



life
by **DESIGN**

Join the Drive to
ONE MILLION FAMILIES WORLDWIDE
Living Life By Design

think
by DESIGN



It's an easy mistake to make – thinking of creating health as involving only physical actions. You address the Brain–Body Connection through specific chiropractic care, properly fuel your body via Eat By Design foods, and receive adequate exercise by following Move By Design protocols. You experience more energy, better sleep, a stronger immune system, and clearer thinking. The assumption is you're doing everything you need to live an extraordinary life and the results speak for themselves.

Not so fast! To truly be well, you must do everything, at the same time, for a period of time, preferably a lifetime.

The most overlooked requirement for optimizing our health and maximizing your life is fulfilled by the actions and processes that occur right between your ears. The mind is the greatest gift humans have, and our ability to think consciously helps define us as a species. Without deliberate thought regarding the nature of your existence and why you wake up every day, you're relegated to living the life the world defines for you. Welcome to the status quo.

The Why Behind the What

Just as there are physiological needs like food, movement, sleep and nerve



supply, there are also mental requirements like a philosophy, self-esteem, vision, purpose and strategy.

We know thought is required for an optimal life because, in order to thrive in this world, we must learn. Take, for example, our physiology: though much of the body runs automatically, we must ensure the required needs are met in order for the “autopilot” to optimize its expression – it’s thinking that delivers. Food added into the body will be broken down and utilized as nutrients to the best of the body’s ability – but it is thought that brings it to the mouth.

In order to survive in the world you must learn, and to gain knowledge you must think. This makes thinking a primary human necessity for life and a fundamental By Design concept.

The Importance of Thinking

When you observe the state of the world, what do you see? A population that lives with an abundance mentality, strives towards excellence and experiences a happy, fulfilled existence? Or do you see a world in an unstable flux between extreme pleasure one moment and severe depression in the next; surviving instead of thriving, and accepting the lowest common denominator as the gold standard for health, happiness and life?

It is the natural and normal expression of a fulfilled life to be happy, live for

something, value life, to be healthy, to achieve, to have a smile that is genuine, to understand that the cause and purpose of your emotions – the purpose of life – is not to suffer and die, but to enjoy oneself and fully live.

Sadly, most people rarely find this state; even worse, many think it's impossible to achieve.

The goal of Think By Design is not to fill your brain with dogma, or tell you specifically what to think. The objective of Think By Design is to help you learn how to think and guide you through the process. The outcome will be fulfilling the requirements for an optimal mind.

The Challenge That Lies Ahead

Think By Design is paradoxically both the easiest and most difficult of the Life By Design steps to integrate: The easiest because it requires no special knowledge, and the most difficult because the process requires such an in-depth understanding of some very abstract concepts to perform an honest analysis of yourself and your thought processes.

A topic like Eat By Design is difficult in the sense that it requires knowledge of biochemistry, physiology, endocrinology, research methods, and many other complex fields to fully understand its concepts and applications. When it comes to Think By Design, you do not need any special knowledge, only the tools with which you were born – namely your five senses and your consciousness.



A lack of integrity in this area will only lead to your own destruction, and pure honesty will give you an opportunity for growth and development. If you are not honest, you will only be hurting yourself.

Ignorance is Not Bliss

Not understanding a concept does not absolve us of its consequences – for better or worse.

Think of a truck. Everyone has seen a truck, and it's easy to explain the properties of a truck to a two-year-old. If you simply point and say "truck", it won't take long before the child understands what a truck looks like and they too begin to point and say "truck". What if you took the same child and tried to explain the concept of a "vehicle"? The concept of a vehicle is more abstract and harder to understand. What if you tried to explain an even more complex idea like transportation?

You can see the escalating level of difficulty, and here is the problem: a child, even when not understanding the concept of a "vehicle", is still subject to the consequences of that vehicle.

If someone were to see a small child crossing the road and a vehicle was on a direct collision course with the child, not one responsible, reasonable person, would say to themselves, "It's OK, he doesn't understand what a vehicle is; he'll



be fine.” The bottom line is: whether the child understands the concept or not, it will still affect him (in this case it would be life-ending). Once the child begins to understand the concept of a vehicle, he will also understand not to walk in front of one.

Why is this important? At some point in our lives, for better or worse, someone pointed to a truck and said “truck”. They also, for lack of better terms, pointed at other things like happiness, money, love, sacrifice, friends and told us what they are, how they should be viewed. And, like the child, we never questioned the teacher; we simply integrated the information as if it was truth.

We have all heard the term, “love is blind,” but have we ever asked ourselves exactly what that statement means and how, if accepted, it would influence our life? Its intended use describes the experience of overlooking or becoming blind to someone else’s faults or imperfections when we are in a relationship. Does this mean something you think is horrific in anyone else is excused with a spouse or partner? “It’s OK, I didn’t realize that was happening. After all, love is blind.”

