



## The 8 Steps of Storyboarding the Transformation Process

Our stories are our destinies. Everything we do, with or without our conscious knowledge, helps to shape our stories. Stories either take us where we want to go or they don't. There are three fundamental criteria of all good storytelling.

**Before you begin this transformation process, make sure to read pages 1-14 in the book entitled *The Power of Story – Rewrite your Destiny in Business and in Life* by Dr. Jim Loehr.**



Your own life story will be the most important story you will ever tell.



The epicenter of your life story is purpose.



## Step 1: Identify Purpose (Ultimate Mission)

Before you complete this section, make sure to read pages 39-67 in the book entitled *The Power of Story – Rewrite your Destiny in Business and in Life* by Dr. Jim Loehr.

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### *Need to jump start your thought process?*

Sample answers to the following questions can be found on page 20 of the appendix. To view the samples now, [Click Here](#).

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Questions to help in the process:

How do you want to be remembered?

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What is the legacy you most want to leave for others?

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How would you most like to hear people eulogize you at your funeral?

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What is worth dying for?

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What makes your life really worth living?

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In what area(s) of your life must you truly be extraordinary to fulfill your destiny?

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## Step 2: Facing the Truth

Before you complete this section, make sure to read pages 68-119 in the book entitled *The Power of Story – Rewrite your Destiny in Business and in Life* by Dr. Jim Loehr.

Here you must identify and confront your dysfunctional current stories. Some questions to get you going:

- In which of the following area(s) of your life is your story not working? If your behavior is not aligned with your core purpose, then this story cannot take you where you want to go.
- In which area(s) do you need or want to be more engaged to fulfill your *Ultimate Mission*?

- Performance under Pressure
- Work/Job/Boss
- Managing Stress
- Health
- Food/Diet
- Exercise
- Family
- Spouse/Partner
- Children
- Parents
- Love
- Sex/Intimacy
- Friendship
- Happiness
- Trust/Integrity
- Money
- Self-Indulgence
- Spirituality
- Religion
- Death
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



### Step 3: Select a Story to Work on

Because almost all the core stories in our lives need at least some editing, here are some questions to help you with the selection process:

- Which of the stories selected in Step 2 causes you the most concern and grief?
- Which of these stories is the greatest source of disruption?
- Which of these stories creates the greatest misalignment with your Ultimate Mission in life?

After thoughtful consideration, which is the story you would like to work on now and why has it such a high priority right at this time?

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The story you have chosen to edit is your *Training Mission*. If you are to enjoy genuine transformation, then you must commit to work on this story for the next 90 days.

## Step 4: Current Dysfunctional Story (Old Story)

Write the story you have been telling yourself that has allowed the misalignment to occur; this means including the faulty thinking and strange logic that helped to form the story you now wish to edit. Write in as much detail and with as much specificity as you can. Your task is to unearth completely your current dysfunctional story.

Some writing suggestions:

- Don't worry about grammar, spelling or how it sounds. Just start writing.
- Capture both the content of your dysfunctional story as well as the tone of the private voice you use when telling this story to yourself (such as frustrated, cynical, unrealistic).
- Also capture the public voice you use to tell this story.
- Exaggerate the emotion in your story, so it really moves you.
- Bring as much color and texture to your story as you can.
- Identify any faulty assumptions in your story. To help you articulate the faulty story you have created, ask yourself the following questions:

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### ***Need to jump start your thought process?***

*Samples of faulty assumptions can be found on pages 22-28 of the appendix. To view the samples now, [Click Here](#).*

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1. In what way(s) does the story you tell yourself allow you to ignore that it is not taking you where you ultimately want to go in life – is not “on purpose”?

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2. What logic do you use in the story you tell yourself to justify that your story does not reflect the truth?

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3. In what way(s) does the story you tell yourself not inspire you to take action to make this part of your life better?

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Before you finish your Old Story, take a few dives into your sub-conscious world. Ask yourself these questions:

1. What hidden influences might be behind some of your faulty thinking and beliefs that helped to create your current story?

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2. Do you get very defensive about your faulty story? If you do, then what are you protecting? Specifically, in what parts of this story are you most fragile and vulnerable? What are you most afraid of here? If you follow the fear, where does it take you?

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3. The story you currently tell yourself that you wish to edit clearly hasn't inspired you to make a change. What is the logic and rationale you have used to keep this faulty story alive in your life for so long?

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4. Is this really your story you are telling or someone else's? Whose voice is it?

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Ready to prepare the final draft of your current story that isn't working? From here on, we will refer to this current story as your "old" story. This may be your second draft of the story or your tenth. When you are ready, write your final draft in the space provided.

You may wish to read the following examples before you start:

**Sample 1:**

*I am a 35-year-old African American senior executive for one of the biggest, most challenging companies in the world. I rose very quickly and now the pressure is on me. No one can understand or appreciate what I face on a daily basis. I have so many expectations to live up to, both at work and at home. My family should try to understand how hard I work and how much I do for them. They don't know how this terrifying fear of failure burdens me every single day. My voice inside keeps saying, "You cannot fail, you cannot let people down." But my voice also says, "I don't have time for myself, I don't feel in control and, some day soon, my flaws will be discovered." My work expectations are beyond my level of competence. My world at home has a similar theme. I love my wife, but I know she is going to attack me for something I have not done right, and she is probably correct. Eventually, I just shut down, mentally and emotionally. I have no time for friends or my community. Inside I am a complete wreck and I have no clue what to do about it.*

