

Week 1 - Part 1

Mission

Imagine life as walk in the countryside. People approach this walk of life in various ways.

Some people are **wanderers**. They go from place to place with no real direction in mind. They just do what seems right in that moment. They may find themselves climbing mountains and experiencing the wonders of the heights, but on the other hand may find that they wander into the depths of the valleys where life is unhappy, stressful or depressing. These are people who live life with little long term direction. They live from moment to moment taking whatever life has to offer on their way. They let their environment dictate their direction in life and as a result they sometimes experience great times, other times they experience bad.

Other people are **pasture lovers**. They set off in life climbing a steady slope, and eventually find a pretty pasture where they feel comfortable. They decide that this is fine for them and then stay in this familiar spot taking whatever life has to offer them from there. These people seek out and find a comfortable place in life. They find a job, relationships, and financial position which are fine. They get an easy life but do not achieve true fulfilment because they never understand what makes them fulfilled and when they do try to achieve something they tend to give up too easily.

Other people are **aimless climbers**. These are people who find themselves at the foot of a particular mountain and start climbing. It is only as they rise up this mountain that they realise that it's not the one they want to be on. They look up at the peak and the route they'll need to take to get there and cry, "Oh no! That's not what I want. What have I been doing with my life?". In fact they look across the valley and wish they were climbing the mountain over the other side. These people lacked direction in their life when they made some key decisions such as the career and relationships they are in. They're unhappy because what they've got is not what they want. Sometimes people just carry on climbing because the effort needed to change course is too great. Others stop where they are and become pasture lovers. Some realise their mistake and make the effort to change.

Finally we come to the **hill and mountain climbers**. These people decide what mountains and hills are the ones that will give them true satisfaction from scaling. They plan the best routes and then walk and climb steadily towards them. These are the people who truly understand what is important to them to give them true satisfaction in life. They plan and work towards these things in a co-ordinated way until they achieve them. **Mountain**

climbers set themselves the hardest and toughest of goals. They are very hard workers and risk takers who will put everything into achieving their goals. **Hill climbers** set tough but more modest goals which will provide them with a less risky route but one which will still provide long term happiness and contentment.

Hill or mountain climbers can also be **view lovers**, they enjoy the view as they climb, or **peak focusers**, where they will put up with whatever pain is necessary to get to the top and get there as quickly as possible. View lovers enjoy the journey of life, peak focusers, strive on and on and are never happy despite having it all.

Exercise 1

Take a few moments now to examine your walk of life. How have you been climbing? Which of these people are you? You may even find you are a mixture of two or three. Take a moment now to decide.

How has that affected your life?

What will happen if you continue to live in this way?

Getting the most from the exercises

So have you done that exercise, or have you just started reading on? Remember this is a practical programme. The benefits which people gain from it depend on them spending time doing the exercises, so please do stop NOW and spend just 3 minutes thinking about the exercise. Many people find it useful to actually write their answers down. This both reinforces people's thinking and gives a useful reminder as they progress from week to week. An exercise book can be great for this as it ensures you have got one place where you can record everything you have learnt.

Mission

As we take our own personal walk of life it is vital that we all decide which mountains and hills are right for us to climb so that the peaks really do give us true satisfaction in life. It is vital that that we plan the best route to the top and learn from our experiences as we progress. It is vital that we enjoy the view along the way. To achieve the most from your life you should follow the way of **view loving mountain or hill climber**.

An important starting point is therefore to decide what life is all about for you to create a vision of what you want from life and the way you aim to live it. This is called a *mission*.

Creating a mission is like taking a map of the land and deciding what sights you want to see, and experiences you want to have, and deciding which paths, and mountains will give you those sights and experiences. Creating and living your personal mission is the focus for the first four weeks of the course.

What you will gain from having a personal mission?