It’s easy to think, “Who cares?” But that’s exactly the point. If we don’t care, we leave ourselves open to the same consequences as the child who stepped in front of the vehicle. Ignorance is NOT bliss.

We need to understand concepts – ideas of how things function in the world – for us to function optimally in the world. The truth is you’ve already developed many



of them, and you use them whether you are aware or not. Ideally you would understand them, search for the truest version and live accordingly.

What about happiness? What about money? What about love? What if you are completely unaware of the proper definitions and functions of all these concepts? What would your life be like?

Unfortunately, the associations most people blindly accept have programmed their conscious and unconscious minds and eventually ruin, or at minimum, negatively impact their lives. If you are to ever begin unraveling the thoughts and beliefs that hold you back, you need to start at the very beginning.

Step 1: Develop a Conscious Philosophy

“As a human being, you have no choice about the fact that you need a philosophy. Your only choice is whether you define your philosophy by a conscious, rational, disciplined process of thought and scrupulously logical deliberation – or let your subconscious accumulate a junk heap of unwarranted conclusions, false generalizations, undefined contradictions, undigested slogans, unidentified wishes, doubts and fears, thrown together by chance, but integrated by your subconscious into a kind of mongrel philosophy and fused into a single, solid weight: self-doubt, like a ball and chain in the place where your mind’s wings should have grown.” ~ (Ayn Rand).

A philosophy is your framework for dealing with reality. It guides your decisions,



it lets you know what you think is possible and what you think is impossible, it programs your beliefs, helps you find love and make friends; it could be the cause of your self-doubt, or it could give your mind wings.

More importantly, you need a philosophy to live. If you didn't have one, you wouldn't know how to act. So the question is not "Do I need a philosophy?" but instead, "How do I go about consciously developing my philosophy?"

Most people in the world hold philosophy as a trivial exercise, something over coffee on Sunday afternoon with no real world impact. Simply understanding the importance of philosophy and its proper definition will be of tremendous benefit to your life.

Developing a philosophy is one of the most powerful and exciting experiences a human being can ever have. There are, however, a few common challenges to be aware of in order to optimize the process.

1. Internal Conflict

The first challenge is an internal struggle between what you have to do to practice a philosophy (Life By Design will be our example throughout the book), and what you currently feel is correct, or what you feel comfortable with.

"I want to start living By Design, but I hate lifting weights so I'm not going to



bother.” “I really like Life By Design but I don’t agree with all of the values, so I’m not going to bother.”

This conflict is not a reason to reject a philosophy completely. It’s time to begin to understand where the internal conflict is coming from and why. It’s this contradiction that stores the potential for our growth and development. The emotions we experience are meant to serve as a signal to let us now that we are either “aligned” with our beliefs or “out of alignment” with our beliefs.

We’ve used the term “developing your philosophy,” but it may be better explained as “uncovering your belief system.” Once you begin to become conscious of your beliefs, you will learn that some of them are not true and are, in fact, hurting you instead of helping you. Once you learn what those beliefs are, you can begin to let them go and reprogram them, so that your life becomes consistent and congruent.

2. External Conflict

After we face the internal struggle with a worldview that is different from our current one, we turn to the fear of outside forces that we think will impact us negatively. People are afraid that accepting a philosophy means they are going to battle with every other person who does not share similar views. There is an overwhelming sense that life will be spent in a constant debate with everyone who thinks differently than they do.



The reality is you are not going to have to battle anyone. It will however, require some courage to change and follow a different path. But that's the ultimate purpose of philosophy – to live consciously, to align our beliefs and actions in order to achieve and enjoy the best we can in every area. The goal of philosophy is to give you a blueprint with which to live your life. That's not something to fear – it's something to anticipate.

3. Philosophy is for Young People

The objection is as follows: *“Philosophy is very important as a young person because it helps guide your decisions, helps you choose your spouse, your career, your sense of morality, your profession, etc. But I've done all those things and I no longer have a use for philosophy.”*

Using Life By Design as the example, someone using this argument might say, “I would really love to get my mom to start living By Design, but she says that she is too old and there is no point in starting now.”

If a philosophy guides your actions and improves your life and the quality of it, it is never too late to begin striving to be a better version of yourself.

All of these challenges stem from the same idea. People do not want to accept a conscious philosophy because they think that life will be easier “just living,” “not thinking all of the time,” or whatever other reason they tell themselves.

Take, for example, a spouse who noticed that her husband was acting “weird.” Being a very honest, philosophical and deliberate person, she wanted to find out why. She decided to wait a week, hoping her husband would tell her what was happening. He didn’t. The following week she spoke honestly about her thoughts and perceptions of the situation and asked him what was bothering him. It turned out that his contract was not being renewed and in two years he would be without a job. This was difficult for him to deal with because he was the primary provider for the family.