**Sample 2:**

*My life – the way that it is – does not allow any time for myself, and I am okay with that. Exercise time is time I need to spend with my family or get work done. I don't have the luxury of time to focus on something so selfish. Also, eating right is too difficult – so why even bother? The main thing is that I eat something, anything. The right food is not readily accessible anyway. I have a pretty high metabolism, so it is not a big deal when I don't eat right. Sometimes it just feels good to eat a lot of unhealthy things. It is a huge stress reliever for me.*

**Sample 3:**

*My "great" job has changed drastically. The company has created an organization that makes no sense and is operationally set up for failure. I have huge increases in responsibility, including businesses and people over which I have no authority. The company looks to me for answers when, in fact, they should be solving these issues at a structural or strategic level. My job has significantly increased in demand and volume and I simply don't have sufficient staff to cover what is expected. I am frustrated. I am angry. I am resentful. This job is literally killing me, but I see no real solution.*

**Sample 4:**

*I am an impostor sneaking by under the radar. I have gotten to where I am out of pure luck. I don't know what I am doing and am petrified that people will discover the truth. I work hard and fear leaving the office because I am certain, if found out, I will get fired. I have considered personal executive coaching but deep inside don't believe it will help. I have also broken my pact with my wife to share in childcare responsibilities, so I have failed there as well. I blame all my misery and feelings of failure on my job rather than creating the opportunities that I really want in my life.*







## Step 5: Read Your Old Story

Sit back and read your Old Story. How does it make you feel? Sick? Stupid? Dumb? Embarrassed? Does it stir powerful feelings of disgust? Can you see and *feel* the story's dysfunctionality?

## Step 6: Write a New Story

Your New Story is who you must become to achieve mission success in your life. It should communicate where you need to go in life to complete your Ultimate Mission.

**Before you complete this section, make sure to read pages 120-149 in the book entitled *The Power of Story – Rewrite your Destiny in Business and in Life* by Dr. Jim Loehr.**

Write a New Story that

- is fully aligned with your ultimate purpose;
- reflects the truth;
- inspires you to take hope-filled action.

To help you articulate your New Story, here are some suggestions:

1. Start with the words “The truth is ...”. Then proceed to give an account of what is really going on in your life. What myths have you been perpetuating that take you off course in pursuit of your ultimate purpose? Describe as vividly as possible what will likely happen if you continue with the Old Story you have got. What is it going to cost you in the long run if you continue on this path? In other words, if you continue with the same behavior and story, where are you likely to end up? This part of your New Story should involve raw truth. Don’t turn your head from the truth. You will need to face it and look at it. Keep in mind that it may cause discomfort. Face reality head on by connecting the dots.
2. Don’t labor over every word. You will edit it later. Just get your initial thoughts on paper, quickly.
3. Because your New Story packs a cannon blast of reality, it will necessarily stir negative emotion (the more powerful, the better).
4. Now focus on what really matters to you, what is important, what you value. Your New Story should clearly reflect and connect with your Ultimate Mission in life. Articulate how your core values and beliefs connect to this mission. Anyone reading your New Story should have no trouble connecting it with what you care most about.
5. Your New Story should be inspirational for you when you read it. It must move you powerfully: move you emotionally and move you to take action. Use compelling language that will rally passion, conviction, commitment, and clearly conveys the deep value you assign to what and whom you care about.





## Step 7: Create Supportive Rituals

Design explicit rituals that ensure your New Story becomes reality.

**Before you complete this section, make sure to read pages 153-217 in the book entitled *The Power of Story – Rewrite your Destiny in Business and in Life* by Dr. Jim Loehr.**

- Rituals are consciously acquired habits of behavior that enhance energy management in service of a mission.
- Rituals represent the vehicle by which your New Story receives the investment of life-giving energy.

A few suggestions as you think about creating your new rituals:

1. Link the ritual to one or more values. Since the ritual by itself is largely meaningless, connect it to deeper reasons. (i.e., one executive who vowed to take physical breaks every 90 minutes, walks the hallway, poking her head in offices to say hi and see if she could help; in being so public about taking care of herself, she also feels as if she serves as a good example for her workaholic direct reports).
2. Invest energy in it for 30 to 90 days.
3. Be precise in the timing and other details surrounding the ritual (i.e., exercise at the same time certain days a week; when you walk in the door, put your house keys in exactly the same place each time).
4. Acquire no more than a few rituals at a time.
5. Focus on where you are going, not where you came from (i.e., rather than focusing on the cigarette you can't smoke, focus on the lemon drop you are sucking on, the wallet photo of your kids you pull out, the brisk walk around the block you are taking to clear your head).
6. Create a supportive environment (i.e., recruit a buddy or colleague or your spouse to work out with you; have your kids give you a report card each evening to see if you did what you said you would).
7. A particularly valuable ritual is to begin every day of your 90-day mission by reading your New Story.



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***Need to jump start your thought process?***

Sample rituals can be found on page 35-45 of the appendix. To view the samples now, [Click Here](#).

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Rituals:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 8: Provide Accountability

Establish a daily accountability system for the rituals you have committed to.

Almost every successful athlete HPI has worked with has used a daily training log. It helps to ensure that they do what they have committed to doing, at the time and with the focus that they committed to doing it.

**Before you complete this section, make sure to read pages 218-245 in the book entitled *The Power of Story – Rewrite your Destiny in Business and in Life* by Dr. Jim Loehr.**

Some suggestions:

1. Make your accountability system easy to complete and accessible. It could be a sheet of paper on your nightstand or, if you love technology, a spreadsheet on your computer. The point is that you must fill it out daily to keep the transformation process alive.
2. Think of your daily accountability form as both a time management system and an energy management system. Did you do what you said you would at the time you committed to (time accountability)? Did you invest the right quantity, quality, focus and force of energy (energy management)? You can use a scale of 1 to 5 or A through F to reflect your energy investment success. (See examples on [pages 18-19](#).)
3. Consider reviewing your accountability log with someone you respect (spouse, colleague, friend). Ask that person to serve as your coach during the 90-day mission.
4. Be obsessive about your record-keeping and compliance during the 90 days. Eat, drink and sleep your mission.
5. If your enthusiasm about the change you are making starts to wane, or if you start getting bored reading your New Story (this will likely happen at some point), go through the entire process again but in a much shorter time frame. Rewrite your story to reignite your excitement and commitment to change.





