

SESSION EIGHT ω GOALS SECTION

To live in fear of being fully alive is the state of most people.

One of the most common experiences people have in going through Soma Structural Integration is the review and revision of many of their long-term goals.

Many of our goals are not really our own because we learned them from our parents, spouses, teachers, preachers, etc. This goals handout is designed to help you decide what goals are really important to you now, and more than that, to determine if they are really your goals.

Please do not read through this exercise until you have 30-40 minutes of undisturbed time to spend on it.

Only you will see your answers. Have fun!

“When that inevitable moment comes, often in crisis, it can change our lives forever. We can no longer live our lives by accident. It breaks us open so that we watch our lives with excruciating care and we walk on the earth paying infinitely close attention to what is precious and what is true and what is right.”

Wayne Muller from Touching the Divine

YOUR LIFETIME GOALS EXERCISE

Get several pieces of paper (or cards) and a pen or pencil.

THE FIRST LIFETIME QUESTION

Write at the top of the first paper. **WHAT ARE MY LIFETIME GOALS?** Time yourself and take exactly two minutes to list answers to the question. Obviously, you will have to be very general and abstract, but you should still have time to take account of personal, family, social, career, financial, community, and spiritual goals. Try to write as many words down as you can in the two minutes. You are not committed to any of the goals that you write down, so record whatever comes into your head.

Include far-out wishes such as climbing the Matterhorn, eating a whole cheesecake, taking a year off for a solo vision quest, building a retirement home on the California coast, going to a group-sex party, chartering a yacht, adopting triplets, or losing forty pounds by jogging an hour a day. There is nothing wrong with uncensored fantasies.

NOW, WITHOUT GOING ANY FURTHER, TIME YOURSELF FOR EXACTLY TWO MINUTES AND WRITE.

Take an additional two minutes to make any changes necessary so that you feel satisfied with your statement of goals at this early level. **TIME YOURSELF FOR TWO MINUTES.**

THE SECOND LIFETIME QUESTION

When you list lifetime goals quickly and without reflection, you probably include a number of generalities such as happiness, success, achievement, love, and making a contribution to society. You can pinpoint your goals by asking a second question. **HOW WOULD I LIKE TO SPEND THE NEXT THREE YEARS?** (if you are over thirty years old, change it to the next five years.) List your answers as quickly as you can for two minutes.

WITHOUT READING ANY FURTHER, TIME YOURSELF FOR EXACTLY TWO MINUTES AND WRITE.

Take another two minutes to include whatever you may have missed the first time around on this question. **TIME YOURSELF FOR TWO MINUTES.**

THE THIRD LIFETIME QUESTION

Take another sheet of paper and from a different perspective, write this third question at the top of the sheet. **IF I KNEW NOW THAT I WOULD BE STRUCK DEAD BY LIGHTNING SIX MONTHS FROM TODAY, HOW WOULD I LIVE UNTIL THEN?** This means that you have only six months to live and have to squeeze whatever you consider important into your dramatically reduced time on earth. Before you start listing your answers, assume that everything relating to your death has been attended to. You have completed your will, bought a cemetery plot and the like. Your answer to this question should concern itself with how you would live these last six months.

The purpose of this question is to find out whether there are things that are important to you that you are not doing now or which deserve more of your attention in the next six months. You might continue to live as you do now; or if you had the money, you might want to quit your job and live it up. What would you do? Write your answers as quickly as you can for two minutes. (Do not get lost in thinking about the question, just write)

TIME YOURSELF FOR EXACTLY TWO MINUTES AND WRITE.

Take another two minutes to include whatever you may have missed the first time around on this question. **TIME YOURSELF FOR TWO MINUTES.**

TIME YOURSELF FOR AN ADDITIONAL FOUR MINUTES, reviewing and improving your goal statements in answering all three questions.

In looking over all three sets of answers, you may have found that the answers to question two were an extension of those to question one; this is okay. Some people find question three an extension or continuation of the previous two, but others are jarred into sharp departure from their previous plans by the sudden realization that their time is limited.

Now you have a list of goals. But you have probably thought of more to do than there is time to do it in. This lack of time creates goal conflicts.

