

Seven Steps to Building Success

Tools and techniques
for those who strive to be their best

Originally entitled "The Secrets of Principle Based Self Management"
a component of the "Life Planning Process" by Bill Forrest
Adapted by Andy Lee - Revision Date 1/1/10

Get ready for an exciting ride!!!

This system will help you create a written plan of where you are headed with your life and it will help you follow that plan once it's been written. Once you've written your plan, you'll have the peace of mind of knowing where you are headed and how you're going to get there. And once you start working your plan, you will have even greater peace of mind that comes from seeing your progress and knowing each day is making a difference toward your goals.

You can position yourself for a lifetime of success by spending the time and energy to master and use what you learn here. Imagine your future, then use these tools and techniques to make your dreams come true.

Enjoy the journey.

Quotes

"People with clear, written goals accomplish far more in a shorter period of time than people without them could ever imagine." -- Brian Tracy

"If what you are doing is not moving you towards your goals, then it's moving you away from your goals." -- Brian Tracy

"Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile." -- Vince Lombardi

"It's easy to have faith in yourself and have discipline when you're a winner, when you're number one. What you've got to have is faith and discipline when you're not yet a winner." -- Vince Lombardi

"It is not the critic who counts; nor the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again because there is no effort without error and shortcomings; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at best knows in the end, the triumph of high achievement; and who at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat." -- Theodore Roosevelt

"The tragedy of life doesn't lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach. It isn't a calamity to die with dreams unfulfilled, but it is a calamity not to dream. It isn't a disgrace not to reach the stars, but it is a disgrace to have no stars to reach for. Not failure, but low aim, is a sin." -- Benjamin Mays

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." -- Mark Twain

"The world makes way for the man who knows where he is going." -- Ralph Waldo Emerson

"If you want to live a happy life, tie it to a goal, not to people or things." -- Albert Einstein

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." -- C.S. Lewis

"Everything I've ever done was out of fear of being mediocre." -- Chet Atkins

"Most people struggle with life balance simply because they haven't paid the price to decide what is really important to them." -- Stephen Covey

"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand?" -- Luke 14:28-31

"A wise man thinks ahead; a fool doesn't and even brags about it!"
"Plans go wrong with too few counselors; many counselors bring success."
"The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty."
-- King Solomon

Now we summarize the entire system. Read from the bottom up, since the Belief System is what everything else is based on.

PLANKS OF YOUR
PERSONAL
PLATFORM

Here you will write statements on where you stand on issues that are important to you. These positions are a more extensive development of what you wrote in your Belief System.

PERSONAL
TUNE-UP

To perform at your best you need to be physically, mentally, and spiritually healthy. The Personal Tune-up gives you a way to establish and practice the habits that can keep you healthy.

LONG TERM GOALS

In this step you summarize all of the long term goals you identified for the Roles you described below.

ONE YEAR GOALS

In this step you summarize all of the one year goals you identified for the Roles you described below.

YOUR ROLES

Select and describe from 4 to 7 Roles that you will be involved in this year (and include what you would like to pursue in future years). Your Role descriptions will include one year and long term goals. Be sure that your Roles agree with your Code of Conduct and with your Belief System.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Write your own Code of Conduct that describes how you promise yourself you will act in specific situations. Be certain that your Code of Conduct is in agreement with your Belief System.

BELIEF SYSTEM

Write a few sentences (or paragraphs) that accurately describe the key elements of your personal Belief System.

Step Number One - BELIEF SYSTEM

The objective of Step Number One is to condense your Belief System into several short sentences or paragraphs that capture its meaning. There are, of course, many ways to approach this task, but to simplify the process consider trying one of the following:

1. If you believe in the tenets of a traditional religion or philosophy, then write the beliefs of that particular faith. For example you may be: Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim
2. If you are a free thinker, and are not committed to any particular organized faith, you will be designing your own system of beliefs and values.
3. You may want to blend elements of numbers one and two above into a statement that is tailored to your current philosophical / religious position.

The vital question is: out of all the existing options, what do you believe? What is your credo? In a nutshell, what are the bedrock beliefs of your philosophy or religion? What words most clearly express your deepest beliefs and values?

