types

Type One: The Perfectionist

I strive for things to be perfect and in place. If I am passionate about something, I work really hard and spend a lot of time on it. I want other things around me to be perfect, but I am mostly hard on myself. I am very critical of the things I do, and I am very disappointed in myself when I make a mistake. I often have a lot of priorities on my plate, but I just want to improve my life and the lives of others. Often, people follow my lead, and I am comfortable in that leadership capacity. Whatever I have to do, it has to be done right, and I will do what it takes to get there. Others might say I am intense or too serious at times, but I just like to be focused and I would rather relax when the work is done.

Type Two: The Helper

What really drives me is my ability to help others. I love doing things for somebody, especially if I know they will appreciate it. I feel like I know how best to help people because it is usually easy for me to determine their wants and needs. It might seem like I try too hard or am controlling at times, but it is just because I want to help in the best way. I get satisfaction out of putting others before myself, though sometimes it takes its toll when I do not focus on my own needs. I like when others recognize that I am there for them, and I usually have a difficult time saying no. I also place a huge emphasis on relationships. I give a lot of myself in hopes that others will recognize what I have given, and in turn will respect me for that. At the end of the day, I hope that the people I help will be there for me when necessary.

Type Three: The Doer

I want to be the best I can be at what I do. Goals are important to me, and I work hard at achieving them. I feel very successful when I meet my goals, and I want others to respect me for it. My mind works rather quickly, and sometimes I can get irritable if something or someone seems to be working too slowly. Though I am personally competitive, I can also do well on a team and am well liked. I want to make a good impression on people, and I care about how others view me. When I have a really passionate goal, I know just what to do to achieve it and stay motivated. I prefer to do only the things I am good at.

Type Four: The Artist

I like to express my emotions, and I want others to understand me for who I am. I consider myself genuine and unique. I am constantly seeking more in terms of my life, and I try to evaluate and consider what is missing. I do not like to be misunderstood. Sometimes people might mistake me for being dramatic or caring too much, but really I just want to express exactly how I feel. I like to get to know others on a deeper level and form real connections. I am passionate about feelings, and I want to accurately reveal myself to others.

Type Five: The Thinker

I love being the expert. Before I delve into something, I want to know as much as I can. I do not like to be wrong or corrected, which is why if I do not know something, I would rather not say it. I am happy to argue my points for what I believe is right, but if the facts do not support my idea, I will reconsider my idea. I often thrive on alone time, and I like to think about my past experiences. I am pretty independent, and I do not want to have to rely or depend on someone else. I crave information and knowledge, and I am not shy in a group setting, where I can speak up and say what I know and express what I want. Overall, I am a simple person, and my life is rather straightforward.

Type Six: The Friend

I like to be prepared for the worst. Often I envision worst-case scenarios so that I know just what to do in case they actually happen. I have a creative imagination and a somewhat odd sense of humor. I can be unsure of people in authority, especially if I do not trust them. Once I trust someone and have explored an idea, I will be very loyal. When it comes to new ideas, the first thing that usually comes to mind is what could go wrong. I would rather think it through before accepting it at face value. I am not much of a follower, especially when it comes to ideas, because I can easily pick out why I disagree with it.

Type Seven: The Optimist

I enjoy life at a fast pace. I like to create many options for myself and future plans. I keep many options open. I shy away from negative emotion, and I hate feeling bored or trapped with my life. If I am upset over something, I do not want to dwell on it. Sometimes I will get really excited over something rather quickly, but then eventually I will get bored with it and forget about it or drop it. Often, I will start things that do not quite get finished. At the same time, I am very optimistic, and I believe life is a ride that is meant to be enjoyed. When I have several options that I can choose from, I have a hard time deciding because I want them all.

Type Eight: The Defender

I like to be in control as much as possible. I am very blunt and honest because I want things to be clear. It frustrates me when I feel like someone is conniving or unfair. At times, I might seem controlling, but I just want to take charge and keep things going smoothly. I try to hide my weaknesses because I feel vulnerable when someone else knows what they are. That being said, I think we should still recognize our weaknesses and do something about them. I would rather get something done on my own than be told what to do, which is why I sometimes have a hard time following orders from

authority. I will not always respect a person of authority upfront, but when I do, I am much more willing to follow directions from them.

Type Nine: The Peacemaker

I like things to be peaceful and happy. I tend to avoid conflict and confrontation. Sometimes I cannot even recognize exactly what I want, so I just go with the flow, especially in group settings. When I do know what I want, I might still agree with someone even if it goes against that. I might get angry at myself, but I do not like getting angry at other people, or when people are angry at each other. I have a kind heart, and I know it can be taken advantage of. When I really need to, I know how to stand up for myself. I am good at seeing multiple sides to a situation, both pros and cons.

<i>Challenges to Personal Growth</i>	<i>Exercises that aid personal growth</i>
<i>Type 1: The Perfectionist</i>	
Being too hard on myself. Being too serious. Not taking time for myself for fun and pure enjoyment. Demanding perfection and not accepting every part of myself.	Improvisation and activities like improv are outstanding for 1's. They let 1's act without getting stuck in their thoughts. Taking time out of the day for fun and laughter.
<i>Type 2: The Helper</i>	
Doing so much for others that I forget to take care of my needs. Becoming too involved in relationships. Becoming demanding when I am not recognized.	Write out what you want for each area of your life and determine clearly what balance you want to achieve. Set aside time to treat yourself as you would treat another person.
<i>Type 3: The Doer</i>	
Realizing that your worth is who you are, not what you have accomplished. Sacrificing personal relationships for the sake of a goal.	Relax your focus on success and put your focus on what would fulfill you. Clarify your values and what's really important to you.
<i>Type 4: The Artist</i>	
Over identifying with emotion, especially sad emotion, without moving into action. Resisting change if it is not dramatic. Feeling unworthy. Focusing too much on yourself.	Practice changing perspectives and choosing those perspectives that empower you to get what you really want. Create a positive vision of your future life.
<i>Type 5: The Thinker</i>	
Over-analyzing and being stubborn. Avoiding people or opportunities that seem overwhelming. Being very private. Not moving into action.	Meditation. Especially short meditation during the day to check in with your emotions. Then move into action! You must act on what you decide.

<i>Type 6: The Friend</i>	
Not trusting yourself or others. Thinking about worst-case scenarios. Wanting to keep knowing more before making a decision. Doubt.	Check in with fear. Practice identifying perspectives and choosing positive ones to move forward. Positive affirmations.
<i>Type 7: The Optimist</i>	
Thinking that something they don't have will be better than what they have. Avoiding pain and not meeting responsibilities. Being distracted from bigger goals.	Clarify a mission statement and take small action steps to accomplish it. Meditation is very important to 7's. Exercise discipline.
<i>Type 8: The Defender</i>	
Being stubborn. Denying weakness and sensitivity. Fighting any attempt to be controlled and trying to control others. Acting in ways that make success harder to accomplish.	Focus on the gift that you can give to others. Listen closely to others and practice empathy. Resist being stubborn and constantly resisting others.
<i>Type 9: The Peacemaker</i>	
Ignoring problems and trying to be comfortable always. Not meeting problems when they first start and avoiding conflict at any cost. Not knowing what you really want.	Clarify a mission statement and commit to taking small action steps. Practice asserting yourself and saying no to small things. Refuse to be passive aggressive. Instead be assertive.

Challenges and Exercises for Personal Growth

My primary core motivation:

Challenges most apt to me:

How you know you are doing well:

Exercises for personal growth:

Academic Thinking Styles

Understanding the Academic Thinking Styles helps you seek out and organize information in a more effective way. Using thinking styles is a tool to help you understand your own style as well as become aware of potential blind-spots in your studying.

Here is an excerpt from an essay in *Future-Proofed* that addresses thinking styles:

The brain is a thinking machine. Just as everyone has a specific style of speaking, the brain has a specific style of thinking. From one point-of-view the brain can be thought of as an information device. It is designed to gather information about the environment to keep you safe from danger and alert to opportunities.

Your thinking style is going to be approaching the knowledge from many different points of view. The problem occurs when students think that they know a topic, but really, they just know one perspective of the topic. They just know the details, the definitions, and not necessarily how everything fits together or connects. For example, students may know how to do a math problem but they may not necessarily know why it works or what it is called.

When you know your thinking style, you will know your strength and you will also know what thinking styles you need to develop. Ideally, you will become comfortable in each of the three thinking styles. You will get in the habit of taking notes with each question answered for each concept, and include each thinking style in your writing.

As such, your brain focuses on 3 specific questions to make sense of the world.

1. What?
2. Why?
3. How?

How to Determine Your Thinking Style

Your Academic Life Coach will provide a lot of valuable experience to help you determine your thinking style. Sometimes your style is readily apparent. Sometimes it is tough to determine. The key is to recognize the kinds of questions you find yourself asking when trying to learn something. Below are the specific characteristics of each thinking style.

What Thinkers

What thinkers tend to love detail and want to know the names, definitions, facts, and more about the material itself. What thinkers may put a copious number of facts in an essay, and put hours of work into their writing, but be frustrated with not earning the highest grade because teachers want more analysis. (In other words, the teachers want to know more than just the facts and have a balance of thinking styles in an essay.) What thinkers assume that if they can know all the correct facts, and are knowledgeable about the facts of a situation, the cause (or why) or method (or how) will be apparent.

Why Thinkers

Why thinkers want to understand the reasons behind the action. Detail is somewhat important, but not as important as knowing the motivation behind someone doing something or the cause of something happening. These kinds of learners tend to drive teachers who are ‘what thinkers’ crazy, especially in a subject like math. Why thinkers assume that if they can know the causes behind something, they know all the important facts and there can be any number of methods to accomplish it.

How Thinkers

How thinkers want to understand how they can do something or how it happened. To a how thinker, most details are not that important, but the essential details are paramount. When writing how thinkers tend to summarize or retell the event *from their particular point-of-view*. As a result, their papers tend to be light on synopsis and analysis and make the reader work to fill in many of the details. How thinkers assume that the reasons are obvious, the details are usually superfluous, yet if someone knows how to do something, all the other pieces of knowledge will fall into place.

How to Use the Concept of Thinking Styles

Each Thinking Style is a channel or method of thought. Each is valid and important. Similar to a learning style, one of the goals of knowing about and using thinking styles is to become proficient at each style as well as know which styles might be your weak point. If you know, for instance, that you are a how-thinker, you may want to take more time focusing on the specific definitions or names when studying. If you are a what-thinker, you may want to spend more time looking for analysis and the reasons behind action. If you are a why-thinker, it would be worthwhile to spend just a little more time on the names and definitions as well as get used to learning specific methods for solving a problem.

The key to using learning styles is to become comfortable with each style, and to make sure that when you are studying you understand the concept from each of the three angles.

1. What are the details and definitions?
2. Why did it happen this way? Why does it work?
3. How did it happen? How can I do it?

WHAT
WHY
HOW
THINK!

Exercises for Building your Thinking Styles:

- Take notes that you would usually take in class. Then, when reviewing your notes, code them into What, Why, and How for each major concept. If you cannot find a Why or How, that is a good question to ask the teacher next time in class.
- Practice writing paragraphs that address each of the four questions. Students often find themselves favoring one thinking style, which leads to writing that is either filled with too many details and little analysis, or a summary of what happened without really letting the reader know what the main topic is and the reasons behind it. By addressing each of the four thinking styles, in turn, you ensure that you will begin to write outstanding paragraphs and papers (which will also help you on the college application).
- Pay attention to the kinds of questions each teacher asks and the kinds of information your teacher is giving in class. Is your teacher fond of names, dates, and details? If so, then she is probably a what thinker. Does he like to delve into the possible reasons why something happens? Then he is a why thinker. Does she spend a lot of time going step-by-step through the problem or section? Then she is probably a how thinker.