Thankfully, the spouse responded by dealing with the challenge (acknowledging that there was a problem and thinking about what to do), planning for the future, and developing a strategy for addressing the situation when it happened. The spouse did not evade the responsibility of thought. Her husband, in this case, did. If she wasn’t persistent, they would not have planned for the future and their entire family would have been in financial trouble. They avoided the potential disaster by simply thinking.

Once again: ignorance is NOT bliss. The negation of thinking does not absolve you from the consequences of not thinking. The more conscious you become about what you think and why you think it, the clearer your thoughts become, the better your life becomes, and the more you know what to do and how to take action.



How to Use the Exercises

The law of accumulation governs the results you will receive by taking action. It's not one action, but instead the accumulative impact of many congruent actions taken over time. Stay the course, do the hard work by understanding principles but also the long work by applying them, and the rewards will be yours.

Each of the actions steps in this book will build on those that precede them. Completing them in the correct order is vital to the successful development of an extraordinary life. The results of the exercises in section one – Developing a Conscious Philosophy, section three – Identifying Your Vision, and section four – Clarifying Your Purpose, are not intended to be final products but instead the development of ideas, thoughts and insights pertaining to the specific exercise. The objective is to use the products of these exercises in section five – Detailing Your Strategy.

In this final section, you will create your blueprint, your working document, **Your Guide to an Extraordinary Life**. You will detail your beliefs, vision, purpose and strategy in all *“Eight Branches of Your Life By Design”*.

Action Steps

1. Reading list

“Atlas Shrugged” by Ayn Rand

Please understand you are not being asked to accept objectivism as your philosophy for life. However, better than any other book, “Atlas Shrugged” gives concrete examples of how people with consciously defined values succeed in the world, gives us insight into applying different philosophies to life and challenges the morality of our age.

“Think and Grow Rich” by Napoleon Hill

2. Exercises

Developing your conscious philosophy can be a daunting and difficult endeavor. A tremendous strategy to help you through the process is to break the steps down and learn from others who have successfully accomplished the task already.

a. What Do You Believe?

As discussed, what you believe (your philosophy) determines your actions, and it is your actions that dictate your legacy. This makes understanding what you think



about important areas of life vital to either accepting those beliefs as true or deciding to alter a belief in order to align more closely with reality.

Find a quiet, inspirational location and, with a journal of your choice, begin to think about and then write down what you “believe” about the core areas of your life. What do you believe about health? Do you believe that your body is a machine, built to breakdown and develop disease, or do you believe it is extraordinary and designed to be healthy if you make the correct choices? What do you believe about parenting? What do you believe about money?

As you can quickly see, having beliefs that you are unaware of, or built on a faulty premise, will lead to actions in contrast to what the nature of reality is. The result will always be destruction.

The power of this exercise is phenomenal in helping us understand more about what we don’t know regarding ourselves and our beliefs. As you progress through the steps, you will begin to see the need to come back and alter one or more beliefs to better match what you are discovering is really true about the world.

b. Your Current Values

Next, identify the top five areas where you are currently spending your time and energy. This simple task will demonstrate what your values (priorities that tell you how to allocate time, energy and resources) are TODAY. You may discover

that they are television, video games, toxic relationships and sleep instead of the values you convinced yourself were the most important. This will be an opportunity to confirm if your values are ones you wish to keep or if they need to be altered to attain a different result.

A common example: Many people pronounce health as a value; yet have no health-creating strategy as well as no time or resources applied to attaining it. No matter how often you tell yourself health is a value, it just simply isn't.

c. Your Dream Life

Next, identify what you really want out of your life. Examples may be a happy marriage, a successful career, health, children, family or financial abundance. Through identifying what you want, you will understand more about what your ideal values would need to be in order to drive congruent actions and create your desired outcomes.

d. Your Ideal Values

Visit this website: <http://www.stevepavlina.com/articles/list-of-values.htm> for a list of 400+ possible values. Pick twelve values that will move you towards what you want in your life. Based on your current time and energy allocation (from part b., either you have them and wish to keep them, or based on what you really want for your life (in part c.), you wish to add them as a value.



e. Bring Your Values to Life

Narrow the list of twelve down to as few as you possibly can. Give your value meaning by making it actionable. For example, Excellence is a noun. Bring it to life and help make your decisions based from it tangible by giving it an action-driven definition such as *Excellence: I deliver my best in all aspects of my life.*

Tip

Don't be scared to change one of the values on your list if you think that it is no longer relevant. This exercise requires full honesty on your part. If you are not honest, the only person you are harming is yourself. The more honest you become with yourself and the more clearly you define what you want, the better your life will become.

f. The Doorman Principle

Imagine a very large and mean "Doorman" who has a list of your values. For anyone to pass through the door into your life, they must identify with your values. If they do not strongly match, they do not enter.

