

**A. CHAPTER RECAP AND  
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:  
MEANING**

## **Chapter 1:** **Create Meaning With Small Wins**

*Recap: Creating meaning for others matters more than pursuing happiness for yourself.*

What percentage of your free time do you spend on activities that create meaning? How could you add one meaningful activity to your daily or weekly routine?

How did you make meaningful progress through your work today? If you did not today, how could you tomorrow?

What is the most meaningful thing you have done in the last month?

**Chapter 2:**  
**Pursue Life, Liberty, and Meaningfulness**

Recap: *Meaningful work is driven by deep, internal motivation.*

Why does your current job or role exist? Does it help another person, make a process more efficient, or produce something people need?

Which external motivators tend to pull you in the wrong direction?

How could you do even more for the people you serve?

What are your best intrinsic motivators and reminders of why you do what you do?

**Chapter 3:**  
**Make Work a Purpose — Not Just a Place**

Recap: *Your work should improve your overall well-being.*

What actions could you take that would allow you to spend more time on meaningful efforts?

Does the work you do improve your life?

What makes you feel like you are part of a shared mission?

**Chapter 4:**  
**Find a Higher Calling Than Cash**

*Recap: Keep money from killing meaning for the sake of your well-being.*

Are your relationships stronger because of the job you do every day?

Is your physical health better because of the organization you are part of?

Are you contributing to society because of what you do every day?

When does money motivate you in a good way? Are there times when it steers you in the wrong direction?

## **Chapter 5:** **Ask What the World Needs**

*Recap: You create meaning when your strengths and interests meet another person's needs.*

What are some of the most important unmet needs among your friends, colleagues, customers, and community?

Think about your unique talents and abilities. What can you do far better than most people you know?

What activities give you a positive charge and make a long-term contribution to society?

## **Chapter 6:** **Don't Fall Into the Default**

*Recap: Cast your own shadow by building your dreams into your job.*

What specific tasks do you get so engaged in that you lose track of time?

Who energizes your days? How can you spend more time with these people?

What is one step you can take today to see how your work makes a difference for others?

## **Chapter 7:** **Initiate to Shape the Future**

Recap: *Instead of responding to every ringing bell, focus on less to do more.*

What percentage of your time do you spend responding to emails, texts, and phone calls in a typical day? How does that compare to the percentage of time you spend initiating?

How can you work smarter instead of working harder?

If you could focus only on a few meaningful things tomorrow, what would they be? How can you spend less time responding?

How can you use technology to help minimize distraction instead of allowing it to disrupt you?



**Chapter 8:**  
**Focus for 45, Break for 15**

Recap: *Work in bursts, take frequent breaks, and keep the mission in mind.*

How can you structure your day so you can work in spurts and be more effective?

How can you help remind your friends and/or colleagues about the importance of their work?

Is there a “field trip” you and your team can take to see the influence of your work more directly?



**CHAPTER RECAP AND  
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:  
INTERACTIONS**

## **Chapter 9: Make Every Interaction Count**

*Recap: Our days depend on brief interactions with the people around us.*

What have you done to infuse positive energy into an interaction today?

What could you plan on doing in the next few hours that will add a positive charge to someone's day?

What friends or colleagues do the best job of adding positive energy to your environment? What could you learn from them to better carry that positive energy forward?

**Chapter 10:**  
**Be 80 Percent Positive**

Recap: *Focus most of your time and attention on what is working.*

What proportion of your interactions in the last day were positive? What percentage were negative?

How can you make sure that people know you are paying attention to their work and efforts?

What is the most meaningful praise or recognition you have received in the last year? What made this recognition stand out for you?

## **Chapter 11:** **Start Small and Be Clear**

*Recap: Practical goals and good questions create speed and productivity.*

What small action can you take today to boost the well-being of one of your closest friends?

What is one good question you can ask new acquaintances to learn more about what's going on in their work or life?

How can you invest even more time and energy into one of your most productive relationships?

## **Chapter 12:** **Take a Break *for* Relationships**

*Recap: Social networks that we often take for granted profoundly shape our lives.*

How can you build more in-person social time into your work?

Which friends and family members improve your health and well-being when you spend time with them?

What is one practical step you could take to pay attention to other people better when you are together? How will they know they have your full and undivided attention?

## **Chapter 13:** **Put Experiences First**

Recap: *Spending on people and experiences yields the greatest return.*

What is an experience or trip you can plan to create well-being for yourself and others?

How can you invest more time or financial resources in the long-term growth of another person?

How can you help others look forward to an upcoming experience or trip you have planned? If you don't have anything planned right now, what can you do to help someone else benefit from the memories of a past experience?



## **Chapter 14:** **Avoid Flying Solo**

Recap: *We do better work when we collaborate and have shared incentives.*

What are a couple of the best moments in your life? Did they involve other people?

How much do you focus on beating a competitor compared with the time you spend trying to create new value for other people or groups?

Do the rewards, recognition, and incentives around you center on individual or group goals? What would the ideal incentives look like if the goal was to do more for others?

## **Chapter 15:** **Build a Cumulative Advantage**

*Recap: The more you focus on another person's strengths, the faster they grow.*

What is the earliest example you can remember of someone spotting a unique talent of yours and encouraging you to spend time building on that strength?