Academic Life Coaching Curriculum

The following pages will lead you through the exercises of the Academic Life Coaching Program. It is advisable to follow through the program in the order presented, although at times your coach will ask you to jump around in sessions, which often happens and can be helpful too

Session 1

Science of Learning

Wheel of Life

Well-Designed Actions

Design the Coach/Client Alliance

Science of Learning

Learning is your ability to gain new knowledge, skills, or experience. Your fulfillment and success rely to a large degree on how well you learn; it is a bedrock on which you will build a foundation for the rest of your life.

Learning is a natural skill. Babies and young children learn rapidly because they are not afraid to make mistakes and try out new strategies until something consistently works. Teenagers and adults who also have a high tolerance for frustration and who continue to try out new concepts can also learn quickly. Unfortunately, grades and measured job performance create a culture where mistakes are not appreciated, playfulness is not encouraged, and it is safer to stick with tried-and-true strategies. As you go through the Academic Life Coaching Program your coach will help you tap into the resourceful playfulness which is optimal for learning.

The grades you earn are not a reflection of your intelligence. Grades are a reflection of the system and habits you use to learn. Change your learning habits, and you will change your grades. The following three concepts adopted into your learning habits are proven to boost your long-term learning.

Although the structure and grading systems of most schools go counter to these concepts, you can still incorporate them into your study habits. Because the Academic Life Coaching Program is a *life coaching* program, it is important that the information about learning styles is assimilated into action as well as designed jointly by you and your coach. Your Academic Life Coach will have some specific suggestions for how to best integrate learning styles into a study method, and it is up to you to co-design the exercises to build your learning styles, as well as integrate them into your study habits with your coach. Those three concepts are:

1. Self-Quiz

Asking yourself to recall information, aka retrieval, is the key to long-term learning. Self-quizzes, or tests, are most useful at the very beginning and midway through the learning process. Unfortunately, most tests are given at the end of the process to see how much a student has learned. This is the least effective place for a test. Putting in effort at the beginning of a concept is absolutely key to getting that concept into long-term memory. To further cement that concept in long-term memory, it is important to test yourself and the information you have learned. The Academic Life Coaching Program uses the Academic Thinking Styles as a way to organize and test your knowledge of a subject. Testing yourself on the definition, reason, and steps of each concept mid-way through the learning process is ideal for long-term learning.

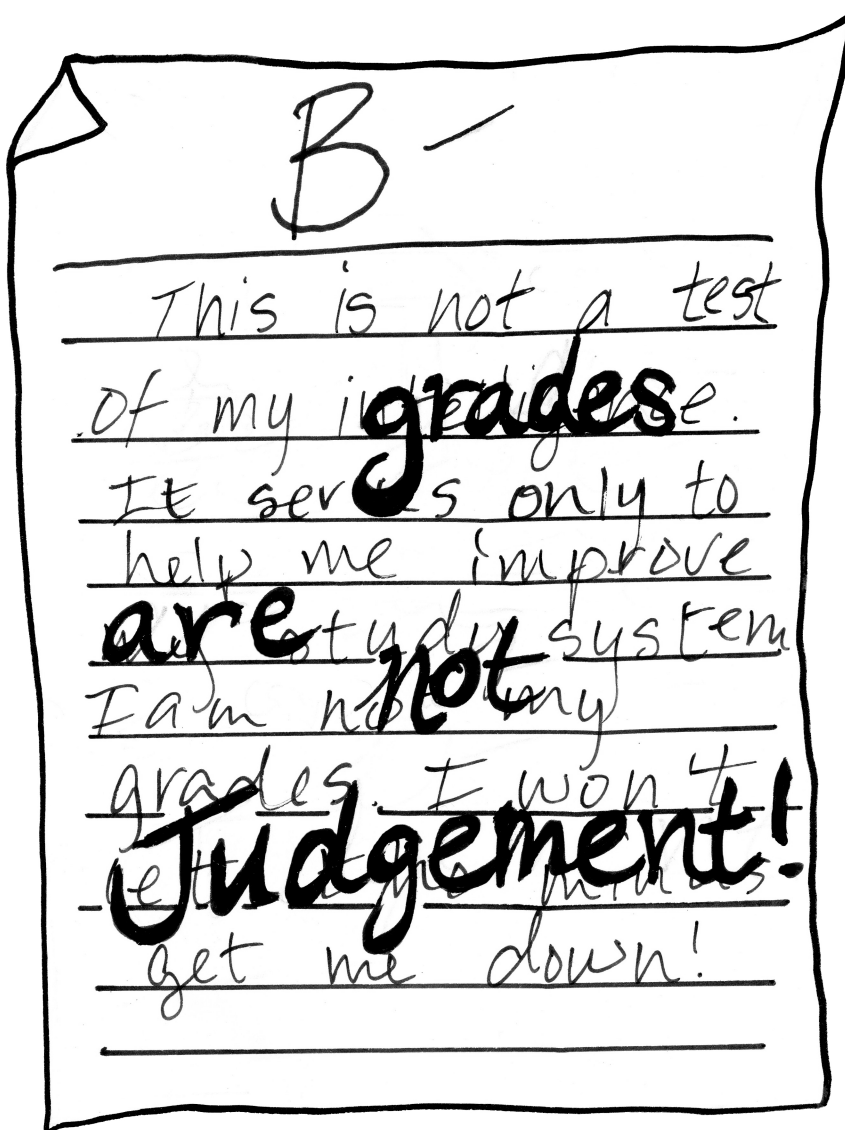
2. Engage Multiple Senses

The pervasive myth of learning styles is that if you are taught in your preferred learning style (visual, audio, or kinesthetic or VAK) then you will learn the information better. Many scientific studies have shown that matching instruction to a preferred style simply does not provide any boost to long-term memory or learning. However, engaging all your senses, especially using imagery to create a mental map of the concept along with visual or audio memory cues, has been proven to boost long-term memory. Later in this coaching session you will have the opportunity to gain more awareness of your VAK style as well as design actions to exercise all the styles.

3. Short, Frequent Study Sessions

Effort helps long-term learning. Repeating the same concept in rapid succession might seem like you are learning because you can repeat what you just read, but that kind of massed learning (aka cramming) is nearly useless in the long-run. The ideal learning conditions are practice sessions spaced out just to the point where it takes some effort to

work through the solution or remember the concept from the previous practice session. The process of retrieving fuzzy information from yesterday might feel like more work and be less encouraging, but in the long-run, that effort cements long-term learning. The Academic Life Coaching Program relies on Systems (which you will cover in the next ALC training session) to build short practice sessions into your daily and weekly study routine.



Engage Multiple Senses

The following quiz is designed to give you a quick picture of your Visual-Audio-Kinesthetic Profile. Simply circle the letter to the phrase that best completes each sentence. The purpose of the quiz is to bring awareness of the style you use in everyday life and to shed light on the other styles you could develop. You can use the chart that follows to tally your responses.

VAK Styles Quiz

1. I know something is right when:
 - a) It looks right.
 - b) It sounds right.
 - c) It feels right.

2. When I have to make something, I like to:
 - a) Jump right in and figure it out as I go.
 - b) Look at the pictures in the instructions.
 - c) Read the instructions and explanations.

3. When I am in a new city, to find my way around I like to:
 - a) Study a map.
 - b) Ask for directions.
 - c) Walk around to get a feeling for where things are.

4. When I am showing someone how to do something, I like to:
 - a) Do it first then turn it over to them.
 - b) Talk them through it.
 - c) Point out what they need to pay attention to.

5. When I choose something from a menu, I like to:
 - a) Read the choices and visualize what I want.
 - b) Have someone read the specials of the day and pick what sounds good.
 - c) Follow the feeling in my stomach.
6. When I absolutely need to concentrate, I like to:
 - a) Have something in my hands I can fiddle with as I'm thinking.
 - b) Be still and focus on what's in front of me.
 - c) Talk it through in my head.
7. When I am remembering how to spell a difficult word, I usually:
 - a) Picture it in my head.
 - b) Hear myself say the letters in order.
 - c) Have to write it down.
8. When I am worried about something, I usually:
 - a) Engage in self-talk and try to talk it out in my head.
 - b) Picture the worst that could happen but try to "fix" the picture.
 - c) Move around and not be still.
9. When I speak in front of a group, I am most comfortable when:
 - a) There's room where I can walk around and gesture freely.
 - b) I can hear my voice calm and confident in the opening and closing.
 - c) I have a powerpoint presentation or other visual aids set up.
10. When I am really happy about something about to happen, I usually:
 - a) See a picture of how great it's going to be.
 - b) Talk to myself to psych myself up.
 - c) Feel an extra burst of energy and have trouble sitting still.

In the chart below, circle your response to each sentence. Then tally up your responses.

<i>Sentence Number</i>	<i>Visual</i>	<i>Audio</i>	<i>Kinesthetic</i>
1	a	b	c
2	b	c	a
3	a	b	c
4	c	b	a
5	a	b	c
6	b	c	a
7	a	b	c
8	b	a	c
9	c	b	a
10	a	b	c
Totals			

Recommendations for exercises that to stretch and strengthen VAK styles:

Visual

- When reading go straight to creating a picture in your head.
- Draw a quick sketch of the picture when studying.
- Spell words in their mind's eye forwards and backwards.
- Practice taking a perfect “snap shot” of the information then recreating it on a blank sheet of paper.

Audio

- Make up funny ways to say important words or information. Rhyming and alliteration are great.
- Create a quick verbal summary of the information.
- Say it out loud or write it down. The act of creating speech is a great way for audio learners to study.

Kinesthetic

- Flashcards are key and the act of making them helps a lot. (Flashcards are good for each learning style, but especially kinesthetic learners).
- Take notes. By engaging in movement, kinesthetic learners are better able to understand the material.
- When reading, scan through the material quickly, then go back and focus in on the details.