This is not a judgment or indictment of a specific person, but instead a principle that is used to guard something sacred – your life. Look back at your life with honesty and recall all the times you made a decision that was not in accordance with your values. What do you remember? Mostly likely it became a disaster



fraught with sadness, upset, anger, or maybe worse.

Every time you choose an opportunity over a value it will lead to destruction in some way, shape or form. Live your life as if your “Doorman” is guarding it. Yes, it will be difficult, but your life and happiness are worth any challenges it may bring about.

With your ideal values confirmed and actionable definitions developed for each, it’s vital you start making decisions based on these values. If an opportunity or choice arises in any area – business, friends, relationship, family or anything that does not meet your values – DO NOT DO IT ... EVER!

g. The Morning Ritual

The ultimate purpose of the Morning Ritual is to encourage lifelong learning, to set time aside to read, review and develop any area of your life you deem important and valuable for the pursuit of your dreams and vision.

This step is hands-down, without question, one of the most powerful action steps anyone can take and one that will deliver abundant impact short and long term.

Start every day of your life with your “Morning Ritual”. You may have heard it called the “Power Hour” or the “Five AM Club.” Regardless of the name, the principle is starting your day with a period of focused time to concentrate on self-

development. Some may start at 5am, others later. Simply set aside a time every day that will be for only you, in a place where you will not be disturbed by outside sources.

During this time, review your values, their definitions, your current and future choices, their alignment with your values and whether you need to invoke the “Doorman Principle” or if they are solid value based decisions.

Next, review your goals from the “***8 Branches of Your Life By Design***” (to be completed in step five) and confirm that your weekly and daily goals are moving you towards what you wish to create in your life. Make the appropriate alterations when necessary to maintain alignment between what you’re doing and what you wish to achieve.

The Morning Ritual is also a wonderful time to introduce movement and exercise. Whether it is the Move By Design Mobility Program, a training session at your local CrossFit gym or simply at home, movement is a vital and powerful way to start every day.

How you choose to organize the time will be flexible and based on each individual – it will be dependent on the amount of time available, your specified goals and ideal objectives. Here is one example:



5am – Move By Design Mobility Program

5:15am – Read “Atlas Shrugged”

5:30am – Review Values

5:45am – Review Weekly Goals

This outline can change day-to-day or week-to-week. Whatever works best for you, schedule it, ritualize it and make it real.

These are not exercises you do once and then forget about them. These are lifelong strategies based on vital requirements for an optimal life. Beliefs and values are a guide – a plan for living congruently with what is truly important to you. Knowing them will help you make the choices that match with your vision and avoid the ones that do not. As you begin to understand your beliefs and values, they will awaken your mind, unveil your philosophy and, as promised, your life will never be the same.

Step 2: Build Self-Esteem

Self-esteem by definition means the *health of the mind*. Its development forms the second step of Think By Design.

Why does philosophy come before self-esteem? Simple. Self-esteem is the byproduct of actualizing your values. If you don't know what you believe, if you don't know what you want, then you won't know what your values are. How do



you begin to live accordingly and build self-esteem?

The Life By Design philosophy on self-esteem is strongly rooted in the work of Dr. Branden. His concept of a deficiency in self-esteem is equivalent to the nutrient, movement, and nerve supply deficiencies addressed through the strategies of Life By Design. Applying this similar philosophy to the requirements of an optimal mind was the inspiration for all of Think By Design.

To quote a pioneer in the self-esteem field, Dr. Nathaniel Branden:

“Apart from disturbance whose roots are biological I cannot think of a single psychological problem – from anxiety and depression, to underachievement at school or at work, to fear of intimacy, happiness, or success, to alcohol or drug abuse, to spouse battering or child molestation, to co-dependency and sexual disorders, to passivity and chronic aimlessness to suicide and crimes of violence – that is not traceable, at least in part, to the problem of deficient self-esteem. Of all the judgments we pass in life, none is as important as the one we pass on ourselves.”

Dr. Branden, who is considered the father of the movement, has published nearly 20 books on the topic, pushed the field further than anyone before him, and left a legacy by creating clear distinctions between different levels of self-esteem and a way for people to begin developing and raising their own.

Dr. Branden discovered what he coined the 6 pillars of self-esteem. Each of these



pillars forms a basic requirement in the development of self-esteem:

1. The Practice of Living Consciously
2. The Practice of Self-Acceptance
3. The Practice of Self-Responsibility
4. The Practice of Self-Assertiveness
5. The Practice of Living Purposefully
6. The Practice of Personal Integrity

1. The Practice of Living Consciously

In order to change anything, consciousness is crucial. Many people are not or choose not to be conscious of behaviors and actions that are damaging to themselves or others. Not being conscious means, “lacking the awareness that something is happening.” In this regard, it can be either ignorance or volitional. By nature we are humans, and this means that there are going to be areas in life that we simply do not possess knowledge about yet. There will always be information, facts or concepts that we don’t know that we don’t know. How do we know what they are? That’s the point, you can’t know. And in these cases our ignorance or lack of consciousness can powerfully affect our quality of life.