Improved decision making



The right decision is that which moves you towards your mission

Quicker decision making



You will learn a fast and effective decision making process

Motivation



Having a source of continual inspiration and direction

Keeping your life on track



Directing your life towards a purpose linked to your key values

Balancing life



Being successful in all areas of your life

Constituents of a mission

Over the next 3 weeks we will examine the for key constituents of a mission

1) Key Values

The first step in finding your mission is to find out what it is that you really want to get out of life. Ultimately what we all strive for is to achieve certain good emotional states or avoid bad ones. Everyone's different, but the types of emotional states people strive for can include happiness, security, passion, love, warmth, excitement, healthiness, energy, contentment, relaxation, pride, and so on.

In our walk through the countryside, Key Values are the feelings you would like to have as you take your walk. Your aim is to both have those feelings now, while also be creating a future where you can experience more of these feelings in the future.

2) Life direction

Key Values can be lived in many ways. If someone values excitement they could get this from competing in a sport, going on a roller coaster, doing a parachute jump, gambling on the races, at a casino, or on the stock market, setting up their own business and so on.

A life direction is a statement of the specific ways in which you will live your key values in your life, based on your our own skills, passions and personality.

It is like deciding on the specific mountain peaks you will aim for and the trails you will to follow which will enable you to get the most from your walk of life. By basing your Life Direction on your Key Values you will ensure that the mountains you are climbing, and the tracks you are following are the right ones for you.

3) Personal principles

A personal principle is a rule for our own behaviour. Clear principles act as a guide for living a life which is true to our own personal values and provide a solid foundation for everything we do. They are the basis for many religions, in Christianity for example principles include: turn the other cheek, help thy neighbour, and do only to others and you would do to yourself. They also form the basis of many forms of personal development. Stephen Covey's 7 habits are principles with which to live a successful life.

Personal principles are designed to support your Key Values, so for example taking the Key Value of excitement, to support this some personal principles might be: to be a risk taker, to be an entrepreneur or to be competitive in all you do.

4) Mission core

The final step in writing a mission is to create a one sentence overview of your life purpose. This is a motivating statement, designed to inspire you, to act as a reminder of who you are and what you stand for. It is used as a guide to living life in every moment of every day.

Summary

By pulling all these elements together into a mission statement you will have available to you a powerful tool to guide and focus your life and give it true meaning in a way designed just for you. To see examples of mission statements please visit the website at www.managementoflife.com.

It is now time for you to discover your own mission - the first step is to find your Key Values.

Week 1 - Part 2

Key Values - What is important to you?

Consider the following question: is it right that surgeons should practice and perfect operations on animals prior to carrying out the operation on humans? Take a moment now to come up with your own answer before moving on. Done it? Okay, read on.

Whatever your answer, and there is no absolute right or wrong, it will tell you something about what you value. Perhaps it is: humans are more important than animals; humans must support their own species above others; humans and animals are equal and should be treated as such. What is your value in this situation?

Values drive our decision making

Our values are the factors of importance to us in life. They are the things we stand up for and believe in, what we strive for or the emotions or we desire to have in our life. People's values can be wide and varied. Examples can include happiness, security, fast cars, money, love, comfort, excitement, health, family and friends, world peace, freedom for all, and so on.

Ultimately our decisions are directed by our values and our lives directed by our decisions. Thinking of the value you have in relation to animal rights, does this significantly impact upon how you live your day to day life? If you value animal life as equal to human you may perhaps be a vegetarian or campaign on behalf of animal rights. For other people, though, their value may not greatly effect their life. They will have other values which do though.

Someone who values *security* may well work for an organisation where their job is safe, perhaps marry someone who they feel is reliable, take out life assurance, have a secure pension, dislike entering into unfamiliar social situations, and go on organised package holidays, usually to the same place.

Someone who loves *excitement*, on the other hand is more likely to be an entrepreneur undeterred by the possibility of losing everything, enter into relationships more passionately, yet leave them more easily, like entering into a lot of new social situations, and go on adventurous holidays to unusual parts of the world.