Exercises you want to use to leverage strengths:

Exercises you want to use to develop other VAK styles:

Wheel of Life

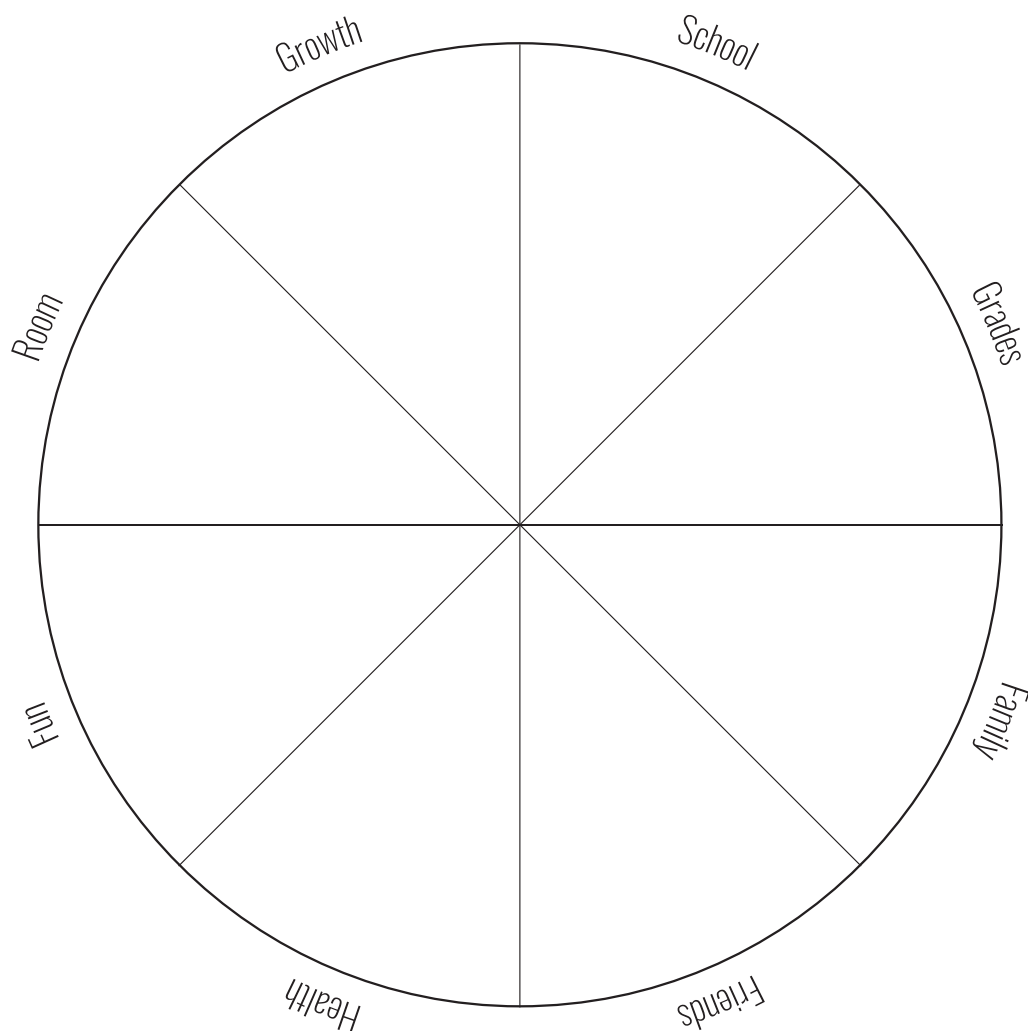
The *Wheel of Life* is an exercise that gives you a quick visual overview of your life. It is a good starting point for a great life coaching session. In the Academic Life Coaching Program, you will end up using several wheels with various concepts.

Steps to Create Your Wheel

1. Draw a circle or use the one on the following page.
2. As if the circle were apple pie, draw four lines to cut the pie into eight pieces.
3. Determine the eight areas of your life you want to focus on.
4. Write each label around the outer edge of the wheel.
 - **School:** Your overall experience of being in class and being with your friends
 - **Grades:** How happy (or not) you are with your grades
 - **Family:** Usually your immediate family, and if you need to break this wedge into two (parents and siblings) that works
 - **Friends**
 - **Health:** How healthy you feel, how much you exercise, and your diet
 - **Fun:** How much fun you are having?
 - **Room/Personal Space:** How clean or messy your room is and how happy you are with it
 - **Growth:** How you feel you are growing personally and spiritually

5. Then rate your *current level of satisfaction* for each area on a scale of one to ten, with ten being the highest.
6. Then for each wedge draw a line parallel to the circumference of the circle that represents the percentage of the pie piece that corresponds to your number. After you do this step, you should have a wheel drawn inside the circle that looks like a cog or gear.

Date:



Your coach will have some insightful questions to ask and perhaps an exercise that uses the wheel as a starting point. Here are a few questions to get you started:

Looking at your wheel, what jumps out at you?

If you were to choose just one wedge and do one action to increase that number from a 7 to an 8 (for instance), what would that action be?

Do you want to follow through with the action? If so, how will your coach know that you did so?

Save your wheels. I do this exercise with myself about once a quarter (every three months) and I date them. It is a great exercise to look back and see that *the action you take from doing this exercise really does make a difference in your life over the long-run*. So often your successes can get buried in the details of living that we forget what was the reality even three months ago. Consider this an exercise to make sure your life is balanced, a kick in the pants to get you moving, and a tool to remind you how far you have come.

Well-Designed Actions

Goals are Overrated

When people think about life coaching and improving their life, often goals is the first word that comes to mind. In the ALC program we think the sentence: “You need to make goals,” is said too often. On the one hand, having goals are great. But unfortunately, the word is overused. The concept of having ‘SMART’ goals gets closer to being useful, but the whole process of setting goals and then trying really hard to achieve them (often doing the same actions just harder) usually leads to frustration.

The Virtue of a Well-Designed Action

Instead of creating goals, it is much more effective to think in terms of creating a system of actions that leads to an outcome. The well-designed part of a *well-designed* action refers to the characteristics of the end result that help focus the mind and attention in a way that boosts natural, intrinsic motivation. It will help you learn the valuable skill of moving forward when you most need to move.

The *action* part of a well-designed action refers to thinking in terms of systems, not simply in terms of effort and reward. Actions can happen naturally, sometimes with little or no effort. (Goals always require effort.) Actions are usually part of a system. If you can learn to create systems that work effectively, you will be astonished at how much you can achieve.

A well-designed action meets these criteria:

1. Stated in the positive
2. Getting started and the success (or failure) of the outcome depends entirely on you

3. Bite sized action

4. Measurable

Examples

Goal: To get all A's

Well-designed action: To study for all my tests for one hour or more TWO days before the test date.

Goal: To not get a bad grade

Well-designed action: To write in my planner each class, and if I don't have any homework I will write "no homework"

Goal: To not get yelled at by my parents

Well-designed action: To ask my parents to do something fun this weekend

The biggest virtue of the well-designed action is that they empower you with full control of the success or failure of the outcome. So much of our lives falls outside our control. Most goals involve a lot of elements that also fall outside our control. For example, it is impossible to control the grade that you may get on an essay, as it is ultimately up to the instructor. Of course, the goal is to get a good grade on that essay.

A well-designed action, on the other hand, will focus you on the actual process of writing your paper effectively and in a way that produces their best work. It is important to learn turn attention inward and focus on what you can control in your life and to follow through on that action. The concept of a well-designed action helps students learn and practice that crucial skill.

Achieving any of these well-designed actions doesn't automatically mean that you will get all A's or avoid bad grades or being yelled at by your parents. However, following through on the outcomes over time does make a big difference in your self-confidence, ability to create new habits, and eventually the results your getting.

I often see students who start to apply the concept of a well-designed action, take the outcome and incorporate into their life so fully that they forget that they even set it as an outcome weeks ago. The well-designed action has become a habit, and they are off to creating the next outcome and system.

Throughout the Academic Life Coaching Program, you'll create many well-designed actions with your coach, and being able to create and set them for yourself is a crucial skill to being fulfilled and effective.

Now it is time for you to write out some of your own well-designed actions with the help of your coach.

Outcome #1:

What structure or system do you need that will help make this outcome easier to accomplish?

How will you know that you have accomplished this outcome?

Outcome #2:

What structure or system do you need that will help make this outcome easier to accomplish?

How will you know that you have accomplished this outcome?

Outcome #3:

What structure or system do you need that will help make this outcome easier to accomplish?

How will you know that you have accomplished this outcome?

Session 1 Notes

Date:

Notes:

Agreed-upon action steps:

Debrief (to be filled out during the week or at the beginning of next session)

What worked?

What did not work?

Session 2

Design the Alliance

Recipe for Academic Success

Systems

Vision Recording

Design the Client-Coach-Parent Alliance

Throughout coaching, we have the opportunity to design the relationship in a way that best serves you. To do so, it is helpful to think of what motivates you best (more heart or heat from your coach), how you move into action, what requests you have, what you think I should know, what is working, what is not working, and how will you know the coaching has been successful.

What best motivates you?

How do you move into action?

What requests do you have?

What do you think I should know?

What is working so far?

What is not working so far?

How will you know that this coaching has been successful?

What is the best way to communicate what you are accomplishing to your parents?

Recipe for Academic Success

This is a short little gut check to make sure that you're doing what you need to do to succeed academically. If you are not getting the grades you want, or you are stressed out trying to get those grades and working too hard, you are not doing one of the following actions.

1. Use the three science of learning concepts: self-quiz, engage the senses, and short, frequent study sessions.
2. Use your planner and systems binder.
3. Talk to your teachers about what you can do better.

How are you doing with this list?

What action do you want to focus on first? When will you work on it?

How will you know that your action is contributing to your success?

What other area in your life have you experienced success?

What made success easy for you?

How can you incorporate the same values/beliefs/actions to how you approach school and your grades?

Systems

You have recently created a vision for your desired future, and you are more aware of the three ingredients to be successful academically. Now it is time to find a way to make that vision—and your ongoing academic success—a reality.

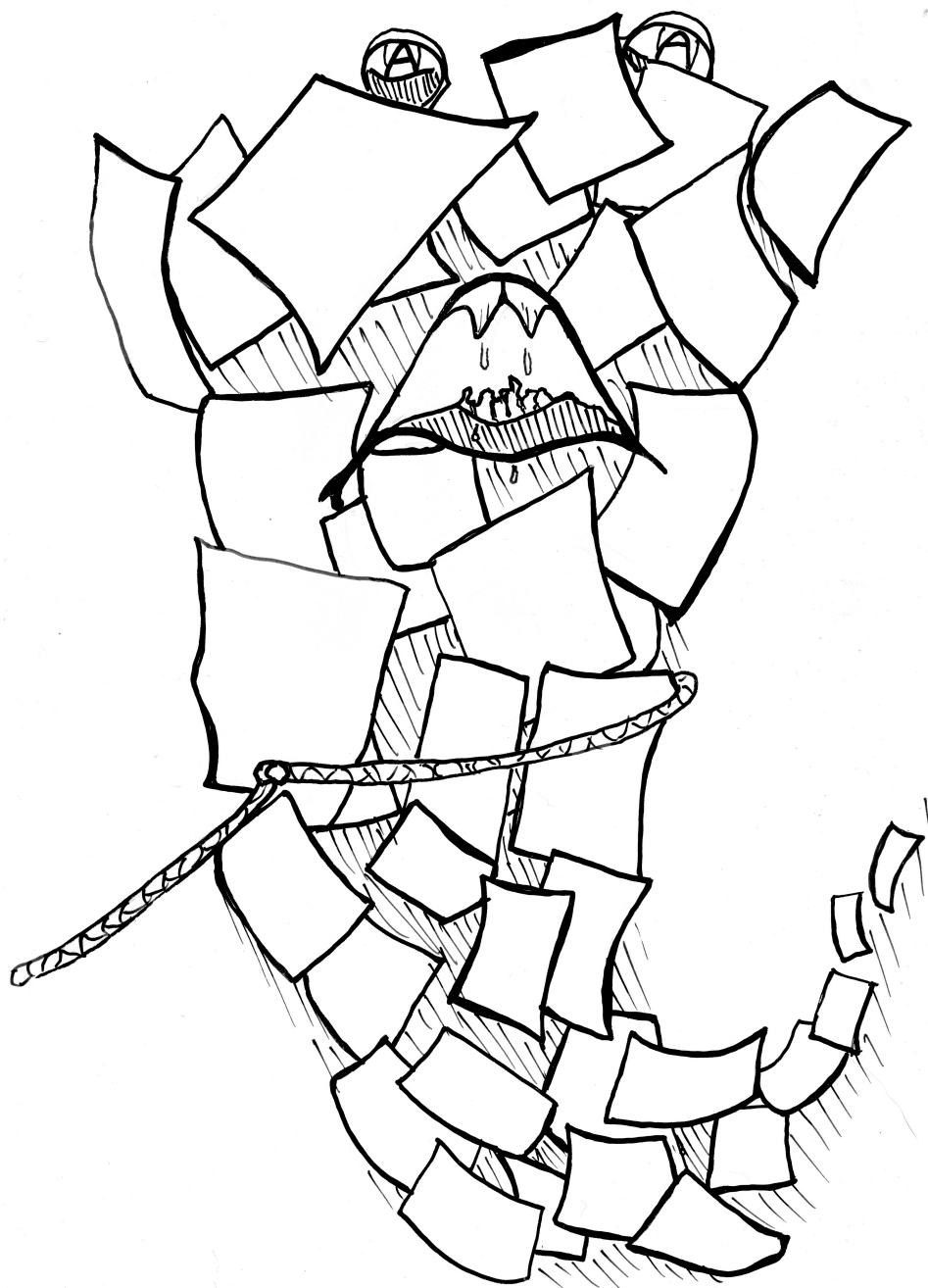
The best way to accomplish such an undertaking is by creating a system that is sustainable and designed to fit you. The key is to develop the system first, then do the work. The mistake most students make is simply diving in and doing the work without thinking about the best way to do it in the future or designing a way to stay on top of the work.