### What do you do after your 90-day mission is complete?

Select another faulty story that is not taking you where you ultimately want to go; edit it and begin the process again.

If our stories are our destiny, then to achieve a destiny of our own design, rather than one that is merely a default, requires courage, commitment and energy. It means editing our stories for as long as we are alive.

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### ***Need to further jump start your thought process?***

*Samples of various program components can be found on pages 46-58 of the appendix. To view the samples now, [Click Here](#).*

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# Daily Training Log

## Sample

**MY MISSION:** *To be more energized and engaged in the afternoon at work and with my family at home.*

May 22 - 28

Rituals	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	Notes
Daily mental preparation 5:45 a.m.	5	1	5	5	1	1	5	
Eat breakfast	1	1	5	5	1	5	3	
Eat until satisfied, not full	1	1	3	3	5	1	5	
Break every 90 to 120 min.	3	3	5	5	4	-	-	
Exercise	1	1	5	1	5	5	1	
Exercise intensity	-	-	3	-	3	3	-	
Drink water - carry water bottle	5	5	5	5	5	2	2	
Small portions during lunch/dinner	2	2	3	3	5	1	5	
Snack every 3 - 4 hours	5	5	1	5	5	-	-	
To bed by 11:30 p.m.	5	4	5	5	1	1	5	
Quality of sleep	2	2	4	5	4	2	2	
No multitasking with direct reports	5	2	2	5	5	2	5	
No multitasking with family	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Cell phone off during dinner	5	5	2	5	5	-	-	
Fully engaged - 30 min. at home	3	2	3	5	5	-	-	
Afternoon engagement	3	3	4	5	5	2	2	
Evening engagement with family	3	2	3	4	5	-	-	
Afternoon productivity	3	1	5	2	1	5	3	

1 = not successful    5 = very successful



## APPENDIX: Samples of Selected Storyboarding Elements

### Step 1: Identify Purpose (Ultimate Mission)

#### How do you want to be remembered?

*As a loving, caring father who lived his values and beliefs fully and completely.*

#### What is the legacy you most want to leave for others?

*I want to leave a legacy of integrity, honesty and courage both in my personal and professional life.*

#### How would you most like to hear people eulogize you at your funeral?

*Was compassionate and fully engaged to the very end.*

#### What is worth dying for?

*My family, my country, my integrity and my character.*

#### What makes your life really worth living?

*In spite of all life's challenges, I am able to fulfill my ultimate purpose – to bring optimism, passion and a sense of joy to whatever my life touches and to be grateful for all of life's gifts.*

#### Samples for Your Ultimate Mission:

*To be a person of great character, patience, compassion, generosity and authenticity.*

*To be an extraordinary daughter to my parents, extraordinary sister to my brother, and the most positive and peaceful force in my field within the next ten years.*

*To be a fully connected man whose devotion to his family is an inspiration to others.*

*To be a role model for working moms and an extraordinary volunteer.*

*My mission is to pursue a life of happiness and success at work, aiming toward a future marriage with a future potential family. I, no one else, hold the key to this happiness.*

*To live in such a way that I create hope in others.*

*To know, to feel and to be flourishing so that my actions and words might inspire and benefit my family, my students and all sentient beings.*

*My focus is not on the destination but on the path that takes me there.*

*To passionately love and be loved by my wife and three sons. To have strong and caring relationships with my brothers, sisters and friends. To lead with strength and concern. To leave a positive and lasting legacy for the people I have known and loved.*

*Have a greater impact in the next 50 years than I did in the first half of my life.*

*To raise two daughters to become happy and fulfilled adults. To instill in them values of hard work and caring about people. To have them be friends and stay close with each other all their lives. To continue to challenge myself and grow.*

*To serve God by serving other individuals, my family, my co-workers and under-served people or groups.*

*To make a meaningful change that otherwise would not have happened. In doing so, to create the means for a better future for my family.*

*My mission is to be all I can be both as a mother and leader at work.*

*Be there for my girlfriend and family, friends and colleagues, and always have them know I am the person they can count on.*

*To explore and experience the world in the spirit of adventure and a genuine sense of gratitude.*

*To prove that I can have it all: a close connection to God, a passionate love with my husband, loving guidance of my children, a rewarding career, intellectual pursuits and a healthy body.*

#### Step 4: Current Dysfunctional Story (Old Story)

##### Samples of Faulty Assumptions

###### Performance under Pressure:

*Performing at the highest level under pressure is more luck than anything.*

*Great performers don't have to struggle with nerves. They don't get nervous.*

*I can overcome the tug of sleeplessness by sheer will.*

###### Work/Job/Boss:

*Most of my problems in life stem directly from my demanding job. Without all the stress of my job, I would be a more responsible and engaged father and husband.*

*The only way I can meet the demands of my job is to work longer and harder.*

*Getting just a few hours of sleep night after night, year after year, is the best option or the only option for me to get everything done and to make it through.*

*I will lose my job if I don't keep my cell phone on and constantly check my e-mails at home.*