Most religions have some form of written text that delineates their Belief System. Christians use the Bible, Muslims use the Koran, etc. In addition to these and other documents of faith, here is a list of words that might be useful in triggering your thought process while writing your Belief System:

unselfish	God	optimism
believe in myself	good	peace
compassion	helpful	persistent
courage	honest	productive
curiosity	hopeful	respect
energetic	humor	responsible
enthusiasm	kindnesses	self discipline
experience	logical	sincere
friendly	meditation	work
love	joy	peace
patience	kindness	goodness
gentleness	faithfulness	self-control

What we're going to do in the future is (or should be) established by our Belief System. So it is vital to start this process by writing a few sentences (or paragraphs) that accurately describe the key elements of your personal Belief System.

Review these samples when preparing to write your own personal Belief System.

Belief System Sample A: Christian

I am a Christian. I strive to live my life according to the word of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ. These are found in the Holy Bible. I also study the great philosophers. I weave their best thoughts into the fabric of my Belief System when they are compatible with my faith.

Belief System Sample B: Free Thinker

I am a Free Thinker. I view Jesus, Muhammad, Buddha, and other religious leaders as great teachers, but I cannot subscribe to the idea that any man has appeared on earth as a deity possessed of divine powers. I do not rule out the possibility that a master creator exists.

My Belief System is composed of principles that enable me to find harmony and happiness in my relationships with people and with my environment.

Writing Step Number One. Now complete this step by writing a description of those beliefs that form the foundation of your personal **Belief System**.

Step Number Two - CODE OF CONDUCT

Once you've written your Belief System, you're ready to create your Code of Conduct. Your Code of Conduct will consist of statements that explain how you will act in specific situations.

Since your Belief System is already in place, your Code of Conduct will flow naturally from the principles of your Belief System. Your Code of Conduct (the way you promise yourself that you will act) must be in harmony with your personal Belief System.

The following is a list of questions you may wish to address in your Code of Conduct. Try to describe exactly how you will behave when confronted with the situations presented in these questions. You may want to refer to the list on page five when working through this section.

- How will I treat other people?
- How will I conduct myself in relation to my religious beliefs?
- Will I be completely honest?
- Will I allow myself to use profanity?
- Will I allow myself to use drugs?
- How diligently will I meet my commitments to others?
- How diligently will I strive to reach my full potential?

Review these samples when preparing to write your own personal Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct Sample A: Christian

I believe in, and will earnestly strive to abide by, the Ten Commandments:

- I will worship only one God.
- I will not worship idols of any kind.
- I will not profane my God's name.
- I will keep the Sabbath day holy.
- I will honor my father and mother.
- I will not commit murder.
- I will not commit adultery.
- I will not steal.
- I will not lie.
- I will not covet any person's possessions

Other principles that I will conscientiously follow are:

- I will not swear or use profanity of any kind.
- I will not use illegal drugs nor will I abuse alcohol.
- I will honor all of my commitments according to agreed upon terms.
- I will support each choice that I make with my very best efforts.
- I will strive to do all things with love.

Step Number Three – SELECTING AND DESCRIBING YOUR ROLES
along with
Step Number Four - ONE YEAR GOALS
Step Number Five - LONG TERM GOALS

A way to decide what your personal goals are going to be is to determine what you would like to accomplish in the Roles you are involved in now, and want to be involved in the future. I came across this technique in Stephen Covey's book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People*. His treatment of life planning is excellent, and I highly recommend that you read his book to broaden your knowledge on this subject.

All of us are currently involved in fulfilling certain Roles, so this technique begins right where you are today. You may be a father and a contractor and you're attending law school in the evenings. You may be a full time mom, work the weekend shift as a nurse, and you're also involved in your son's scout troop.

If you were able to do your very best in the Roles that you have right now, you would be accomplishing something that has great importance to you. So, in a tangible way, you would be achieving a goal. By examining the Roles that you are involved in today you can:

- understand your current Roles more clearly
- determine if these are the Roles you want to continue to be involved in
- decide what your short and long range objectives are for each Role that you select to pursue.

The following guidelines are designed to help you select and describe the Roles that you will be involved in this year.