Without a system, most people bounce between being completely on top of things (like having a clean room, an organized binder, and all their work finished) to being behind aka failing to tame the homework monster (a messy room, a stuffed binder, and a few missing assignments). With a system there are sure to be times when things get hectic, but you are able to handle a bigger workload and more easily manage stress. A great system is the key!

The other key is to look at creating a system where the stuff (for example: binder, notes, planner, desk, etc.) aligns with what you need to do and what wants to happen naturally. Here is an example that illustrates the point:

Back in 2005, I was working with a student who was completely disorganized. It was March, but he had papers stuffed in his binder from the beginning of the school year and they were not just the class syllabi. He had actual quizzes and old homework assignments crunched in between the rings and in the bottom of his backpack. His parents thought it was no use to fix, and since he was getting good grades, they left him alone. The problem was he was super stressed out anytime he had to find something and it was starting to get to him.

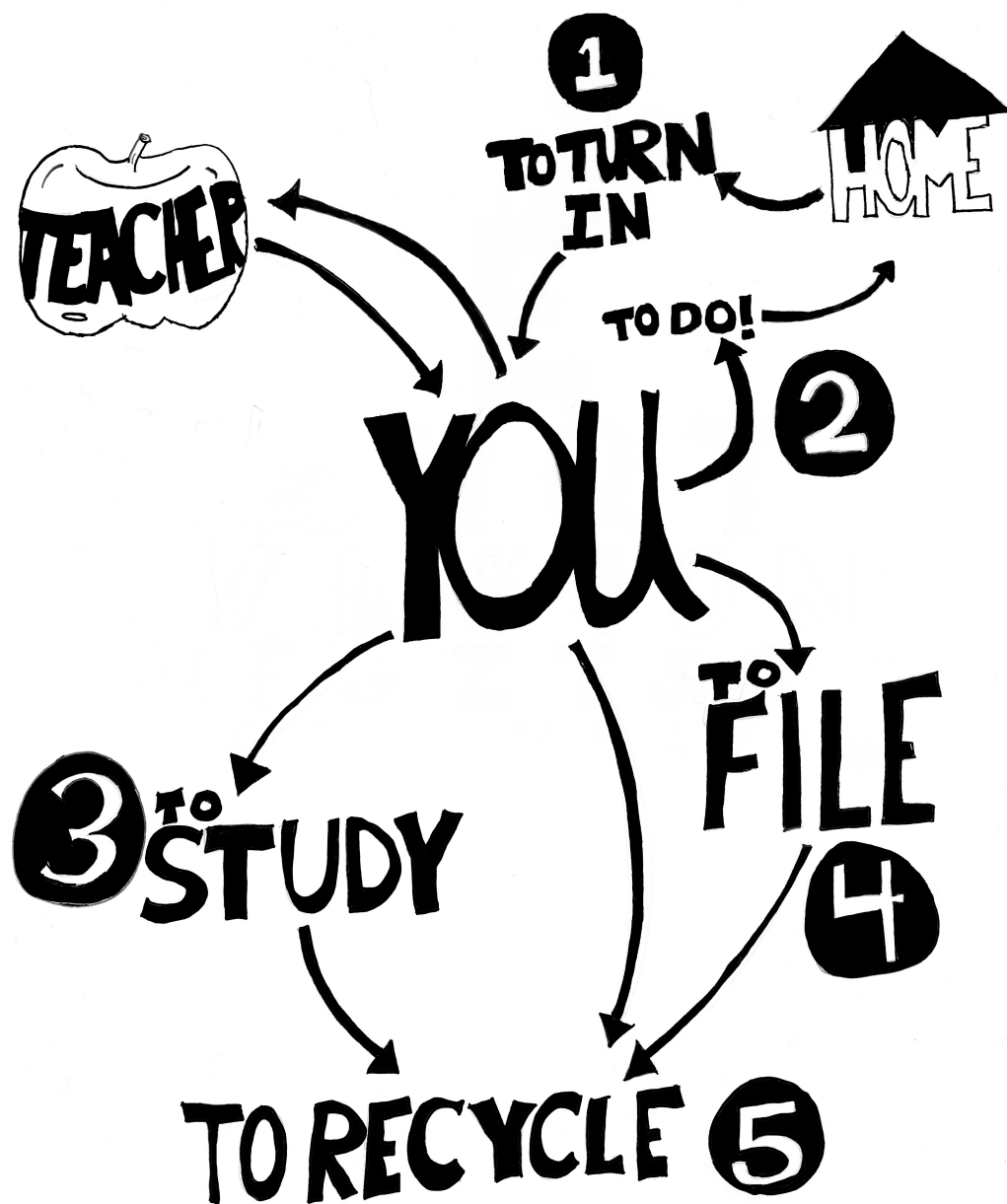
The Dreaded Paper Monster



We looked at what he had and what he was trying to accomplish and we decided that he only needed to do five things with any piece of paper he was handed. He had to do it as homework, turn it back into the teacher, study, file, or get rid of it. To mimic the actions he needed to take, he created a binder with five folders and labeled each folder with the action. He did NOT immediately clean out his binder all at once. Instead he let his system work for a week, and what he found was that he was naturally cleaning out his backpack and class binders because he had the confidence that he really did not need many of the papers in there. It was a slow and natural progression, and weeks later (and even years later) he still used the system to keep on top of his work.

√Systems

5 Folders to Handle Paper Flow



Paper is the *raw material*. The **YOU** is the *choice point*. The arrows are the *actions*. The numbers are the *structures* of the system.

Now it is your turn to create a system of your own. The first part is to get clear on what you want to accomplish. Then it is on to the fun part of creating a process that seamlessly takes you from your starting point and raw ingredients to your final product (while avoiding most of the mess).

Desired outcome:

Inputs/raw ingredients:

What is currently working? (This gives you great clues about what you can build on.)

What is NOT currently working? (This gives you great clues about the structures you need.)

Choice points: Determine the point where you have to make the decision to do something with the raw materials (it will inform the kind of structures you need)

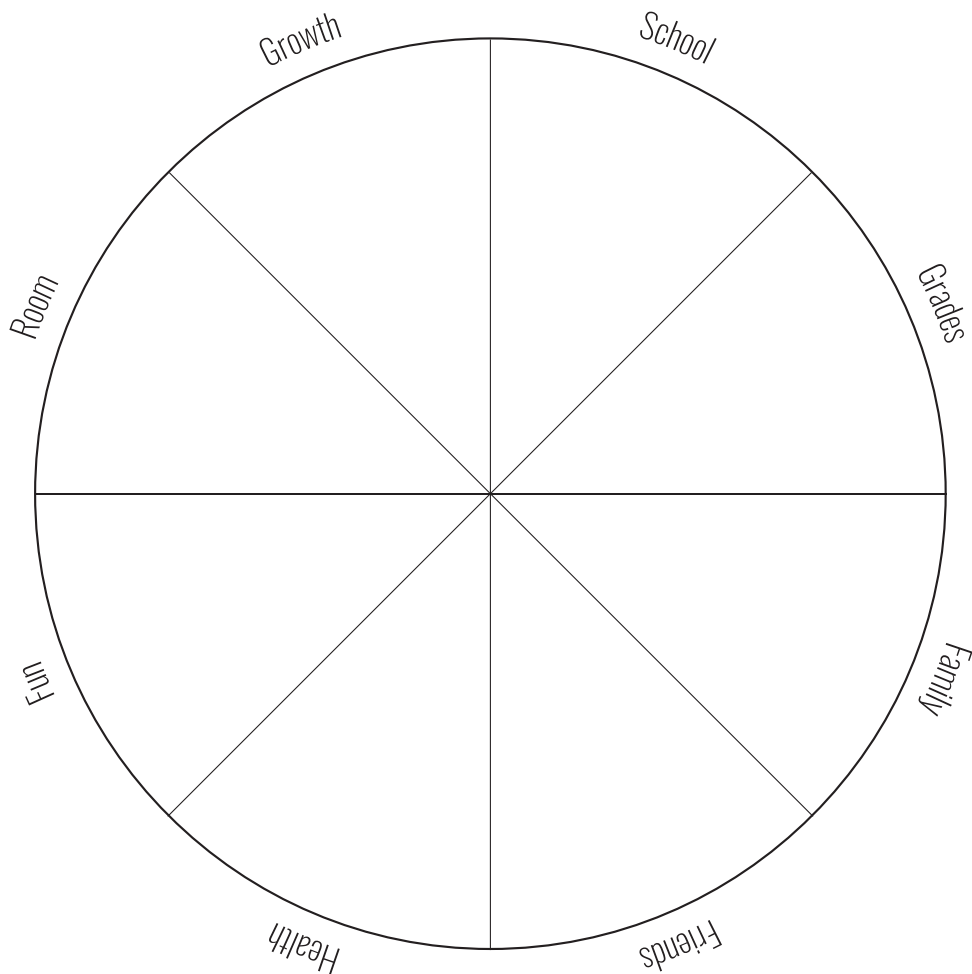
Structures: Align what you have to *do* with *binders, bins, folders, planners* or *whatever* you need to mimic the action you need to take.

Diagram of your system:

Vision Recordings

In the last session we emphasized the importance of having a vision in mind to keep you motivated towards an outcome. In this session, you will create a reminder for that vision. The more details you can add to your vision, the richer and more useful it will be, creating a clear vision to work towards.

Start with another *Wheel of Life*, but this time, instead of putting what is currently happening, put what you ideally want in each of the wedges.



E
Z N Q T
V I S I O N
H F G Z T S Q C
X G F T H N L A Y 2 W

Then imagine yourself in a year (or some other designated time in the future). From the point-of-view of the future, look back on what you have accomplished and write about your life as if that amazing outcome is real and you are currently living that reality.

Here is some space for notes.

Session 2 Notes

Date:

Notes:

Agreed-upon action steps:

Debrief (to be filled out during the week or at the beginning of next session)

What worked?

What did not work?

Session 3

Motivation Styles

Conditional vs. Intrinsic Motivation

Reactive vs. Proactive Motivation

Sake of Self vs. Other Motivation

Setting Reminders

Motivation Styles

Life coaching is designed to get you moving into action. Much of the magic in coaching comes from sparking motivation to change processes for the better. Harnessing motivation can be a challenge, but it is also one of the key skills for young people to master in leading an effective life.

The purpose of this section is to help you become more aware of the kinds of motivation available as well as the characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses of each type of motivation.

The Academic Life Coaching Program looks at three distinctions in motivation styles to give you a better understanding of the factors of motivation and your specific mix that works best.

Those three distinctions are:

1. Conditional vs. Intrinsic
2. Reactive vs. Proactive
3. Sake of Self vs. Others

Understanding the different motivation styles gives you a more specific vocabulary to gain a deeper insight into what really motivates you.

Every style is useful. However, given different circumstances, some of these styles are going to be more useful to you than others. Once you are more aware of the different kinds and styles of motivation, you can more consciously tap into those that work best at different times for different projects.