*My job controls me – not the opposite. I am not the boss!*

*Very few people take breaks. My company would frown on it.*

*Investing the lion's share of my energy at work and not at home will be worth it in the long run. I am doing it all for my family.*

*My job is who I am. Without my job and my money I am a nobody.*

*If I get the promotion and salary increase, I will be happier and feel better about myself.*

*We simply couldn't survive on any less money. That is why I feel like a slave to my current job.*

*Once I make partner in my company, I will have a better chance of finding a mate.*



*I am simply a very laid back person and rarely show excitement for what I am doing. I think most enthusiasm and passion are phony anyway. How much genuine excitement can one generate for work like mine? I work numbers from dusk till dawn and get more than 150 e-mails every single day. I get my work done, but am I fully committed? Probably not – but I don't think I need to be. There is much more to life for me than just my work.*

*I am not running a popularity contest at the office. Yes, I am impatient with people and I am because it serves a purpose. Plain and simple, it keeps people on their toes and they get things done. If I were to be all sweet and nice, projects would drag on and on. People will slack off if I am not on their cases all the time. I don't really enjoy being this way. I tell people if they cannot handle my heat, go somewhere else. You have got to be tough and deliver the goods to be on my team.*

*No one supports me, so why should I support others? It is a "dog eat dog" world.*

*Why do so many bad things happen to good people? The never-ending storms in my life have left me cynical, sarcastic and very pessimistic. It is not how I want to be, but when you consider all the storms I had in my life, my jaded view of the world makes complete sense.*

*With two young children and a job that has no boundaries, I simply have no time whatsoever for community work. To be honest, I rarely even think about it. There is no possibility for it to happen in my life, so I block it out of my mind completely. When I force myself to think about it, I get increasingly clear that I am not giving back beyond the reach of my immediate family. But I have no choice. Giving back is an important part of who I want to be and the legacy I want to leave behind, but it just cannot happen at this time in my life.*

### **Managing Stress:**

*The key to managing stress is to avoid stress.*

*Managing stress is purely mental.*

*The less stress exposure in my life, the happier I will be.*

### Health:

*Heart attacks happen to lots of people who eat the way I do, never exercise and are overweight. But it won't happen to me.*

*I feel good, so my health must be okay.*

*I am still young, so I can get away with doing things that are bad for my health. Some day I am going to have to significantly change or face the consequences. I still have time.*

*Taking care of myself is a luxury I cannot afford right now.*

*I devote what little time and energy I have to the areas of my life that matter most – my family and my job.*

*Choosing not to exercise demonstrates my love and devotion to my family.*

*Taking care of my body is personal and has nothing to do with my responsibilities as an employee.*

*When others neglect their bodies, it shows, but for me it will be different.*

*We are all going to die of something someday. If I die a little earlier because I have a steak four nights a week with half a bottle of wine, it will be worth it.*

*Healthwise, if I do everything else right, I can still smoke and get away with it.*

*Both my mother and father smoked and neither contracted cancer. Smoking really helps me keep my weight down. Which is worse, being overweight or smoking? I am still pretty young and doubt whether it really is that bad for young people. Someday I will quit – just not now. We are all going to die of something someday.*

### Food/Diet:

*I am not in fact what I eat.*

*I am not hungry in the morning, so why should I eat?*

*I hate the taste of food in the morning.*

*If I eat something before I run, I will get an upset stomach.*



*I worked out earlier, so I can have a big piece of pie later, since I already burned off those calories.*

*I overate at lunch. I am disgusted with myself. So for the rest of the afternoon I won't consume a single calorie.*

*I skipped lunch today, so I can have a much bigger dinner than usual.*

*I am obsessed with food and diets. I am always looking for a new secret that will magically fix my problems in this area. I am a seeker for any promise except anything that involves hard work or effort. I have no self-discipline. I am just like my mother.*

*You only live once. Why not eat the foods that taste best? Fatty foods and candy cannot be that bad for you, otherwise they wouldn't be approved by the FDA and readily available to buy.*

#### **Exercise:**

*My life is only marginally affected by my being out of condition.*

*I have no time or energy to exercise.*

*Working out is selfish.*

*I have tried exercise so many times. I simply hate it. I don't understand how people can continue with something that is so unenjoyable and uncomfortable. Everyone tells me I need to exercise and, frankly, I just turn off when I hear it. If the only way I can fix my problems is through exercise, I am destined for failure.*

*If I exercise when I get home, it takes time away from my kids.*

*If I exercise at work, it jeopardizes my standing.*

*If I exercise early in the morning, I won't get enough sleep.*

*If I exercise before I go to bed (as if I have any energy left then), it may lead to divorce.*

*My work is all-consuming. I have neither the time nor the energy to exercise. What little energy I have left over at the end of my day, I want to give to my family. I am not a jock and, frankly, feel quite uncomfortable when I go to public workout facilities. We all have to make tough choices and working out is a luxury I simply don't have right now. My job and my family come first.*

### Family:

*My family understands that the reason I work so hard is because of them. Everything I do is for them.*

*It is okay with my family when I come home from work exhausted and disengaged. They appreciate all that I do for them at work.*

*I bring home the money and my spouse raises the kids. That is how it has to be right now.*

*My father was pretty rough on me and I came out okay. I rarely saw him. What was good enough for me should be good enough for my kids. I actually spend more time with my family than my father ever did.*

*Thank God I don't have the responsibility of a family or a serious relationship. I am pretty one-dimensional, which gives me a competitive advantage, allowing me to achieve my goals and reach happiness a lot quicker, because I can devote everything to being the best at work.*

*It is predictable that my family is always on my case because I spend so little time at home. That is just the way it has to be for now.*

### Spouse/Partner:

*Even though I am frequently disengaged at home, my wife knows how deeply I care about her.*