1. List all of the Roles you are involved in right now, and also the Roles you'd like to be involved in the future. Be sure to include in your list:

- The Role of Family Member or Relative
- The Role of Friend
- Your career Role
- The Role of practicing your faith
- A Role that is for fun, (quilting, woodworking, sculpture, model airplanes, scrap booking, etc.)
- Any new Roles, or self development Roles you've been hoping to get around to

Here are some examples to get you started:

Christian	hiker	little league coach	woodworker
deacon	teacher	electrician	committee chair
hunter	salesman	nurse	Sunday school teacher
artist	musician	photographer	bookkeeper
father	mother	political activist	husband
wife	gardener	choir leader	troop leader
mentor	youth worker	volunteer	outdoorsman
singer	scrapbooker	soccer coach	dance teacher

Use the space below to write the Roles you are going to consider:

From all the Roles you've listed above, choose from four to seven Roles you will be involved in this year. Fewer than four will not stretch you. More than seven will stretch you too much. The other Roles need to wait for another year.

Ask yourself some questions like, "Should I take some time off from any of these Roles?" and, "Am I continuing in this Role simply out of habit?" and, "What Roles need to wait until next year?" or, "Am I pursuing this Role because of someone else's expectations of me?"

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.
7.	

Once you have selected your Roles for this year, it's time to get involved in the writing process of Step Number Four. Your task here is to examine each Role that you've selected by writing your response to the four sections of each Role Analysis Sheet.

Role Analysis Sheet - Example A

Name of Role: Husband

My interpretation of this role: To be loving, caring, unselfish, and reliable to my wife.

How I'd like to be described in this role:

"Andy is an honorable partner, one who I am very happy and contented to spend my life with."

My one year objectives in this role are to:

- seek the best possible communication with my spouse
 - listen for the meaning behind the words
 - do not jump to conclusions
 - repeat my spouse's statements to make sure I understand
- attend one marriage seminar
- plan an anniversary trip
- say "I love you" daily
- have one date per week
- make a minimum of one tangible expression of affection each week

My ultimate objectives in this role: To be faithful to my yearly objectives to the end of my earthly life.

Role Analysis Sheet - Example B

Name of Role: Outdoorsman

My interpretation of this role: To respect and enjoy God's creation, and introduce it to others.

How I'd like to be described in this role: Andy taught me to appreciate the out-of-doors

My one year objectives in this role are to:

Take six groups of people overnight camping that would otherwise not be able to go.

My ultimate objectives in this role:

- To enjoy & promote the out-of-doors experience into my eighties.

Now - do your own Role Analysis on the following sheets.

ROLE ANALYSIS SHEET

Name of Role:

My interpretation of this role:

How I'd like to be described in this role:

My one year goals in this role are to:

My long term goals in this role:

ROLE ANALYSIS SHEET

Name of Role:

My interpretation of this role:

How I'd like to be described in this role:

My one year goals in this role are to:

My long term goals in this role:

ROLE ANALYSIS SHEET

Name of Role: _____

My interpretation of this role: _____

How I'd like to be described in this role: _____

My one year goals in this role are to: _____

My long term goals in this role _____

ROLE ANALYSIS SHEET

Name of Role:

My interpretation of this role:

How I'd like to be described in this role:

My one year goals in this role are to:

My long term goals in this role:

ROLE ANALYSIS SHEET

Name of Role:

My interpretation of this role:

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My one year goals in this role are to:

My long term goals in this role:

ROLE ANALYSIS SHEET

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My interpretation of this role:

How I'd like to be described in this role:

My one year goals in this role are to:

My long term goals in this role:

ROLE ANALYSIS SHEET

Name of Role:

My interpretation of this role:

How I'd like to be described in this role:

My one year goals in this role are to:

My long term goals in this role:

Step Number Six - Your Personal Tune-up

When you simultaneously possess a healthy body, an active mind, and a tranquil spirit, your chances of being happy are excellent. The idea of the personal tune-up is to serve as a reminder to keep these three areas of your life in good running order.

On your Personal Tune-up Sheet you will list activities you enjoy doing that will strengthen you in each of the three categories: Physical, Mental, and Spiritual.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO PICK THINGS YOU LIKE TO DO AND ARE CONVENIENT FOR YOU TO DO.