Tapping into these styles and exploring the effect of different motivation styles at different times, you will gain familiarity with each style's different feel. You are literally developing your Emotional Intelligence, especially self-awareness and self-control. Misunderstanding the benefits and drawbacks of each kind of motivation is a large

reason why many people have a hard time being productive and proactive while avoiding long periods of procrastination.

As a student, the habits you set now will be your default habits of motivation throughout the rest of your life. By establishing habits of motivation mindfully, and experiencing that joy of being on top of your work and ahead of schedule, you are setting yourself up for a positive spiral of motivation and accomplishment which sets the stage for flow.

Conditional vs. Intrinsic Motivation

Conditional motivation is being motivated to do something for the sake of an external benefit. It is when people think, “If I do this, then I get this reward.” Or it could be “If I don’t do this, this won’t happen.” Anytime someone uses a conditional sentence—a pair of *if-then* clauses—he or she is using conditional motivation.

Intrinsic motivation is being motivated to do something because the action itself is the reward. It is when someone thinks, “I want to do this because it’s fun.” Or it could be, “I enjoy the challenge.” Or even, “I want to see what happens when I follow through with...” Intrinsic motivation is about enjoying the process as much as the result.

While conditional motivation works well in the short-term, to be successful in school without all the stress, it is important to find a way to be intrinsically motivated. In other words, you must find a way to balance doing your homework for the sake of the grade with doing your homework because learning and doing the work is enjoyable.

I am sure you have had the experience of being on top of your work and doing an assignment and actually enjoying it. It is natural, *the brain wants to learn*. Finding that place where learning is fun allows you to take more control of your motivation so you can switch at-will between conditional (for short bursts of energy) and intrinsic (your main engine).

The biggest key in shifting to intrinsic motivation, which will be more useful in the long-run, is simply being aware of which motivation style you are using. Self-awareness goes a long way to determining which style you use. Once you find the joy of tapping into an intrinsic style of motivation, it quickly becomes a positive habit.

When do you find yourself using conditional motivation?

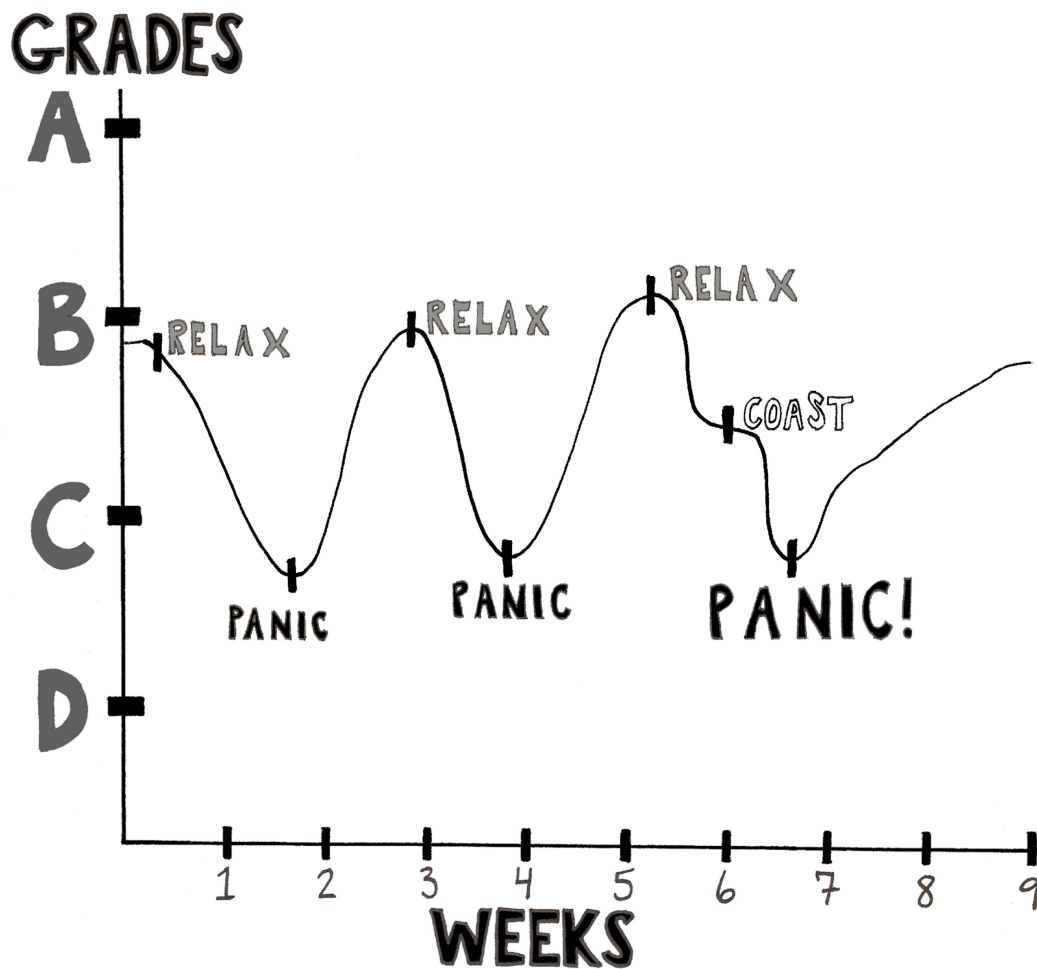
For which activities do you naturally use intrinsic motivation?

In your school work, what is your balance between conditional and intrinsic motivation?

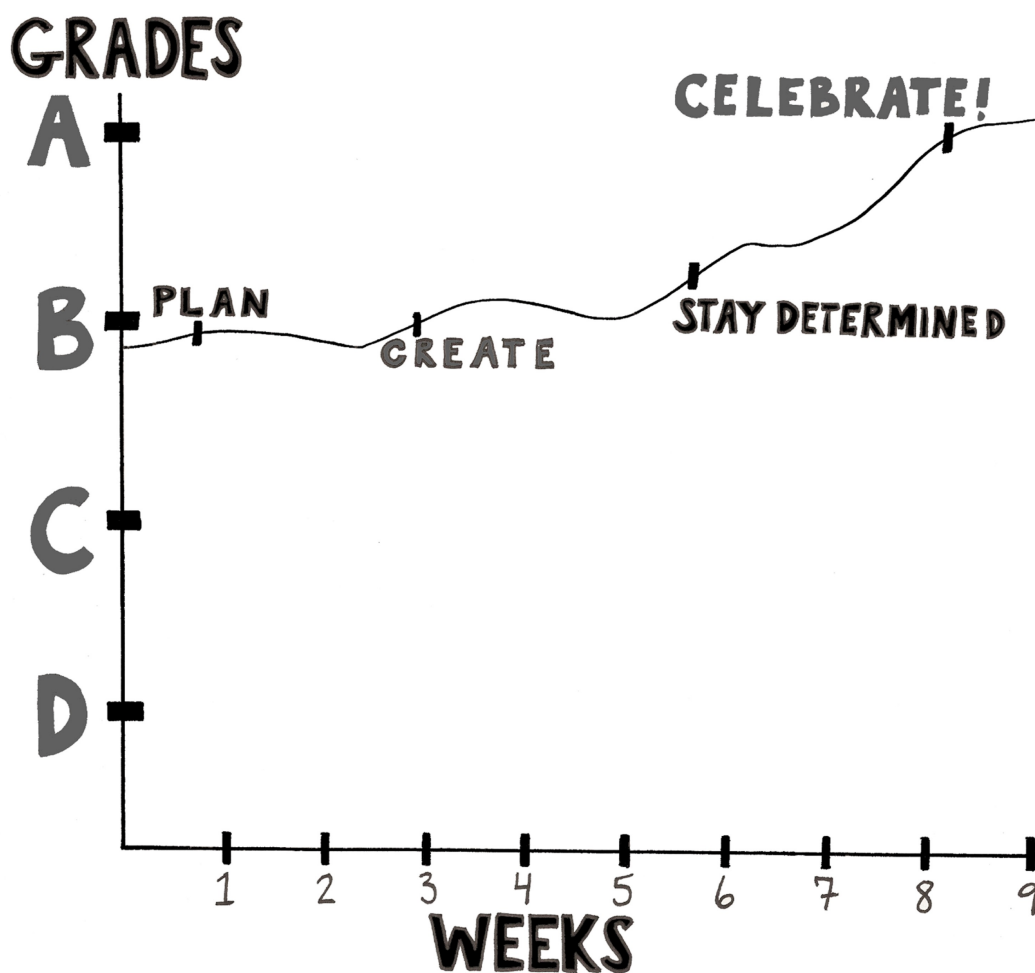
What could you do to shift that balance slightly more in the direction of intrinsic motivation?

Reactive vs. Proactive Motivation

This concept is also known as Motivation Away From Negative vs. Motivation Towards Positive. The first chart below is an example of being motivated AWAY from what you don't want, which could be a bad grade or being yelled at by your parents. Really anything that you don't want to happen serves as a good source of motivation.



This chart below is an example of being motivated toward what you do want to happen. Notice how it may be difficult to get moving at first because you are so far away from your primary source of motivation. Once you get closer to the outcome you want, you start to pick up the pace because you can see how close you are and the experience of getting what you want becomes real and achievable.



In school, what is your usual balance between being motivated ‘away from’ vs. ‘towards’?

What areas of your life do you find yourself using an ‘away from’ motivation style?

What areas of your life do you find yourself using a ‘towards’ motivation style?

Sake of Self vs. Other Motivation

Here is a chart for you to map out the pain and the benefits that occur when you achieve the outcome you desire and add what will happen in your life and in the lives of others when you follow through.

When thinking about the impact in the lives of others, it is not necessary to have an answer. It can be difficult to think about the benefit of what getting all A's and B's will be on your family 20 years from now. However, it is still useful to think about the impact your current decisions will have on the future.

Action to take:

	Skipped it	Did it
In my life		
In the lives of others (parents or friends)		
In the future (in the lives of people you do not yet know.)		

Setting Reminders

You have just created a system and some structures to keep things in order. The final step is to create a few reminders to keep you on track. A reminder can be viewed as a mental structure designed to get your mind back in the game when something knocks you off track. Usually, reminders are words, specific movements, or images that you have created to get back in the game. If you have a solid structure and a few reminders to help you recover quickly, you will find it easier to move forward at a steady, effective pace.

Your coach will help you create a few of your own reminders. And as you go through the next few sessions in the Academic Life Coaching Program, you will have the chance to create some of your own.

What you want to be reminded of (a perspective, well-designed action, kind of motivation, etc.)

Your Reminder:

When you will use it in the future:

How will you know it works?

Session 3 Notes

Date:

Notes:

Agreed-upon action steps:

Debrief (to be filled out during the week or at the beginning of next session)

What worked?

What did not work?