### Children:

*With all the things I have to do to get the household together, achieving a high degree of engagement with my children is simply beyond my energy reserves.*

*My children are too busy doing their own things to notice my disengagement at home. If they do see it, I really don't believe they take it personally.*

### Love:

*The way my life is going, I honestly doubt that I will ever find someone to spend the rest of my life with. Maybe my standards are too high, but, as sad as it sounds, I will likely spend the remainder of my life alone.*

### Sex/Intimacy:

*I have this deep sense of distrust in men. I had no relationship with my father and I blame him for my inability to get close to people, particularly members of the opposite sex. I will never forgive him for the burden I have to carry because of him.*

### Friendship:

*Friends consume far too much energy and, at this time in my life, disengagement from my friends is the only option.*

### Happiness:

*I will never find real happiness in my lifetime. I just know it.*

*I cannot be happy and be under so much constant stress. Happiness is freedom from stress.*

*No one in my situation could find happiness.*

*My happiness will come when I achieve financial freedom. I know it sounds ridiculous but, for me, it is absolutely true.*

*I sacrifice my happiness for my family.*

*Success and happiness go hand in hand.*

### Trust/Integrity:

*Yes, I have a problem with trust and it comes up in all my 360 feedback sessions. Yes, I need to do something about it, but I just don't believe people are trustworthy. This is constantly reinforced in my interactions in both my personal and professional life.*

### Money:

*Money is a big problem for me. It is only the last few years that I am able to admit it. I live my life as if I didn't have a penny to spend. I never spend money unless I am forced to. More than once I have been told I am cheap and constantly take advantage of*



*others by not paying my fair share. My position on this is, I am simply who I am and I will have money when everyone else is in deep financial trouble. As I see it, it is a problem for others, not me.*

### Self-Indulgence:

*I indulge myself way more than I should. I rarely say “no” if I really want something. We only go around once in life – so why not indulge yourself? Tomorrow may never come.*

### Spirituality:

*I have got a big hang-up with anything religious or spiritual. I carried so much guilt earlier in my life because of religion, and my solution was to dump all forms of religious thought. I would have to say my answer is not very satisfying. I feel a great emptiness inside, but that is the way it has to be for me.*

### Death:

*Start talking about death and I get very uncomfortable immediately. I just want to assume I will live forever and avoid all the morbid thinking and talk. I have a deep fear of death, so I just don’t go there in my thoughts. It is a problem for me and my solution is to just leave it alone.*

### More Samples of Dysfunctional Stories:

*My job has been a real pain for the last three years. I don’t agree with my boss’ values, therefore I avoid her. She doesn’t recognize my work, and that continues to disengage me. On top of that, I had major health problems last year that I am still mentally recovering from, and my energy and motivation have waned ever since. My boss was not helpful then and I still resent that. I turned my energy to some volunteer efforts and I feel better about that, but that eats into my home time. Several times over the last month I have found myself irritated that my kids are getting in the way of my volunteer work. And even the health problems have not inspired me to get into a regular exercise routine.*

*With three young children and a challenging job, there are simply not enough hours in the day. I want to be an extraordinary mother, not just say it but be it. I want to spend time with my children and be active in their schools. But I also have a big job, which*

*is not just 8 to 5. It is stressful and demanding and, because my husband and I work, we operate as a team when it comes to doing things with the kids. But I have specific times that I can be at the office, so work comes home with me every night. My children are not great sleepers, so I cannot give up more sleep to get things done. The result is limited alone time with my husband and friends, and virtually no time for myself.*

*Our deal was simple. We shared the same big goals and shared a common dream. My job was to excel at work, provide at home and attain financial security. It was the fastest or best way to get there. I have done that fairly well – we have it all. It has taken a toll, for sure. But my wife knew that going in. The company I work for is not an easy one in which to be successful. To provide the best for my family, I have to work hard and long. It takes time, time, time – something I have little of. I am simply too exhausted to be engaged with my family, especially in the evening. I wish my wife would get up early with me and work out with me. That would give us more time together. She doesn't work, so that should give her more time to be able to "create time" by better matching up with my schedule. I am doing my best.*

*My life has been a nonstop merry-go-around of activity for as long as I can remember. I have a demanding job which requires global travel and frequent dinner and social engagements. I give 100% to my friends and enjoy socializing with them in and out of town. My passion for playing golf and hockey borders on obsession. I love my wife and children, but the plate of my life spills over. My real quality time with them is, unfortunately, far too little and they deserve more of me.*

*I view my job as a sacred duty. I am highly paid, and to justify that level of compensation and to fulfill my obligations, I must make my job my highest priority. I must not only show up early, I must stay late. I must work all evenings and weekends. My father served his country for 30 years and did not make in one year what I make in a month, so I must be overpaid. I give all my emotional and mental energy to my job and there is nothing left for family and friends. My spouse and children are ignorant of the effort it takes to be successful and employed at the high level I operate. They are unappreciative of the sacrifices I make to provide for all that they have. When I come home, they do not give me the space and time I need to decompress. I have no time for friends and I have lost contact with most of my great friends from the past.*

*I spend too much time either at work, with work related travel, or preoccupied with thoughts about work. I am jealous that my wife has developed a large group of friends that she has lunch with, shops with, travels with and has a book club with. I would like to have the time and energy to focus more on my relationship with my wife. Additionally, I would like to develop my own group of friends away from work and the company I work for. Also, I resent the fact that I have little or no time to devote to my favorite hobby – golf.*