When was the last time you noticed someone performing at an exceptional level and you pointed it out to that person?

Who can you recognize in the next day with great specificity, sincerity, and detail?

**CHAPTER RECAP AND  
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:  
ENERGY**

## **Chapter 16:** **Put Your Own Health First**

*Recap: When you eat, move, and sleep well, you can do more for others.*

How often do you put your own health first in the midst of a demanding day?

What could you do to build small, healthy choices into your lifestyle for good?

What changes do you notice in your mood, energy levels, interactions, and productivity on days when you eat, move, and sleep well?

## **Chapter 17:** **Eat Your Way to a Better Day**

*Recap: Eating well starts with healthier defaults and decisions and with making every bite count.*

What are the central elements of a healthy diet for you? How could you build more of these elements into your routine?

What are the most common foods you snack on throughout the day? Could you add healthier standby snacks to your routine?

Do you notice how some foods influence your mood and energy more than others? How can you eat more things that give you energy?

## **Chapter 18:** **Learn to Walk Before You Run**

*Recap: Being active throughout the day matters most for your health and well-being. The more you move, the better your mood.*

On a typical weekday, how much time do you spend sitting? Add up the time you spend sitting while eating, commuting, working, meeting with others, socializing, watching television, and working on your computer. How could you reduce this number by at least an hour per day?

What is one thing you could start doing today to add more activity to your daily routine?

How can you remind yourself to take a break from sitting at least one or two times every hour, even if you just get up for 30 seconds to stretch?

## **Chapter 19:** **Sleep Longer to Achieve More**

*Recap: Every hour of sleep is an investment in your future, not an expense.*

What is the ideal amount of sleep you need to feel well-rested? How often do you get enough sleep to be effective during the day?

How can you make sleep a clear priority and value in your family and social and work circles? What can you do to help everyone around you structure their schedules for optimal sleep and subsequent energy?

What is one small adjustment you can make in your bedroom to get consistently better sleep?

## **Chapter 20:** **Eat, Move, and Sleep to De-Stress**

*Recap: Your daily actions can keep chronic stress from accumulating and doing more damage.*

Instead of focusing on one element of health at a time, what can you do to ensure you are eating, moving, and sleeping better every day?

Chronic stressors are a bigger problem than temporary stressors. How can you structure your days to avoid situations that are constantly stressful?

Are there specific people who create a disproportionate amount of negative stress in your life? If so, what can you do to reduce the time you spend with these people so you inherit less secondhand stress?



## **Chapter 21:** **Respond With Resiliency**

*Recap: Your reaction to a potential stressor is more important than the stressor itself.*

Identify one small stressor you have today. How can you reframe this stress (why it matters or why it is meaningful to you) in a way that adds motivation while decreasing stress?

The next time you face an immediate or acute stressor, how can you remind yourself to mentally push “pause” before you respond hastily to someone else — online or in person?

What is one of the most resilient responses you have had to a major challenge in your life? What could you learn from this experience to turn your next major stressor into a more meaningful challenge?



## B. ESSENTIAL READING

---

*The Progress Principle: Using Small Wins to Ignite Joy, Engagement, and Creativity at Work*

by Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer

This team's study of more than 12,000 diary entries reveals how small daily momentum in meaningful work is what differentiates top-performing individuals and teams from the rest. This book is filled with great research on the topic of our daily work lives.

---

*Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*

by Nicholas A. Christakis and James H. Fowler

This book summarizes an extraordinary amount of research on the power of the social networks that surround us. Written by two leading researchers, *Connected* shows how relationships shape our health, work, and well-being in ways we never would have guessed.

---

*Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*

by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

Written by one of the world's top psychologists, this book coins the term "flow" to describe the state you are in when you love what you are doing so much that you lose track of time.

---

*Happy Money: The Science of Happier Spending*

by Elizabeth Dunn and Michael Norton

This is the most comprehensive review I have read about better ways to spend your financial resources. Co-authored by two of the world's leading researchers and experts on spending and well-being, this book led me to rethink how I prioritize my time and financial resources.

---

*Emotions Revealed: Recognizing Faces and Feelings to Improve Communication and Emotional Life*

by Paul Ekman

This book will change the way you think about your next interaction with another person. Author, psychologist, and researcher Paul Ekman explores how our faces and feelings affect the quality of our days.

---

*Give and Take: Why Helping Others Drives Our Success*  
by Adam Grant

This amazing book details why giving more is good. Written by Wharton professor Adam Grant, who has conducted a remarkable amount of research on these topics, this is an exceptional guide to building better careers, organizations, and communities.

---

*Die Empty: Unleash Your Best Work Every Day*  
by Todd Henry

This is one of the most compelling and provocative books I have read on the topic of doing what matters most every day. Simply reading this book will motivate you to do more tomorrow.

---

*Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*  
by Daniel H. Pink

This is a remarkable book about why we do what we do each day. Pink summarizes decades of important research about the need to find more intrinsic motivators in our work and lives.

---

*Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think*  
by Brian Wansink

If you want to make better decisions about what you eat, this book is the single best place to start. Brian Wansink is the world's leading authority on the psychology of eating and why we often make choices that work against our long-term interests.