Session 4

The Assumption Chart

Beliefs

Perspectives

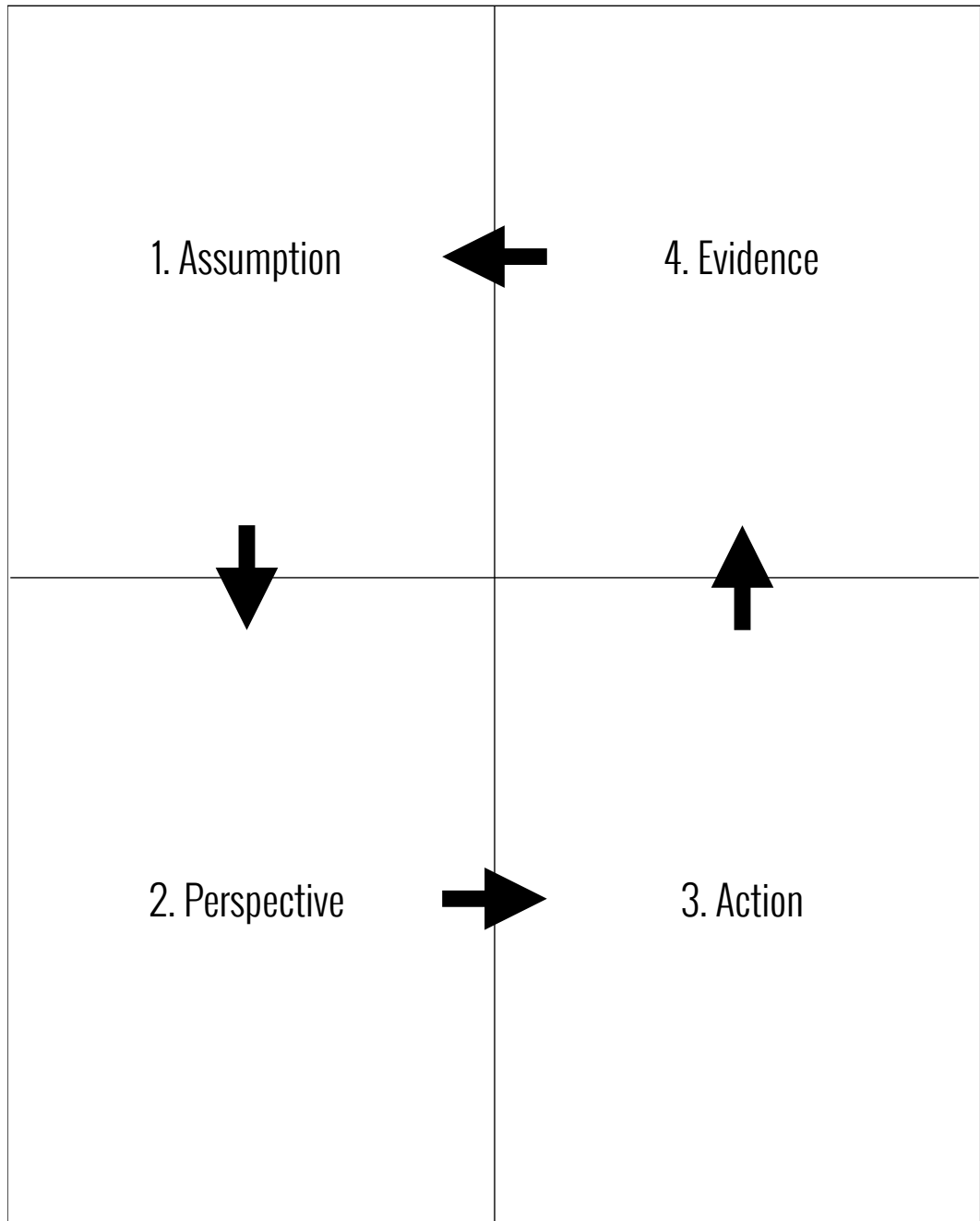
The Assumption Chart

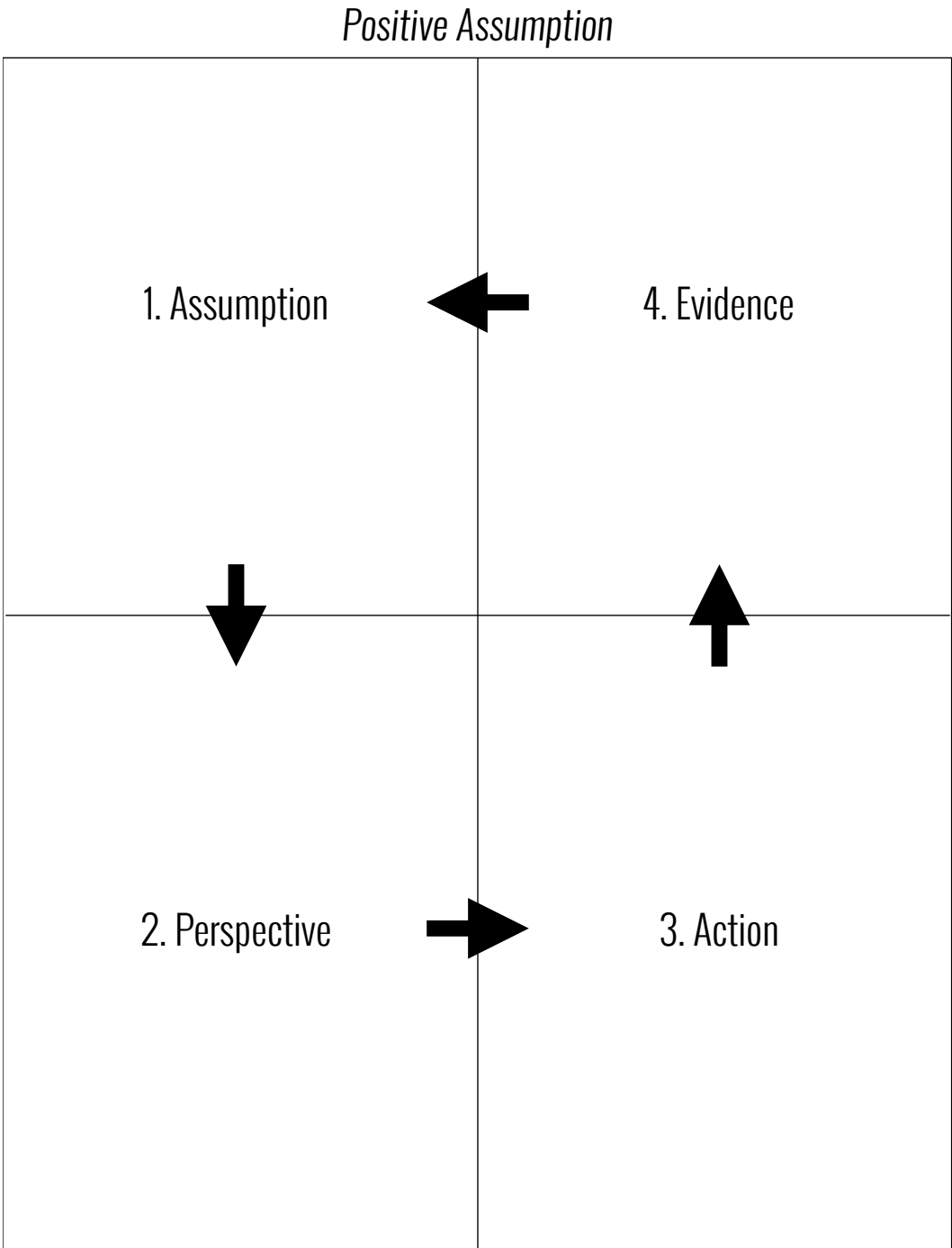
This chart helps you get unstuck and avoid spending energy working against yourself. It works because it gets to the root of the problem: the assumptions you make about yourself, an area of your life, or a task you're trying to accomplish.

Assumptions quickly lead to perspectives, which influence the action taken. Those three—assumptions, perspectives, and action—influence the outcome, becoming evidence to support the original assumption.

As human beings we want our assumptions to be proven true, even if they go against our desires. The reason: it is extremely stressful to be inaccurate about beliefs about ourselves and the world. Here is your chance to align what you want with your underlying assumptions and spend your resources wisely.

Negative Assumption





Busting Limiting Beliefs

Limiting beliefs are easy to bust when you get into the habit of recognizing them. The key is to recognize areas where you are struggling and determine what underlying beliefs you have about yourself or the tasks. Identify the beliefs that are not helping you or are limiting you. Once identified, you can use the assumption chart—or this quicker, more to-the-point busting limiting beliefs exercise—to realign your beliefs to best serve you.

Tough areas/results you do not want

Beliefs about yourself/task

Circle helpful beliefs

Cross out limiting beliefs

It may be a stretch or easy for you to switch to the opposite of a limiting belief, but when you do choose an empowering belief you start to look for evidence that it is true. Your ability to build on what is working is a great skill to have in your tool belt.

Write the opposite of limiting beliefs below.

Write out what different actions you would take based on positive beliefs.

Signature Perspectives

Throughout our day, we often slip into many different perspectives about the tasks that we undertake. The key here is to find the most empowering perspective and use it as your signature perspective: that perspective that is uniquely yours, fits you best, and becomes key to how you look at life.

Perspective #1:

Perspective #2:

Perspective #3:

Perspective #4:

Most empowering perspective:

What is possible from this perspective:

Cues to remind yourself of the perspective:

Session 4 Notes

Date:

Notes:

Agreed-upon action steps:

Debrief (to be filled out during the week or at the beginning of next session)

What worked?

What did not work?

Session 5

Trademarked Values

Making Decisions

Future-Pacing

Self-Alignment: Getting Over Jetlag

Trademarked Values

Value comes from the Latin word *valere* meaning to be strong or fare well. Values are the elements of worth in our lives that fortify us. They are unique to each of us. This exercise is designed to help you recognize your top five values, your trademark values, the unique values that help define you. Once you clarify those values and find ways to include more of them in your life you will be on the path to fulfillment.

Value #1:

Description:

Value #2:

Description:



Value #3:

Description:

Value #4:

Description:

Value #5:

Description:

Making Decisions

Now it is time to put your values into action, especially when it comes time for you to make decisions. To make informed decisions, you have to know what's most important to you. Your values can help guide your decisions, especially when you can pull out what is most important to you and consciously include more of it in your life.

An area of your life you want to focus on:

The value that you want to honor in that area:

The actual point in that system when you make a decision to follow through on your value:

Systems and structures you have in place to support you:

Other insights:

Future-Pacing

Future-pacing has two steps. The first is to imagine yourself in the future, your future self made the right choices and life is ideal. The second is continuing to imagine the scene as if it were a movie. In essence you are pacing your mind through your vision in the future. Thus the name, future-pacing.

You can also use future-pacing to imagine that point in your future where you have achieved your outcome and then pace backwards (as if watching a movie in rewind) to the present moment.

This exercise with its two variations is similar to the visioning exercise, with the main difference being that future-pacing places its focus on turning your vision into a movie and sticking with the vision. It is a great exercise for you to develop your imagination and push its limits.