*I wake up mad and mean since I know that I will be called on to give the next 12 to 14 hours to the never-ending demands of my work. I resent knowing that I must sacrifice almost all my waking hours to make others produce and to meet the objectives of my job. I resent the fact that I support a wife, subsidize a mother, a sister-in-law and her whole family who all benefit from my sacrifices without acknowledging that they get the benefits of all the things I give up in my life to produce the material comforts they enjoy. I feel exploited and used. I have rationalized my poor life choices as my only rewards for everything I must do to stay employed at this level of income.*

*I have had a high pressure job with extensive travel for decades. While many sacrifices regarding participation in family matters and functions had to be made – missed birthdays, anniversaries, recitals, award dinners – my career has been financially rewarding and in return for some sacrifices my family has been able to enjoy a nice life style. However, they seem to take this for granted and do not appreciate all of the wear and tear and hassles I go through to provide their comfort. When I return home from a long trip, rather than feeling welcomed and missed, I get resentment and blame for not being home and helping take care of the family, getting the car inspected, fixing a broken shelf or taking care of other day-to-day issues that happened when I was gone. I am expected to do it all, with little in return. With the relatively little free time I get, I like to occasionally take a small “get away” with some male friends to a sporting event, a golf outing or a fishing trip. Rather than encourage this or support what I would like to do for fun, I find further resentment because of my selfishness. I am committed to do my best in a difficult job that takes up most of my time when I travel. I am not appreciated for all of the contributions I make toward the family’s welfare and enjoyment. I am made to feel guilty for doing things I would like to do on my own. I am glad I am appreciated by my colleagues at work for what I do!*

## Step

## 6: Write a New Story

### Fragments from New Stories:

*The truth is, I came from a home that was cold and loveless, with parents who were either never around or incapable of expressing affection for my siblings and me. As an adult, the home I have made is full of love, with a great husband and two great girls. But I have started to realize just how much I have immersed myself in my work, telling myself the whole time that creative achievement and professional advancement are incredibly important to my sense of well-being. Meanwhile, I have become less and less available to my family – yet it is the love of my new family that I have always wanted and that is by far more important to me than career advancement. The truth is, if I keep on this path, I may lose it all, when it was right there in front of me.*

*The truth is, my old sick story is causing me to hurt those I care about most. I present myself as an open, honest, caring person, but this is only partly true. I can show more compassion and caring to those I don't care that much about than those I care most about. My relationships with family, friends and co-workers are dying because I am either choking them or starving them. I am hurting them and I am hurting myself. From now on, I am going to trust my co-workers with my feelings. I am committed to spending more of my time with my wife and daughters. I will stop cutting them off, cutting them down, holding them at arm's length. I will protect and honor them and their feelings. I will use my best energy to engage more on an emotional level ... .*

*I don't have kids or a spouse or really any responsibilities at home, as so many of my colleagues do, so I have allowed my work to become my family. I have no existence or identity apart from my work ... I go in early and stay late. There is nothing to stop me, so there are no boundaries in my personal and professional life. As a consequence, I often feel I am being taken advantage of. But the truth is that it is my own fault for never drawing boundaries.*

*The truth is that work is not the problem – I am. I have ignored health and exercise for the past three years, thinking I am still young enough not to worry ... .*

*My job is not who I am and it is not my highest priority. My family loves me and wants me – my time – not the money I earn. I am underachieving at my job because I have not been taking care of myself and because I forgot what I was working for. I need to create more energy and focus that energy on improving my relationship with my family and friends. This new focus will make me more effective at work.*

*The truth is, no one has forced me to work the hours I do ... I can accomplish as much*

*if I only engaged. The same applies to my workout regimen. From this day forward, my workouts will have more intensity. My meals will be better planned, and I will show my wife, children and direct reports how much I care. Sarcasm is out. Genuine praise will take its place ... .*

*The luckiest day of my life was the day I met my wife. She has been a great lover and partner in everything I do. She gave me children and helped raise two of the greatest sons in the world. These are just a few of the things that she has given me that I want to once again feel like I deserve. She is my best friend, my business partner and my soul mate. I will make the time so that together we can enjoy the life that we always talked about could be ours, and still can be ... .*

*While I have had a role in leading the business, truth be told, if I had trusted my people more and stepped back, provided better coaching and let people run the business, I would be better off. So would the folks I work with. So would the business. If I don't change the pace I have been going, NOW, I will be dead at 60.*

*Who am I trying to be perfect for? Despite the hours I spend at work, I must be more engaged with my family when home. After all, why am I working? I will keep weekends free whenever possible to spend time with my family. My son will only be here one more year before leaving for college, so I better not wait to implement my changes ... What more of a wakeup call do I need?*

*I am a controlling person. What I may view as control for the good of those I care for, is really counterproductive ... Control assumes my way is the right way. That isn't true. I need to let others have a say and be open to other ideas. Compassion doesn't mean taking care of people the way I see fit. Listen with a desire to understand!! Stop kidding yourself!! Don't suffocate others!*

*I continue to think the reason I haven't advanced as expected, is that I am a woman in a male-dominated environment. The truth is, however, that I haven't produced on several projects, and on one project particularly important for my advancement, I just dropped the ball. Then I found myself thinking that if it had happened to one of my male counterparts, it would have been okay. But when I really face the truth, that is probably my own wishful thinking, not reality.*

*The truth is, I am in too much of a hurry to get nowhere ... The truth is, I blame everyone else for me being too busy, too tired, too overwhelmed. I ask for help, yet when offered, I don't take it ... .*

*The truth is, I am not immortal or invincible. If I do not learn to maintain my physical being, my life will probably be significantly shorter and out of balance again. I treat*



*myself with less respect than I do my car or my tools. I will develop a training program and change my eating habits to make the most of my life and maximize my time on Earth. I owe it to my family and myself.*