On the other hand, living unconsciously by choice is having the knowledge and choosing not to act or willingly pretending that the knowledge does not exist.

Observe a poor relationship. Too often a couple in this situation will behave as if



they are completely unaware that anything is wrong with the quality of their partnership. Yet in hindsight, they can detail the shortcomings of their relationship and the issues that were holding back its development. The truth is, they had the knowledge but refused to acknowledge something was not right.

Not admitting that something needs to change shows a lack of consciousness, and without this realization, nothing ever will. This makes living consciously the foundational step to building healthy self-esteem.

2. The Practice of Self-Acceptance

Once someone becomes conscious that they have something they want to change, the next pillar of self-esteem is the practice of self-acceptance. Self-acceptance simply means to accept your current situation or circumstances. It does not mean that you have to like them, just that you acknowledge them. This applies to both circumstances you don't want (commonly the first thought when one hears the concept of self-acceptance) but also those circumstances you do want.

It is a great crime against ourselves to accept our weak points but ignore our greatness, the very thing that makes us stand out from others. In today's world, people are condemned; not for their sins but their virtues. The very qualities that would make someone stand out as amazing are often ridiculed by the masses.

Look no further than an athlete who wins all the awards and championships that



are possible for them to achieve. When asked about it, they are expected to respond that “*they were lucky,*” “*they had great coaches and teammates,*” etc. The athlete that is honest and admits, “*Yes, I am a great athlete*” is labeled as “cocky” or “arrogant”.

Why should we penalize someone for taking pride in their honest achievements? Why should you take the back seat when you have done something great? If you do, that is a self-esteem problem. But it is also a problem if you take too much of the credit. When it comes to being self-accepting, we need to ensure that we are offering an objective view of both our faults and our virtues.

To briefly summarize the practice of self-acceptance, Branden said: “*My refusal is to be in an adversarial relationship to myself.*” Self-acceptance is simply the acknowledgement of reality, nothing more, nothing less.

3. The Practice of Self-Responsibility

Self-Responsibility means that you accept the fact that you have control over your life and you are an expression of your choices. Being responsible does not mean accepting moral blame or guilt for everything someone feels like blaming you for. It is not your goal to live up to anyone else’s expectations other than your own. Your standards are the only ones that truly matter.

Sadly, society pities those who do nothing to accept responsibility and improve



their life. In contrary, a tragic event seen too often is the attack on the people who do take full self-responsibility for their lives in an attempt to make them better. When Dr. Rachele Jug, co-creator of Life By Design, took full responsibility for her diagnosis of thyroid cancer, changed her lifestyle and in turn saved her own life, she was not given a “pat on the back” by anybody. Instead, she was discouraged to follow her own best judgment, and was labeled “dangerous” by some of her peers, closest friends and medical providers.

The purpose of accepting responsibility for your life is to realize that if you are not happy you can change it. The degree to which you are able to change is the degree to which you are responsible for you own life.

4. The Practice of Self-Assertiveness

Being self-assertive means to speak and act from your deepest convictions – to be truly authentic with your communication. Many feel that, if they express themselves, they may offend someone, or even worse they may not “be accepted” for sharing their genuine feelings or convictions on a topic.

To be clear, self-assertiveness does not mean sharing your opinion at every opportunity and being rude about it. It simply means that, when you speak or act, you do so from what you truly believe to be correct.

Many accept chiropractic as a therapy for symptom relief but, since that idea is



opposite to a deeply held conviction for every Life By Design Doctor, it is not acceptable to refer to chiropractic in a certified office as treatment. Lovingly communicating that chiropractic is a vital life and health-allowing strategy for everyone would be an act of self-assertiveness by a Life By Design team member.

5. The Practice of Living Purposefully

You could say the purpose of life is to clarify your purpose. You cannot wander aimlessly through life and expect to lead a fulfilling existence; you must want to see something happen. Which purpose, or purposes, you choose does not matter as much as just choosing something.

When asked the simple question “What do you want?” most people don’t have an answer. Of course the answer to this question begins in the first part of this book where we discussed philosophy.

The stronger you are philosophically, the more conscious of your beliefs and values you are, the higher your self esteem will be, and the clearer your purpose for living on this planet will become.