List simple activities you can do conveniently. Ideally, you'll spend a little time in each of these areas on a five-times-a-week basis.

Sample:

Tune-up actions that will strengthen my Body:

- exercise bike
- brisk walking
- tennis
- swimming
- gardening
- stretching
- aerobics
- adequate rest
- daily vitamins
- five daily servings of fruit or vegetables

Tune-up actions to strengthen my Mind:

- regular reading and writing in my career field
- monthly chess match
- daily crossword puzzle
- recreational reading to broaden my perspective

Tune-up actions that will strengthen my Spirit:

- living my Belief System
- scripture reading
- prayer
- regular church attendance
- regular giving of myself and my possessions

Now - make your own list of Tune-up actions on the following page.

Personal Tune-Up:

There are small actions I can take on a regular basis, that will "tune me up," and enable me to perform at a higher level. On this page, I will list the small actions that I've selected to strengthen my body, mind, and spirit.

Tune-up actions that will strengthen my BODY::

Tune-up actions that will strengthen my MIND:

Tune-up actions that will strengthen my SPIRIT:

You may want to develop your own system of tracking your tune-ups, but a simple checklist you can use is on the following page.

Each day you do one of the activities you've listed as a tune-up activity, give yourself a mark in that category. For instance, if swimming is one of your physical tune-up activities, and you went swimming today, give yourself a mark in the Body section today.

When you find that you're not giving yourself many marks in a certain area, it's an obvious indication that you need to increase activity there to restore balance to your life.

Five marks per week in each area is a good target. Take two days off per week to allow yourself some flexibility.

Month

Date	Body	Mind	Spirit	Date	Body	Mind	Spirit
1				17			
2				18			
3				19			
4				20			
5				21			
6				22			
7				23			
8				24			
9				25			
10				26			
11				27			
12				28			
13				29			
14				30			
15				31			
16							

Month

Date	Body	Mind	Spirit	Date	Body	Mind	Spirit
1				17			
2				18			
3				19			
4				20			
5				21			
6				22			
7				23			
8				24			
9				25			
10				26			
11				27			
12				28			
13				29			
14				30			
15				31			
16							

Step Number Seven - **YOUR PERSONAL PLATFORM**

This segment of the program is designed to provide you with a place where you can make statements about issues that are important to you.

Just as a political party hammers out the planks of its platform, you can draft position statements on the issues that are of concern to you. Thoughtfully composing your thoughts on a specific issue has the positive effect of giving you the peace of mind which comes from clearly understanding your position, as well as being able to express your position to others.

In your Code of Conduct, you take a definite position on how you will relate to people, and the description of your Roles is an extension of your Code of Conduct as it applies to specific areas of your life.

Now, we build on the foundation we have in place and write statements that identify our feelings on issues that are important to us.

We should "always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give reason for the hope that you have." Knowing what we believe (our Belief System) is a start. We should also know why we believe it, and be prepared to defend it. It is part of our identity and part of our responsibility to the God that gave us life.

What items should you write position statements on? Just about any item that is of interest to you, and that you want to clarify your thinking about can be the subject of a position statement. On page 21 you will find a list of subjects you might want to include as planks of your personal platform.

You can have as many planks in your platform as you want. This format is open-ended. You may feel you've written all the planks you need, and a month later you'll feel the need to add two more planks. Also, you will want to review and revise your planks occasionally.

Here are some examples of planks:

Goals

About one out of ten people write down their goals. About nine out of ten people accomplish little with their life. Once a year, it is a good idea to write down your short term and long term goals. There are two advantages to this. First, you will be much more likely to hit a target once you have decided what the target is, and second, you will experience the sense of satisfaction and peace of mind that come with true relaxation knowing that you deserve a break because, by golly, you're getting a lot done when you're not relaxing!

Decisions

When faced with an important decision, make a written list of the potential good things and the potential bad things that could come from that decision. Put the list together over the course of a couple days. Ask for God to make things clear for you. Be brutally honest with yourself, for it is easy to see only the exciting possibilities. You have to be realistic and see the disadvantages, realize there will be costs, setbacks and unforeseeable discouragements. With a list of pros & cons in front of you, it is sometimes easier to make a decision.