*The truth is that I am starting a new job and if I don't change my attitudes and beliefs, I will most likely fail again. I have put my kids and husband through a bad time the last three years. But no more. I am focused on my important new work and feel good about it. I leave work energized and on time and head home to enjoy the evening with my kids and husband. We enjoy the time we spend together because I am totally engaged. I have a lot more energy in the evening due to my fitness and nutrition routine, and I know I will be around with my family a lot longer to enjoy this time long-term.*

*The truth is that no matter how busy I am, there is no excuse for bad eating habits and lack of exercise. My father died of heart disease and my mother has type II diabetes. Of all people, I should live a healthy lifestyle. No more excuses! I want to be healthy and active for the people I love most – my family. I have taken for granted that because my husband also works for the same company, he understands that we don't have a lot of couple's time. I have said that we prioritize family time and that is enough. But it is not. The time to develop new rituals for couple's time is now – before problems arise. I know that anxiety and "working mom" guilt are not healthy or productive. They are getting in the way at both home and work. I will be committed to my mission, knowing that when I am fully engaged, I am giving my best at home and at work.*

*The truth is that I am very good at blaming others. The fact that I have little time and energy to fully engage, is a lame excuse (and I know it deep down). I have always been an overachiever without time, but I still need to "create" time to be with my friends and family. I need to be more disciplined in creating more energy and time. I can do this by improving my health and stepping up to the level of commitment and capacity I had for my family in the past. My wife has done everything and more for me and I am blessed that she is still around. The wonderful thing is we have tremendously shared goals and values. She has done her part and I need to do mine. This is too important and, from this day on, I will give my absolute best energy and focus to her and our relationship. Importantly, I am committed for our sake.*

*The truth is that my family, and specifically my wife, deserves more of me, both in terms of quantity and quality. I need to re-prioritize my activities to ensure more balance is placed against my number one priority: My family. Work, friends and my love of sports activities do not need to suffer in order for me to carve out more quality time with my family. I also need to regain my energy by starting a rigorous exercise regimen and a healthy diet. With my family, I need to be 100% "on" at all times. This is my mission and I am committed to it. As a result, my family, especially my wife, will get what they deserve – more of me!!*



*The truth is that I have allowed my work to dominate my time and my life. The result is, I am not fully engaged with my wife and have not taken the time or expended the energy to maintain old friendships or develop new ones. I also seem to find work responsibilities or perceived responsibilities as justification for not calling or going to see my 82-year-old parents often. Additionally, golf is a game and hobby I have enjoyed for years, but I have allowed work and work related responsibilities to all but eliminate golf from my life. I am prepared to change my life and daily routines, so I can enjoy the people in my life, plus discover new friendships. I will exercise regularly, change my eating habits and drink less alcohol. I expect to have more energy, be more focused on important things and have a better quality of life.*

*The truth is that I have been a hard working, dedicated employee for many years and always gave my job full attention and commitment. While this is worthy, it is also selfish because I did not use the time away from building my career to build and grow my relationship at home with my family. Rather than spend dedicated, quality time with them when I had the chance, it was still too often about me or my job as the center of what was going on or important. I focused on myself and what was happening at work, rather than showing interest in and directing attention to what was important in their lives. We were not communicating and our lives were going in different directions with limited intersections of interest or time. I realize that I have missed a lot because of this, but there is still time and opportunity to share many adventures and experiences together – especially using the new chapters in life that my children will enter as they get married. I will put new balance and perspective in what I do, not through less commitments or importance toward my job, but through devoting genuine interest in listening, communicating and sharing what my wife and children are experiencing in “their worlds”. I am dedicated to becoming part of “their worlds” and sharing their experiences – good and bad, happy and sad – in a way I never did in the past. I will be a patient and loving husband and father, which I truly believe will make me a whole person and a better performer in all of my other roles. A new focus on health and nutrition will allow me to do this in an active way for a long time!*



## Step 7: Create Supportive Rituals

### Physical Rituals:

#### Nutrition:

*Eat three balanced meals and two snacks daily.*

*Eat breakfast every day.*

*Never go longer than 4 hours without food.*

*Eat 40% grains, 40% fruits and vegetables, and 20% protein (peace sign).*

*80% of my food intake at any meal should be from need foods and 20% from want foods.*

*Eat no more than five handfuls of food per meal.*

*Eat until I am satisfied, not full.*

*Snacks should be low to moderate glycemic.*

*Snacks should be 100 to 150 calories.*

*Drink water regularly throughout the day.*

*Limit alcohol consumption to two servings per day with dinner.*

*Keep caffeinated beverages to a minimum.*

*Always eat within an hour of waking up.*

*Eat strategically every 2 to 3 hours.*

*Convert to a low glycemic diet.*

*Eat more fiber daily to help reduce cholesterol.*

*Carry a bottle of water with me throughout the day.*

*Eat a carbohydrate-rich meal or snack within 2 hours before and after exercising.*

*Never skip lunch.*

*Eat smaller meals at lunch (correct portions).*

*Get "take-home box" at restaurants immediately after ordering and bring some food home.*

*Keep low glycemic snacks available at all times.*

*Take a healthy snack break every morning and afternoon.*

*Stock healthy snacks at work.*

*Buy a small fridge for underneath my desk at work.*

*Shopping for the right foods with my spouse weekly.*

*Restock my office and home with water on a biweekly basis.*

#### **Movement:**

*Every 30 to 45 minutes perform small movements.*

*Every 90 to 120 minutes perform major movements.*

*Go to bed early and get up early.*

*Go to bed and get up consistently at the same times.*

*Get 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. Highly fit individuals require less.*