Using different values to make decisions can produce very different lives. The tragedy is that the values we have and use to guide our life are largely unconscious and we usually accept them without question. They arise through a mixture of the genes we have and our

experiences and influences up to this point in our life. Conditioning by our parents, friends and schoolteachers have landed us with our values, yet it is those values that drive our lives. People are putting someone else in the driving seat.

Very often this means that they do not end up making decisions which are right for them. A good friend of mine left school at 18 to start a career in a local bank. This was not because he particularly wanted to, but because his parents thought it was the best thing for him and he went along with it. After many years of unhappiness there, he finally realised that he had made a decision which was not right for him, who he was and what he wanted to do with his life. He left to become a sports psychologist something he is now both very successful at and loves. Sometimes, then, we make poor value judgements. He valued his parents views and feelings and prioritised this over his true values.

In fact one of the biggest problems for him was that he didn't even know his true values consciously, so it was much easier to go along with other peoples. Indeed, few of us are consciously aware of what is truly important to us. When we have to make important decisions we therefore often find it hard to do, procrastinate and then make a decision without any real conviction.

This section is all about putting yourself in the driving seat and deciding for yourself what is really most important to you in your life by clarifying your Key Values - the five values of greatest importance to your life. By actively finding your most important values, and consciously focusing your actions and decisions so you live these to the fullest you will build a life which is fulfilling and right for you.

Your Key Values will act as your own personal compass. Whenever you come to a fork in the road you can decide which path is most likely to achieve these values and go down that road. Whenever you make a decision you are making a decision which is consistent with what is most important *for you*.

Ends and Means Values

In order to find our most important values it is useful to understand the distinction between End Values and Means Values.

1) End values

End Values are emotional states that you value highly. Consider this list of possible values:

- Having a nice home
- Being happy
- Having a stable job
- Feeling love
- Enjoying life
- Getting promoted
- Being wealthy

- Feeling secure
- Honesty

Which of these are emotional states? Which of these are feelings? You can feel happiness, love, enjoyment and security. These are End Values - emotional states which we hope to gain. You can not feel 'nice home' or 'stable job'!

Means Values

Means Values are things that are important as a way to get to a certain emotional state. Examples above are: having a nice home, having a stable job, getting promoted, being wealthy, and being honest. Through having a stable job for instance, someone might feel a sense of security. What is truly important is security, which is the End Value. The Means Value is the way to get there i.e. it is a 'Means' to an 'End'.

Many people value being wealthy, strive to earn as much money as they can and view being rich as an end in itself. But what will being rich do for these people? What would it do for you? For some people it would give them security, others self-worth, others the chance to relax and enjoy life, and so on. Money is just a means to an end. Notice that it is not the money itself which is the most important value, it is the feelings which the money brings which are really important.

This doesn't mean that money is not important of course, because the feelings it provides often are. Recent research for instance shows that wealthier people are indeed happier. Putting money into the context of the end it brings, though, enables people to get what they really want rather than them pursuing money for the sake of it, only to find that more money in itself it does nothing for them. Focusing on the End Value also enables you to think of other ways of satisfying the value. If "self-worth" is the End Value then this could also be gained through setting a goal and achieving it, doing a fitness programme, being surrounded by supportive people or undergoing counselling.

Key Values

An individual's five *most important End Values* are their Key Values. They are the emotional states which when experienced regularly in life will bring that individual fulfilment. Since people value different things, everybody's Key Values are different, so for example, some people like *adventure*, others *security*, others *contentment*, while others may want *excitement*.

By finding your Key Values and directing your life towards these, you can help create a life which is right and fulfilling for you. You can also understand some of your experiences in life. I remember examining various jobs I have had and how well they fulfilled my Key Values. It was a truly enlightening experience. Those which I thought most highly of where those which fulfilled all my Key Values. Those which I didn't like fulfilled few, if

any. Now I have my Key Values available to me I use these to assess future work I do to ensure it is likely to link in with my Key Values and help me make the right decisions.