Another thing to do is to "knock on doors." It is OK to "push them open a bit" and look inside, but we should never force ourselves into something. If you work hard enough, you can make anything happen. If you rationalize long enough, you can convince yourself to proceed with something that may not be good for you. Investigate, consider, listen, and wait on God. Where God guides, God provides.

Work

Every job has its unpleasant aspects. Make sure you realize any workplace you land at, there will be challenges to overcome and some things you will just have to put up with. You may not want to hear this because you want to be successful in your work and you want to do it quickly, yet almost everyone has "pay their dues" for a period of years to get where they want to be in their careers.

Credit

The following words are very, very dangerous. "It's okay, I've got a credit card. I'll worry about paying for it later." The only two things that should ever be bought on credit are your home and your car (and you should save so eventually you can pay cash for your cars, and payoff your house within fifteen years). As for the rest of the stuff – the temporary pleasure of having or experiencing things is not worth the stress that comes from paying for things after you've realized you shouldn't have bought them anyway.

Anger (and how to prevent it)

- Ask ourselves some questions like,
 - Do I have my expectations too high?
 - Am I taking offense when I should not?
 - Why am I angry?
 - Because I am inconvenienced, overlooked, or interrupted? This would be selfish anger.
 - Because I see injustice, disrespect, vice? This would be righteous anger
- Remember that sometimes, silence is better than anything we can say (shut your mouth). Take the time to cool off - a few minutes, a few hours, or sleep on it. Things usually look better when we are not agitated.
- Remember that no one is perfect, and we make some pretty big mistakes ourselves.
- Should we not model the forgiveness and grace that God has granted us?
- Remember that we are servants of God, and therefore servants of God's people.
- Ask, "Am I angry because of my own arrogance or pride?"
- If children are involved, take turns with the kids - give yourself and your wife a break.

Blind Spots

We all have them. We can avoid being blindsided by (some of) the pitfalls of life by being thoroughly transparent with a group of close friends that will hold us accountable (and make sure your friends are accountable too). Be willing to rely on the judgment of others. Stop being the strong, silent, independent type. Ask our spouse or our closest friends, "What do I need to work on to be a better husband / wife / friend / co-worker?"

How much should I work? / How much should I relax?

If God needed a day of rest after six days of work, then so do we.

Be sure that family needs are met, then other items can be added as needed.

Emotions

Live in the moment. Appreciate what we have right now. Don't be troubled over what is past or what is yet to be.

Here is a list of some of the topics that you may want to write a position statement on:

athletics	health habits	retirement
church involvement	humor	savings
free enterprise	income	taxes
elections	insurance	service to country
credit	job (career)	television viewing
eating habits	medical care	time usage
education	music	vehicle(s)
exercise	abortion	war
family planning	recreation	immigration

Only write position statements on items that are of immediate importance to you. Also, be sure what you write in this section is in agreement with the principles laid out in your Belief System and Code of Conduct

Now, write some position statements on things that are important to you.

Topic

My Position

Topic

My Position

Topic

My Position

Topic

My Position

Topic

My Position

Topic

My Position

Topic

My Position

All the foundation work you've done in this program begins to pay dividends when you can look back and see the progress you are making:

- You have defined what you believe.
- You have decided ahead of time how you are going to conduct yourself.
- You are doing the things that you really want to do in your life.
- You know what your short and long term goals are.
- You are keeping yourself sharp in body, mind, and spirit.
- You know what you believe, why you believe it, and are able to defend it.

It is likely you will want to update these documents occasionally. I do them once a year, typically on New Year's day. I have summarized the entire package to one page front and back and I keep a copy of them in a place I see often so I am reminded of my plans and goals.