A terrible thought that is implanted into many children as they grow up is that following your dreams and making them a reality is a matter of fiction, not fact. True, following your purpose will be difficult and challenging, but it is possible and even probable to fulfill. Far too many people have given up far too early in



their lives because they lacked the courage to follow what they believed to be their purpose.

Dr. Frank Sovinsky reminds us, “The purpose of your life is not to arrive safely at the end.” Your purpose can be whatever you want it to be. It does not have to be transforming the world; it can be something very simple. If your passion is making coffee, it can be your life’s purpose to make great coffee, maybe it’s to raise self-actualized children, or to be the best at pumping gas. It really doesn’t matter what, as long as you have a purpose that is conscious, that you can verbalize, and that you are striving towards each and every day of your life.

6. The Practice of Personal Integrity

The last pillar of Self-Esteem is the practice of personal integrity. Are your beliefs, values, ideals, convictions, standards, and behaviors aligned? Do you mean what you say and say what you mean? If the answer to these questions is yes, you have integrity.

People with a healthy self-esteem have a sense of pride – a characteristic that is frowned upon in today’s world. If you have accomplished many things in your life in an honest and moral fashion, it is automatic to feel a sense of pride. It would be strange if you didn’t. To quote Branden again: “Pride is the emotional reward of achievement, it is not a vice to be overcome but a value to be attained.”



Change Your Mind, Change Your Life

Most people, however, are not conscious of what they hold as their ideals or convictions. For these people the practice of personal integrity is impossible. How do you hold someone accountable when they don't know what they don't know? The issue runs deeper than a lack of integrity – it goes back to the root, it goes back to our philosophy and reminds us that the process of Thinking By Design is a powerful one.

You can begin to see the importance of developing a conscious philosophy and building self-esteem for every human being on earth. They are requirements for an optimal mind and a maximized life. It will be impossible to transform anything in your life until you first begin by altering your thoughts, how you view reality and how you view yourself.

As you develop into a rational and independent human being, the exciting question is “What do I want to do with my life?” The amazing (and at times scary) answer is – whatever you want. There is nothing stopping you unless you have put it there to stop yourself. More often than not, the only thing holding you back is a lack of conscious philosophy and healthy self-esteem, but not any longer. Change your mind, change your life.

Action Steps

1. Reading List

“The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem” by Dr. Nathaniel Branden

“How to Build Your Self-Esteem” by Dr. Nathaniel Branden

The discussion above is a brief overview as to how to begin to build your self-esteem. To understand the concepts fully, we recommend you read both Dr. Branden’s books listed above. He covers an abundance of amazing material and it’s important you take time to read and comprehend the full depth of his knowledge and experience – especially if you have children and expect them to grow up with healthy self-esteem.

2. Exercises

a. Nathaniel Branden has created a simple exercise called sentence completions. At first, it may seem funny and trivial to do these exercises because they seem so easy but they absolutely work. The exercises can be found at <http://nathanielbranden.com/sentence-completion-i>. This exercise is as simple as completing the sentence stems.

b. Act out the six pillars every day in a conscious, deliberate fashion. For example: Whenever we stand up and speak our mind even though we feel fearful

of what others might think, we gain self-esteem. When we cower and stay quiet, our self-esteem decreases. Keep at it every day and with every opportunity, as the law of accumulation will strongly govern your results in this area.

These steps are part of the hard work, but nothing will give you a higher sense of self-satisfaction than planning and then achieving your life's purpose.

Step 3: Identify Your Vision

This is your chance to dream ... to make the impossible probable. Create a vision in every area of your life including your relationships, career, finances, life experiences, health and fitness, etc. If you were only willing to think big, what would your life look like? Don't leave your legacy to chance. Make it By Design. When your home begins to deteriorate or suffers from a serious disaster like a fire or earthquake, the action steps to save and rebuild your home are obvious. First deal with any emergency and stabilize the situation, evaluate what you want, develop a blueprint, create a detailed action plan and get to work!

Identifying Your Vision is all about dreaming what your life could be like if there were no limitations. Don't be restricted by your current capabilities, skills or resources. Think big, dream big, and let go of all limiting beliefs as you create in your mind and put on paper what you want from your life.

Action Steps

1. Exercises

Set aside a time and place in small increments as in during your *Morning Ritual* or take a weekend trip somewhere peaceful and beautiful. Regardless, be sure to create an environment conducive to dreaming big. You will need anywhere from three to six hours to do this task justice.

a. Begin by visualizing every part of your dream – how it feels, tastes and smells – see every minute detail, in any and every area of your life, make it as clear as possible. From the experiences you want to have, the quality of your life, the people you will spend your time with, even the tangible things you would love to enjoy. The power of visualization goes far beyond the context of this book but it's safe to the votes are in. An abundance of research, most successful people and even yourself have confirmed the incredible power of seeing in your mind first, what you wish to experience in your life.

b. As your limiting beliefs melt away and only your dreams remain, what you wish to see will become stronger and clearer. Begin writing down, sketching, mind-mapping, or use any other form of creative expression to document what flows from your imagination.



c. Lastly, synthesize your data into a list of desires, wants, achievements, and feelings in each area of your life. You will use this information again in the final section – *Detailing Your Strategy*.