It's now time to find your Key Values.

Exercise 2 - Finding your Key Values

Give yourself at least half an hour (and maybe longer) to do this exercise.

1. Think of an important personal decision which you have made over the last few years.

Examples might be:

- moving house
- deciding to get into or out of a relationship
- changing or staying in a job
- where you went or are going on holiday
- taking up a new hobby or stopping an old one
- going on a diet/fitness programme.

Note this in the "Decision" column of the table which follows the exercise.

2. What made you decide to do what you did? What reasons did you have. Note these in the "Reasons" column of the table.

In doing this you are starting to isolate some important values to you. These are the values which have driven your recent decision making.

3. Examine this list of reasons and identify which of these are End Values (emotional states/feelings) and which are Means Values (ways of getting certain emotional states/feelings). Put the Means Values in column 3 and the Ends Values in column 4.

4. Most people find that their answers at this stage are Means Values. So what is the End behind that means?

For each of the Means Values listed ask yourself "What feelings do I want to experience through having this?"

These are your Ends Values, note these in the next column.

5. Repeat steps 1-4 for four more decisions you have made. Try to use decisions from different parts of your life. This way you will find a range of important values.

6. You now have a list of Ends Values. If you had to live a life where you were living just 4 of these values, which 4 would you choose?

If you have two values which, to you, express a similar feeling, then these can be combined in one Key Value. So for instance, one of my Key Values is “*excitement and fun*”. To me, these together express a similar and complementary feeling.

Note your chosen values in the Key Values column

7. The values identified to date come from the core reasons behind the decisions you are making in life. Sometimes though there are other values which if we also used to guide our life would add tremendous value to it. There is room, therefore, to add one more Key Value to your list.

Imagine that you are living the four Key Values you have identified (and only these) right now. How do you feel? What are you doing? What can you hear? What can you see?

Wait until you feel you are really living this life, and then ask yourself “What is missing? What one Key Value would I need to be living for my life to be truly fulfilling?”. Add this value to your list of Key Values.

As a guide of the types of End Values you might like to choose, here are some examples of End Values people commonly have:

Love	Togetherness	Intimacy
Security	Comfort	Warmth
Happiness	Contribution	Peace
Excitement	Exuberance	Passion
Adventure	Challenge	Fun
Feeling good	Pride	Achievement
Freedom	Wonder	Energy
Joy	Liveliness	Hopefulness
Integrity	Accomplishment	Acknowledgement
Power	Strength	Confidence

8. Look at your values as a whole. Does this feel right to you. Is the wording right? Use your intuition to amend the values so they feel right as a whole..

Congratulations you now have your five Key Values.

Decision	Reasons	Means Values	End Values	Key Values
1.				1.
2.				2.
3.				3.
4.				4.
5.				5.

Example

Throughout the programme I will give you examples for each of the exercises to act as a demonstration of how to do the exercises effectively. For this exercise I will use the example of Sue, a 33 year old mother of three, who works part time as a marketing executive. You can see Sue's completed chart over the page.

Notice how many of her reasons are Means Values. Only two of her basic reasons are feeling states. These are indicated by the arrow directing these into the Ends Values column. In all other cases Sue needed to convert her Means Values to Ends Values by asking what feelings were important from having the Means Values.

There were a number of recurring themes in the Ends Values section which ended up forming the basis of her Key Values. This is often the case. People tend to ultimately be drawn to a small number of key emotions which drive their behaviour.

Her fifth value was nothing to do with her Ends Values. Appreciation is a great value to choose. So many people go through life without taking the time to appreciate the wonderful things they have in their life, particularly people like Sue who have so many responsibilities. Through having more appreciation people can really enjoy each day they live.