RESOLVING GOAL CONFLICTS

Goal conflicts are resolved by setting priorities. You must decide which goals are most important to you at this time. There is no other way. You must face up to the challenge of deciding what is important to you now by setting priorities. We will sort some of these things out using the three lists you have already prepared.

SETTING LIFETIME PRIORITIES

Take your lifetime goals list in hand and spend one minute selecting your top three goals. Label the most important of these #1, the second most important #2, and the third #3. Do the same on your three-years list and your six months list.

At this point you have nine goals culled from the three lists. Write on a fresh piece of paper, MY THREE MOST IMPORTANT LONG-TERM GOALS ARE.... Pick out the three most important long-term goals of the nine, and write them in order: A-1, A-2, A-3. Now you have zeroed in on just what it is you want to do with your life as you see it at this time.

This brings your future into the present by giving you a clearer view of what your ideal future looks like. The second tool for planning your time continues where the Goals Statement leaves off. It helps you decide on specific activities that you can do now to help you achieve your long-term goals.

You cannot do a goal. You can only do an activity.

To determine the right activities for achieving you're A-1 goals, you must (1) list the possible activities for each A goal and, (2) set priorities to allow you to select the most effective activity to do now.

In listing activities, be imaginative. Quickly write down as many ideas as you can. This is a good way to get creative juices flowing. Trying for quantity and speed will allow your intuition to operate. Your perception will come directly, unfiltered by reasoning processes. The pressure of having to list activities will create new insights. The speed allows you to run right past your inhibitions, because you simply do not give them a chance to operate. The important part of Listing Activities is to keep writing. You are wasting your time if your pen or pencil is not moving across the paper.

Do not attempt to evaluate or censor your ideas yet. If you run out of activities to list, try repeating a previous entry. Try variations on a theme, reactions to previous entries, additions, extension, implications, reactions, greater or lesser detail, broader or narrower focus. The important thing is to keep writing.

Do not confuse goals with activities. Remember, an activity is something that can be done.

You are ready to write. Take three fresh pieces of paper. Write one of the A goals selected earlier on the top of one page. You will break your goals down into do-able activities.

SPEND THREE MINUTES making as long a list as you can of activities that could conceivably contribute toward achieving the first 'A' goal. Time yourself for exactly three minutes.

SPEND THREE MINUTES on the second 'A' goal and three minutes on the third.

Go over your three lists of activities and spend some time on each list. Add, delete, consolidate, refine, even invent further activities. Identify as many activities as you can.

ELIMINATE LOW PRIORITY TASKS

You now have too many activities and not enough time for all of them. Now you need to set priorities. Switch from being creative and imaginative to being practical and realistic. Start by spotting and eliminating low-priority tasks.

For each activity on each list ask yourself. **AM I COMMITTED TO SPENDING A MINIMUM OF FIVE MINUTES (or less if it can be completely finished in less time) ON THIS ACTIVITY IN THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS?** If the answer is no, draw a line through the activity.

Leave only what you are committed to starting for five minutes (and possibly finishing) in the next seven days. No reasons.

If that eliminates too many things, go back and come up with at least four items you consider meaningful and which you will put time into in the next week.

After you have pruned the three 'A' goal activity lists, combine the results into one list. This list will contain perhaps a dozen or so activities that are important and that you are willing to put some time into during the coming week. The next step is to set priorities. Classify the most important activity as A-1, the best use of your time. Number other A-activities accordingly A-2, A-3, etc. With these priorities in mind, set deadlines for the various activities and schedule them into the next seven days.

How can you move closer to your lifetime goals? Select at least one A-1 activity to work on right away and do it. You now have the beginning of an action program for achieving your lifetime goals. Make your first activities short and feasible. Do not get bogged down in trying.

REVIEW

What you have done is fundamental in making your life work. Here are essential points for a quick review:

1. List possible long-term goals.
2. Set priorities for now and identify A goals.
3. List possible activities for A goals.
4. Set priorities and identify A activities for now.
5. Schedule the A activities.
6. Do them as scheduled.