Step 4: Clarify Your Purpose

Are you wandering aimlessly or are you anchored like a rock? A purpose is your compass, your map and your horizon. It can focus you, drive you and reward you. Whether it is raising a healthy, happy family, traveling the world giving to others or creating a successful business, the secret to happiness is clarifying your purpose.

Why do you want to fulfill your vision? Why do you wake up every day? It is your purpose that gives your life and efforts meaning. It is your story. It is **YOUR WHY**.

How do you determine your purpose? Although some people may choose a purpose easily and quickly, this step will take some time for most and need to be revisited and refined as it continues to become clearer.

One thing that's without question – it must be emotional, it must create goose bumps, bring tears to your eyes, and make you feel as though life would not be as fulfilled without its tireless pursuit.

Action Steps

1. Reading List

“Start With Why” by Simon Sinek

“Man's Search for Meaning” by Viktor Frankl

2. Exercises

Clarifying a deep and meaningful why is rarely an easy task. A wonderful way to begin understanding what makes you tick is journaling. This is the *process* of writing about your feelings, what makes you tick, how you respond in different situations, personal insights, challenges, and triumphs. It is not about creating a product that someone else will read later. The only rule is to not censor yourself.

a. During your *Morning Ritual* or at the end of the day, spend five minutes writing down whatever comes to mind.

b. At the end of each week, spend 10 to 15 minutes summarizing insights about your life, with a specific focus on what actions or encounters made you feel good vs. bad, happy vs. upset, and what, if any, conclusions you can make regarding your purpose.

As your purpose becomes clearer, your sense of well-being and excitement



should increase. You will be looking ahead to opportunities or experiences that allow you to fulfill your why.

You may not hit the nail on the head in one try. It will take time, exploration and persistence. The sense of knowing your purpose will be worth every single moment you spend clarifying it.

Step 5: Detail Your Strategy

Here we are.... We have finally arrived at the “how to” step of Think By Design. It’s commonplace to automatically jump to this section of any book, manual or manifesto, and follow the action steps expecting to get optimum benefit. Leaving in the possibility of *good luck*, it almost never happens that way. All the steps that have been presented are equally important but the key to success is following the very specific order laid out in the book.

Why is *Detail Your Strategy* the final step? Simply because even an ingenious idea, without congruent action, becomes meaningless. How many potentially world-changing thoughts never make an impact simply because action was not initiated? Big dreams can be overwhelming, but when they are broken down into bite size pieces they are instantly less intimidating and seemingly possible.

The process is to create a plan in every area of your life to ensure that massive success is not left to chance but is instead, deliberate and repeatable.



Now things get really fun.... With steps one and two there was less task-oriented work and more discovery. This last step will be the opposite. You've done the hard work, now it's time for the long work.

Your Guide to an Extraordinary Life

The biggest challenge when creating your plan is to avoid becoming paralyzed by the enormity of your dream. It can be very difficult to know what to do today, this hour and minute, to move you towards your vision. Therefore the best solution is to break down the actions and goals into smaller "chunks". We have found that the simplest framework is to begin mapping out your life in the "***Eight Branches of Your Life By Design***".

- 1) My Health
- 2) My Intellect
- 3) My Innate
- 4) My Family
- 5) My Relationships
- 6) My Career
- 7) My Finances
- 8) My Legacy

Your goal will be to write about what you believe regarding each branch (the preliminary work for this was completed as a part of the exercises in step one),



what you want in relation to each categories (the preliminary work for this was completed as a part of the exercises in step three), why you want these particular things (the preliminary work for this was completed as a part of the exercises in step four) and what the action steps are to move towards them (to be completed as a part of the exercises in step five).

To summarize, the four questions to ask yourself are:

Belief – What do I believe?

Vision – What do I want?

Purpose – Why do I want it?

Strategy – What action steps do I need to take

This is an authentic example of the “Health” branch from a 35-year-old female who has been living By Design for six months.