Now - if you want to keep improving your life, then you must expand your horizons by reading. Expose yourself to the uplifting thoughts and principle based concepts that have stood the test of time. Start reading the works of the following authors:

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| - Og Mandino | - Zig Zigler | - Edwin C. Bliss |
| - Napoleon Hill | - Rick Warren | - Stephen Covey |
| - Chuck Swindoll | - Edgar Guest | - Dale Carnegie |

In Summary

Once you've done the soul searching and deep thinking that is necessary to work through this program you will experience the joyous sense of satisfaction that comes from a job well done. You will have in your hands a document that will enable you to control your own destiny. And, you'll join the ranks of that select group of people who have peace of mind and wear the smile of success, because they have written and achieved realistic and purposeful goals that are in harmony with their deepest beliefs.

May you enjoy your climb and savor the view when you get there.

Keep on building!

Andy Lee

This day Is Mine
Edgar A. Guest

This day is mine to mar or make.
God keep me strong and true.
Let me no erring bypath take,
no doubtful action do.

Grant me when with the setting sun,
this fleeting day shall end:
I may rejoice o'er something done:
be richer by a Friend.

Let all I meet along the way
speak well of me tonight.
I would not have the humblest say
I'd hurt him by a slight.

Let me be patient and serene,
gentle and kind and fair.
Help me to keep my record clean
through all that I must bear.

Grant that because I live today
and to my thoughts give voice,
o'er something he shall hear me say,
another shall rejoice.

Let there be something true and fine
when night slips down to tell
that I have lived this day of mine,
not selfishly, but well.

HOW TO KNOW THE WILL OF GOD by Dwight Hill

Recently I was having breakfast with a businessman who mentioned the fact that he had been offered a very attractive business opportunity which would mean a significant increase in income, but would necessitate a move to a city in another part of the world.

So he asked me, "Dwight, how do I discern the will of God?" Good question!

You may want to ask yourself the following questions as you seek to determine the will of God:

- "Am I putting God's desire ahead of my own?" (Matthew 26:39b)
- "Will it help me to love God and others more?" (Mark 4:19,20)
- "How does this action relate to my personal involvement in fulfilling Christ's Great Commission?" (Matthew 28:18-20)
- "Will this help me lead a more holy life?" (I Peter 1:14-16)
- "Will this course of action increase my personal knowledge of Christ?" (Philippians 3:7,8)

Before we can discern the "*unknown*" will of God, we need to be sure we are obeying the "*known*" will of God. Basically, the "*known*" will of God is to obey:

The Great Commandment: "*Love God with all your heart...soul and ...mind,*" which always translates into obedience to His word. (Matthew 22:37,38 John 14:21)

The Great Commission: "*Love your neighbor as yourself,*" which translates into a life of loving service with a view toward people knowing Christ and growing in that relationship. (Matthew 22:39; 1 John 3:16)

QUESTION: Are you at the present time actively pursuing the "*known*" will of God? If not, my guess is that perceiving the "*unknown*" will of God may prove to be a formidable, if not an impossible task.

DISCIPLINE IS THE PRICE WE PAY FOR FREEDOM
by Dwight Hill

- Exercise and diet regularly and you'll probably live better and longer.
- Focus 100 % on one task at a time, and generally you'll be less frazzled.

Paradoxically, the same holds true in the spiritual realm. For example, when we:

- Take the time and effort to abide in God's word we are liberated from the tyranny of sin's bondage:

"If you continue in my word...you will know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31,32)

- Joyfully endure trials, God is *then* able to forge within us that inner quality of steel belted strength that results in personal freedom:

"When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives my brothers, don't resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends. Realize that they have come to produce in you the quality of endurance. But let the process go on and you will realize that you have become men of mature character WITH THE RIGHT KIND OF INDEPENDENCE." (James 1:2-4 – Phillips Translation)

- Gain control over the dictates of our lower nature we are insured longevity in effective service:

"Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things...Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim...I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified. (literally:rendered ineffective)... for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved." (I Corinthians 9:25-27;li Peter 2:19)

Paul speaks forcefully to this issue of discipline in stating:

"Exercise daily in God – no spiritual flabbiness, please! Workouts in the gymnasium are useful, but a disciplines life in God is far more so, making you fit both today and forever." (I Timothy 4:7- The Message Translation)

I need to ask myself whether I AM WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE OF DISCIPLINE TO ACHIEVE FREEDOM? The toll exacted upon me for the lack of discipline will, in the long run, far exceed the price I pay for freedom through discipline!