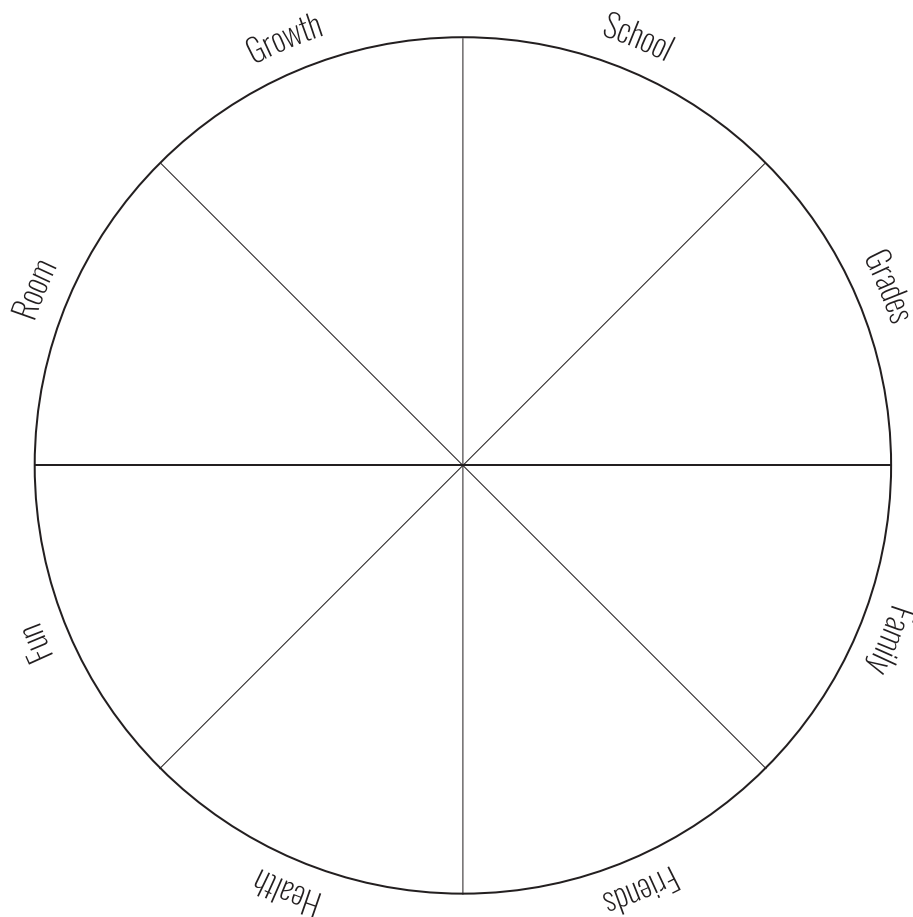
Write out some notes for your vision:

Self-Alignment: Getting Over Jetlag

This exercise is like taking yourself to the chiropractor. You have to get realigned every so often, especially when you're making the kind of big changes that you have been making over the past weeks.

Using your *Wheel of Life*, take a value or a new system that you have created and look at the impact it has on all the other areas of your life.

Have your coach lead you back through, reinforcing the work that you have done and the progress that you have made.



Session 5 Notes

Date:

Notes:

Agreed-upon action steps:

Debrief (to be filled out during the week or at the beginning of next session)

What worked?

What did not work?

Session 6

Inner-Critic

Future-Self

Inner-Critic

Your inner-critic is the negative self-talk, images, and feelings that make up your internal dialogue. In this exercise you use your imagination to separate yourself from this not-so-helpful voice.

What kinds of things do you say to yourself when doing poorly?

If you were to imagine someone else saying this to you, who/what would it look like?

What would its name be?

How big or small?

Other physical description (for example, what kind of clothes do your critic wear?)

Its mission?

When does it show up most often?

Short biography:

Future-Self

Your future-self is your vision of yourself 10 to 15 years in the future. Your coach will lead you through a visualization and exercises to help you meet your future-self. Once you do so, you can use the prompts below to get an even clearer picture of your future-self.

Future-self's nickname:

Fashion style:

Geographic location:

Description of home:

Occupation:

Typical day:

Favorite things to do:

Top values:

Message to you:

Other notes:

Future-Self



Illustration by Austin Blanchard, ALC Student 2015

Session 6 Notes

Date:

Notes:

Agreed-upon action steps:

Debrief (to be filled out during the week or at the beginning of next session)

What worked?

What did not work?

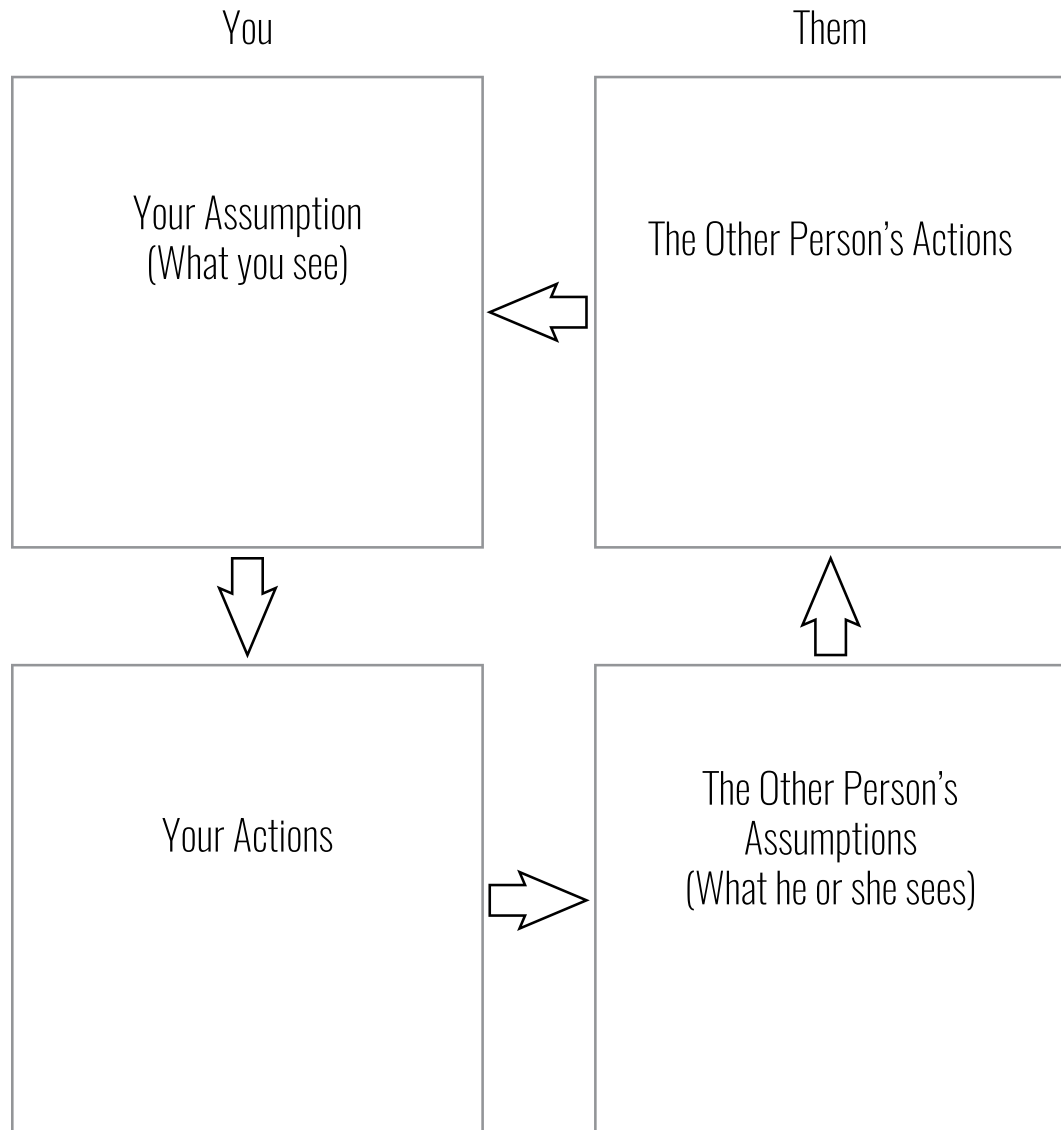
Session 7

Assumptions in Relationships

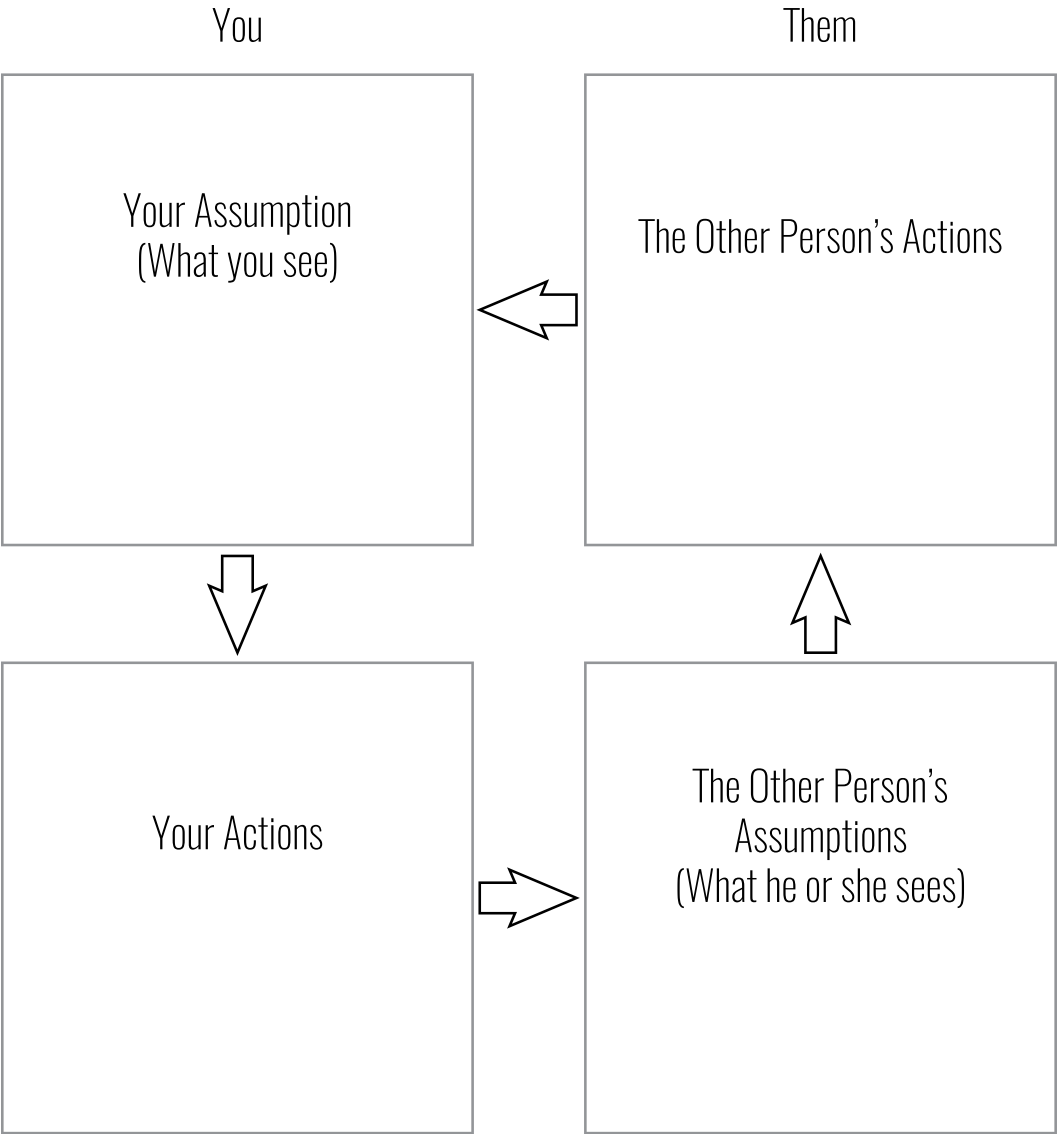
Empathy

Assumptions in Relationships

Relationships are central to living a fulfilling life. You can use the following chart below to check your assumptions and diagram how relationships are not working.



Here is an opportunity for you to change your assumption, which will break the negative pattern and focus your attention on building the relationship.



Building Empathy

Excellent communication is essential for a fulfilling life. One of the main ingredients of outstanding communication is empathy. Empathy is the ability to accurately imagine what another person is feeling and thinking and to see situations from their point-of-view.

Level 1 Communication is listening and speaking for the sake of yourself

Level 2 Communication is listening and speaking for the sake of another and imagining their experience *from their point-of-view*

Both levels of communication are necessary and valuable. Level one is not necessarily better or worse than level two, however, most people spend most of their time there. The worksheet below helps you practice level two communication and helps you further develop the important emotional intelligence skill of **empathy**.

Person's Name:

Stepping into this person's point-of-view, what would you imagine this person's experience of life is like:

we are
all on
the
same
team

What is most important to them?