Beliefs

The body is designed to be lean strong and fit

I am born to be healthy – it is my default state

My health is my highest priority; without it I have nothing

My choices matter, the decisions I make determine whether I am healthy or not – it's not luck, genetics or other factors

I can't be healthy unless I have high self-esteem

Vision

To be someone that my friends look up to and learn from

To feel confident when wearing my bathing suit

To be proud of how my body looks

To lose 10 pounds

I can squat my body weight

To be as healthy as possible so that I can do everything I want to now and for the rest of my life

Purpose

To live the healthiest life possible

To make the biggest contribution I can to improve the live of others – in order to do this, I must healthy

To be a role model for my kids

To feel and look good

To feel proud of who I am

To build healthy self-esteem

Strategy

1. Power By Design

- Get spine and nerve system checked on a weekly basis – can be more often but at least once

2. Eat By Design

- EBD > 80%



- Do not eat after 8pm
- Daily LBD essentials – Fish Oil, Vitamin D, Greens +

3. Move By Design

- Joint-to-Joint Movement – **daily**
- Soft Tissue Integrity, Dynamic Mobility, Primal Patterning – **3 to 6 times per week**
- Lift Heavy – **3 to 4 sessions per week**
- Go Fast – **3 to 5 sessions per week**
- Move Slow – **daily**

4. Think By Design

- Perform my morning ritual at 5 am every day (including review values, goals & 5-minute meditation)
- Read at least two books each month

Goal Setting

Discovering what you want helps you set a direction and gives you a destination to reach. In order to have proper goals they must be:

S – Specific

M – Measureable

A – Achievable

R – Relevant

T – Time Bound

Specific means with as much detail as possible. Fuzzy targets never get hit and neither do fuzzy goals.

Measurable means putting a specific value around your goal. “*I want to be happier this year*” is not a measurable goal. “*I want to lose 10 pounds*” is measurable.

Achievable means that your goal is something that you can achieve through your work. Setting a goal for your husband to lose weight is not very attainable because it involves something outside of your control.

Relevant means working towards a vision. All of your goals need to be aligned with the pursuit of your vision.

Time Bound means that you have set a specific time frame for achieving or completing a goal.

Once your goals have been set, start using the word “No”. The world is full of distractions, and if you really want to accomplish something extraordinary you have to make the time and put in the effort to achieve it. Far too many people are addicted to saying “yes” because they think they need to please other people or



make others happy.

If you think that your life's purpose is to please others, go back and re-read the self-esteem section. The reason you have identified what you want is to give you direction regarding what you need to be doing to fulfill your vision.

Ritualize Your Life

Too many people spend their life handling one crisis after another. Once you know what you want and how to get there, focus on that. If something is important to you, put it on your calendar, take responsibility and make sure it gets done.

Create a rhythm by ritualizing as much of your life as possible. You will quickly notice how fluidly things move in your days, how drama will begin to decrease and calmness will begin to flourish.

People will complain that they don't want their lives to become so "regimented" that they lose "flexibility and spontaneity." While that is understandable, it is also untrue. Organization, ritualization and rhythm release the natural flow of your life allowing time for creativity, life enjoyment and productive achievement.

Action Steps

1. Exercises

a. Done during your *Morning Ritual* or schedule a special extended time, begin mapping out each of the **“Eight Branches of Your Life By Design”**. It will take approximately one to two hours in each area assuming you have done all the preliminary steps and groundwork. This is not an exercise that can be done and forgotten.

b. Once you have completed all eight branches, start the process over again at your *Morning Ritual*, dedicating ten minutes every day to reviewing **Your Guide to an Extraordinary Life**. Make notes of potential changes and alterations as you develop, grow and evolve.

c. Revisit your blueprint every six months for an extended time, and evaluate any significant changes to your beliefs, vision, purpose and strategy. Arrange a day trip, rent a room with a beautiful view or schedule it for one afternoon while on a wonderful vacation. Any time you take for this important project will be an investment in your life and will deliver immeasurable benefit.

The pinnacle achievement of Think By Design will be your ability to incorporate the ideas, beliefs, values and convictions you have developed into your vision, for one singular reason – your purpose.



Once you begin to develop your philosophy, choose your values, build your self-esteem, identify your vision, clarify your purpose, and detail your strategy all that remains is the long work – uncovering inconsistencies or contradictions between truth and behavior, modifying your beliefs to approximate reality, revisiting your vision, setting new goals and strategies to achieve them consistently, honestly and for the remainder of your life.

Thinking By Design is not easy, it's not always enjoyable but it is a requirement for an optimal and maximized life. Do the work, reap the rewards, and ensure you safeguard and develop the greatest gift you have – your mind.

Everything at the Same Time

This is a good time to remember that, in order to be living an extraordinary life, we need to be doing ***everything, at the same time, for a period of time, preferably a lifetime***. Thinking By Design alone will improve our life but will not make us optimal.

Life By Design is an integrative approach to achieving success built on the simple principle that having strategies to fulfill the most fundamental requirements for optimal life and health expression will lead to the best version of ourselves.



Don't Forget...

Having a clear Brain–Body Connection allows full integration of all the requirements. Each is dependent on neurological function, and inherent in each requirement is the need for synergistic activity. In order for the body to work together, a proper nerve supply is paramount.

Insert Chiropractic here.