Decision	Reasons	Means Values	End Values	Key Values
1. To change job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More flexibility in hours to look after children • Better promotion prospects • To earn more money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking after the children well • Getting promoted • More money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love • Security • Feeling secure and avoiding worry 	1. Love
2. To build an extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have a bigger kitchen • To enjoy cooking more • To create a space for the family to eat and be together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bigger kitchen • Family space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warmth • Enjoyment • Closeness/Love 	2. Relaxation
3. To go on holiday to the Lake District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy with a young child • To have a good time • So the whole family could relax and enjoy themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy • Good time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxing • Enjoyment • Relaxation and enjoyment 	3. Enjoyment
4. The choice of Josh's nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A friend's child went there, and she recommended it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other's recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and love 	4. Fulfilment
5. To go on a personal development course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce my stress levels • To get more out of life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce stress • Get more out of life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxed and easy • Fulfilment 	5. Appreciation

Bringing your Key Values to life - Key Values and your mission statement

You have now taken a big step forward in defining your own mission statement. In finding your Key Values you have already entered the core of who you are and what motivates you in life. This is the starting point of your mission.

In your mission statement we want to convert these Key Values into a statement which really brings them to life so that as you read or say the words you connect to your Key Values. The problem with values in pure word form is that we often disconnect from their true meaning, so it is important to create a phrase or paragraph which brings them to life for you, which, as you say it reconnects you to their true meaning.

Lets look at some possible ways of doing this by looking at my Key Values. These are:

1. Challenge and adventure
2. Warmth and serenity
3. Fun and excitement
4. Healthiness
5. Togetherness and love

I could write these out into an expression such as:

“I aim to live a life of *adventure*, where I am continually *challenging* myself to do new things and obtain new heights. I will appreciate life and love life, and through this have great internal *warmth and serenity*. I will be *fun* and have *fun*, and enjoy every moment to the full. I will live life in a healthy way, with the aim of feeling *healthy* and fit. I will aim to create a sense of *togetherness* with others whenever I can, both giving *love* and appreciating the *love* I receive.”

All I have done here is taken each of my values and built around these to create a practical expression of what my life is about. As I sit here and read it, I feel a deep inner connection. Like the statement is hitting right at the core of who I am. That’s the feeling you are looking to generate in your statement. The stronger the feeling and connection that you have, the better, since it will be a better anchor to use to draw you back to this feeling and motivate you.

As an alternative (or in addition to this) you may like to be really creative with your Key Values and write a poem, draw a picture, create an action or do whatever else is right for you, to connect you to your values. Here is my expression of my Key Values in poem form:

Shouting from the highest mountain,
As peaceful as the calmest sea,
Togetherness with others,
While helping them be free.
Living life with fun and wonder,
Exuberating energy,
Striving for all this,
With contentment inside of me.

You may find that just such a statement comes to you, or that you know of a saying or poem which you may like to use or modify which clearly expresses your values.

Exercise 3

1. Take a look at your list of Key Values, and for each one ask yourself:
 - (a) What does this mean to me?
 - (b) What is it like to live this value?
2. Maintaining a sense connection to your values, create an expression which expresses them clearly and fully. Play, enjoy and be creative, remembering that your aim is to produce something which is motivating and meaningful for you, and you alone.
3. Write your statement in the Key Values section of the blank mission statement in the appendix.

Living your Key Values

Having found your Key Values it is vital that you now start living these on a day to day basis if you are to live your life to the full. If your Key Values are different from the current values you use, then living your Key Values will have a dramatic impact upon your life. You are changing the basis of your decision making. If your decisions are different, your life will be too. If you start making decisions based on a Key Values of *fun*, you might find you start to act in a different way with people, choose to do different things with your spare time, or make new friends who you can have more fun with. What you do will be what's right for you.

I challenge you to start doing this right now by asking yourself how you can immediately start living a life where you are living your key values more of the time. Whenever you make decisions, use your key values to help you make the decision. Each and every day review them, connect with them and live them and your life will improve day by day.

Appendix 1 - Proforma Mission Statement

Mission Statement	
Mission Core	
Key Values statement	
Life Direction	
Personal principles	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	