What are their biggest dreams?

What are their biggest worries and concerns?

Person's Name:

Stepping into this person's point-of-view, what would you imagine this person's experience of life is like:

What is most important to them?

What are their biggest dreams?

What are their biggest worries and concerns?

Session 7 Notes

Date:

Notes:

Agreed-upon action steps:

Debrief (to be filled out during the week or at the beginning of next session)

What worked?

What did not work?

Session 8

Identifying Your Passions

Leadership Styles based on Core Motivation

Identifying Your Passions

Knowing your passion and nurturing it is a big part of stepping up as a leader. As obvious as it sounds, you have to know what you love and why you love it. With so many career options available, your success at becoming an effective and fulfilled adult relies on knowing yourself and how you best fit with the world. The starting point is simply identifying your core passions. In this session you are invited to explore what you love. The next step is to follow it, design a way that you can act now to nurture your passion and see its impact on your community.

What do you love to do?

If you had two weeks completely free, what would you pursue?

Is there anything odd that you are interested in that most of your friends are not?

What would you love to pursue as a career?

Leadership Styles with Core Motivation

You have come a long way. Now it is time to look again at your core motivation, specific challenges, and natural styles of leadership. Leadership is defined by how well share your vision, create value for others, and inspire others to work with you on your vision and mission statement.

<i>Challenges to Effective Leadership</i>	<i>I Tap into my Natural Leadership Style...</i>
<i>Type 1: The Perfectionist</i>	
Mistakes, errors. Pressure of having so many things to get right. Not being able to stop thinking if what I am doing is good enough. Others blaming me.	When I allow myself to have fun and enjoy. When I accept myself and the situation as it is.
<i>Type 2: The Helper</i>	
Others not recognizing me. Having too much to do for others and not having time for myself. Caring too much about relationships.	When I don't depend on the recognition of others. Focus on action that is also beneficial for myself as well as others.
<i>Type 3: The Doer</i>	
Others thinking poorly of me. Inefficiency, things getting in the way of accomplishing a goal. Pressure from ambitious goals.	When I allow myself to focus on fulfillment. When I set aside the desire to look good for the sake of accomplishing a meaningful goal.
<i>Type 4: The Artist</i>	

When others do not acknowledge how I'm feeling, or even worse, when they tell me not to feel that way. Feeling inadequate, abandoned.	When I embrace the ordinary and work to make it exceptional. When I focus on principles without getting sidetracked by emotions.
<i>Type 5: The Thinker</i>	
Demands on my time and energy. People invading my space. Being proved factually wrong.	When I take action and connect with people. Thoughtful and astute, as a Type 5, I have the ability to think deeply about problems and create lasting solutions.
<i>Type 6: The Friend</i>	
Danger or threats. Not trusting other people. People breaking their promises or being unreliable. Problems.	As Type 6, I am magnetic when I focus on positive goals and view problems as challenges and opportunities. When I act on positive assumptions.
<i>Type 7: The Optimist</i>	
Thinking that something better is out there for me. Feeling trapped in something boring or painful. Too many options, not enough time or limits on getting what I want.	As Type 7, I can use my natural ability to stir things up for a purpose. When I am willing to face negative situations and emotions and stay focused on creating positive outcomes.
<i>Type 8: The Defender</i>	
People who take advantage of me or others. Weakness in myself and others. Stupidity. Unfairness. When I sense injustice.	As Type 8, I usually have a big impact. As a natural leader, I truly shine when I take other people's needs and feelings into account.
<i>Type 9: The Peacemaker</i>	
Having people angry at me. Going along with the plans of others, even if I don't agree with them. Not being able to say no. Seeing possible problems but ignoring them.	When I have a clearly defined goal and I'm willing to step outside my comfort zone and take measured steps to accomplish goals.

Session 8 Notes

Date:

Notes:

Agreed-upon action steps:

Debrief (to be filled out during the week or at the beginning of next session)

What worked?

What did not work?

Session 9

Leadership Projects

Mission Statements

Leadership Projects

Mission statements are overarching; a leadership project puts that overarching statement to use. Your leadership project is at the intersection of your personal mission and what you want to create in your community.

A leadership project can be short, like helping plan a family vacation that includes meaningful time together, or long, like putting together a business or engaging in public service or an internship. Along the way, your mission statement creates a frame for your leadership project just as your project produced tangible results from your mission statement. The two go hand-in-hand.

The first step is to look for what is needed in your community and determine the impact you want to have on the lives of others.

What is needed in your community?

If your life were thriving, what gift or service would you offer others?

If you were to accomplish your leadership project, what would be the benefit in the lives of others?

The second step is to revisit your mission statement and determine what project—it may be only a few weeks or it may span a few years—addresses that need in your community and aligns with your mission.

Brainstorm possible projects:

Circle the top 2

Name of project:

Time frame:

Purpose: Why this, why now?

Break down the larger project into smaller segments

1st Well-designed action:

2nd Well-designed action:

3rd Well-designed action:

Possible adjustments you will need to make:

Name of project:

Time frame:

Purpose: Why this, why now?

Break down the larger project into smaller segments

1st Well-designed action:

2nd Well-designed action:

3rd Well-designed action:

Possible adjustments you will need to make:

Mission Statements

Mission statements are short, personal statements of purpose that inspire, clarify, and focus your emotion, thought, and action. Mission statements are fluid. They grow and change just as you do. They are only as useful as they are used, and the more you use your mission statement and remind yourself of it, the more power it will have.

Usually mission statements are short, focus on how you can benefit others, and identify the change you wish to create in your life or in the world.

Date:

Mission statement:

Situations where you have already used your statement:

Date:

Mission statement:

Situations where you have already used your statement:

Session 9 Notes

Date:

Notes:

Agreed-upon action steps:

Debrief (to be filled out during the week or at the beginning of next session)

What worked?

What did not work?

Session 10

Resilience

Celebration

Design the Future

Completion

Resilience

Being a leader means understanding that you are not perfect. Leadership is more truly about riding your successes and recovering from your mistakes. The more you learn to recover from setbacks and build up your resilience the better leader you're going to be. The aim here is to cut down the amount of time it takes for you to recover. You are at a point now when you have many tools to help you do that. This exercise is about finding the perspectives, values, and motivation to build your resilience.

What tools (perspectives, values, future-self, etc.) have worked well for you over the past three months?

What systems have worked well?

Within those systems, what are the key structures you have put in place?

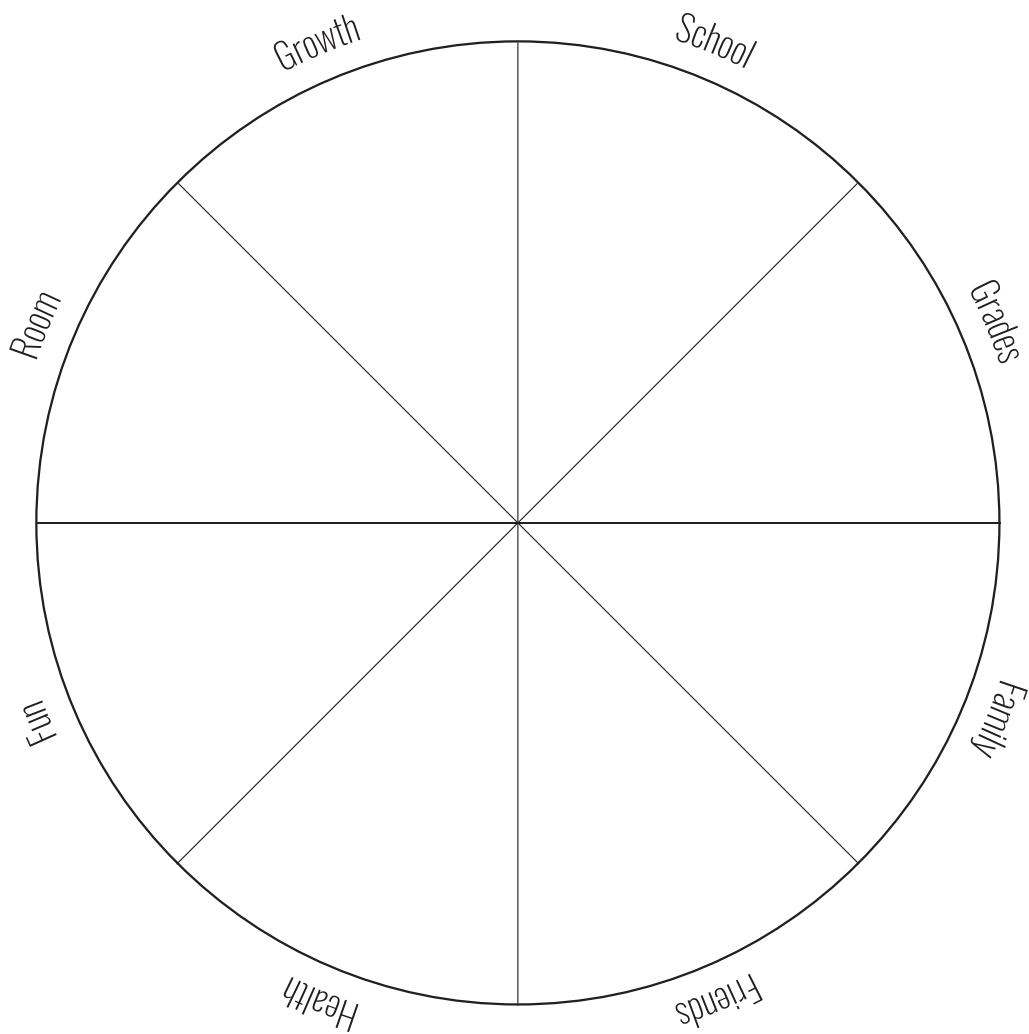
What are examples of when you have recovered quickly? How did you do it? Why did it work so well?

What additional tools can you add to support your resilience?

Celebration

It is important to take time to celebrate success. In the fast pace of contemporary life, successes quickly become a part of the past in the drive to accomplish even more.

In this wheel, write your current level of satisfaction with each area of your life.



3 biggest successes over the past 4 months:

Designing the Future

After celebration comes the work of getting to the next level. Incorporating your recent successes—and imagining a new set of successes in the coming year—create a vision for yourself a year from now. From that point in the future, look back on what you have accomplished.

Capture that vision, either in a sound recording or by drawing it out on paper. Then listen to your recording or post the drawing in a place you will often see it. The more you tap into that vision and take action steps the more effective and fulfilled your life can be.

Here is space for you to take notes on that vision:

To make the process even more tangible, let us first break down the vision into three well-designed actions then look at what systems you can create that will help you achieve that vision.

Well-designed action #1:

Structures/systems you can use:

Well-designed action #2:

Structures/systems you can use:

Well-designed action #3:

Structures/systems you can use:

Completion

Congratulations on finishing the Academic Life Coaching Program!

Throughout this program you have amassed an impressive set of tools to help you succeed academically, personally, and as a leader.

The program is cyclical. By going back through the exercises, seeing where you were when you went through the first or second time and how far you have come, you bring a new understanding of how you can fit all the parts of the program together. The power of the program is not in its one time application. These concepts are meant to be woven into your life so that you naturally live your life while being conscious of your values and the choices that you are making. You know how to choose a powerful perspective and recover to it when something knocks you off balance. You understand the importance of living a with a mission and how exciting it is to start to see a leadership project become a reality.

I invite you to continue your journey and to contribute to the Academic Life Coaching community online through our website and blog at academiclifecoaching.com. The more people in this community moving forward, the stronger the tide, and the more everyone benefits.

Now is the time to take a few moments to say what you need to say to be complete with the program and with your coach. It is also a good time to design how you will work together in the future.