*Engage in some form of physical activity daily.*

*Complete at least two cardiovascular interval workouts per week.*

*Conduct at least two strength training workouts per week.*

*To expand capacity, expend energy to the feeling of discomfort.*



*Exercise at moderate to high intensity.*

*Breathe from the diaphragm to enhance energy recovery.*

*Ideal exercise length is 30 minutes to 1 hour.*

*Stand, don't sit. Walk, don't ride.*

*Chart exercise time on a daily basis.*

*Exercise five times per week for 30 minutes at 5:30 a.m.*

*Work out four days a week and make movement efforts all the time: Monday night – strength training with resistance band (20 min.), Tuesday – aerobic intervals (30 min.), Wednesday – off, Thursday – aerobic or resistance training (30-45 min.), Friday – off, Saturday – aerobic intervals (30-45 min.), Sunday – fun exercise with husband (i.e., walk the beach).*

*Add resistance band strength program to exercise routine 2 to 3 days per week (mornings).*

*Join a spinning class on Tuesday evenings.*

*Play squash three times per week.*

*Exercise for 30 minutes during lunch hour to set a great example for direct reports.*

*Exercise with my significant other to spend valuable time together doing something important for both of us and to hold each other accountable.*

*Exercise in the early morning to reduce the amount of sleep I will need due to improved fitness and to give me more energy for playing with my kids when getting home.*

### **Emotional Rituals:**

*One-on-one lunch with a direct report every Thursday from 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m.*

*Personal call or voicemail rather than e-mail.*

*Greet first thing in the morning with positive emotion and an embracing spirit.*

*Turn away from my computer and give 100% focus when someone enters my office (no multitasking).*

*Write an original note to my children every morning before leaving for work.*

*Turn cell phone off and give 100% of my best energy for the first 30 minutes upon arriving home from work.*

*Cell phone off during dinner.*

*Bed time stories with my children every night at 9:00 p.m.*

*Date night with my spouse every other Saturday evening.*

*Call home at 8:00 p.m. every night when out of town.*

*Establish and meet a minimum number of days to be home for dinner every month.*

*Phone call to parents every Sunday evening at 8:00 p.m.*

*As soon as I start to feel impatient, do the following:*

- 1. Acknowledge the feeling.*
- 2. Say silently to myself, "Kindness matters.", which links the ritual to a core value.*
- 3. Take a deep breath and lower my voice.*
- 4. Say something to build the confidence and trust in those around me.*

### **Mental Rituals:**

*Ask, "What is my mission now?", several times throughout the day to increase energy awareness and vigilance. Align my energy with my mission.*

*Review my mission mentally within the first 30 minutes of waking every morning (2 to 3 minutes).*

*Read my new story daily before leaving for work.*

*Prepare ten affirmations and read them daily as part of my mental preparation routine.*

*Fill out my daily training log before retiring for the day.*

*Download my mission on my screen saver.*

*Enter all my time commitments for my mission in my time management system daily.*

### **Spiritual Rituals:**

*Review ultimate mission and new story first thing every morning.*

*Read my vision statement every morning at 6:00 a.m.*

*Spiritual reading 15 minutes daily and connect to my mission.*

*Spend 20 minutes alone for personal reflection on the day's successes and failures relative to my mission.*

*Every morning, list things to be thankful for.*

*Stop at least once a day to appreciate the present.*

*Install a new picture of my family on my screen saver every month to remind myself of the importance of my mission.*

*Laminate mission and rituals on a wallet-sized card.*

*When my mission pushes me outside my comfort zone, say to myself, "I will never surrender my spirit in this mission!"*

*Say a prayer every night, thanking God for blessing my family.*

*Get my entire family more involved in church activities.*

### **Work Related Rituals:**

*Work in 90-minute intervals with high intensity and focus interspersed with 10 to 15-minute recovery breaks.*

*Offer healthier foods, such as fruit, nuts or nutrition bars, in vending machines. Reduce the number of candy options.*

*Provide healthy snacks, such as whole wheat pizza, fresh fruit, nuts, etc., sponsored by the company.*

*Offer healthier lunches and snacks during meetings (using nutritional guidelines by HPI).*

*Order fruit and protein snacks instead of (or in addition to) cookies for afternoon snacks.*

*Have vice presidents who attended the HPI program share nutrition and fitness information with administrative assistants.*

*Provide bicycles for transportation between buildings.*

*Incorporate exercise into off-site meetings (i.e., 7:00 a.m. walk/run as a group, Tai chi class).*

*“Standing meetings” – where people literally stand during the meeting.*

*No lunchtime meetings so people can work out, have planned lunch away from the office, etc.*

*Have more outdoor meetings to be in the sun and raise serotonin levels.*

*For all meetings, provide clear statement of agenda/goals/objectives.*

*Start meetings at 15 minutes after the hour so everyone is present.*

*Make all hour-long meetings a half hour to ensure participants stay focused.*

*“No laptop/no cell phone” rule at meetings.*

*If agenda is complete, end meetings early.*

*Create “meeting-free” time zones (i.e., Mondays, 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.) to allow people to focus.*

*Schedule senior management roundtable and arrange for random invites.*

*Encourage more face-to-face meetings instead of e-mail (promotes movement and small “recovery breaks” throughout the day).*

*Schedule face-to-face time with direct reports once per month.*

*Intentional full engagement whenever meeting with any direct report. No multitasking.*

*Mentally prepare for meetings with others.*



*Listen more and talk less of the time with direct reports.*

*Thank direct reports for their hard work every week.*

*Have vice presidents and participants in the HPI program e-mail their organizations about changes they will be making. E-mail direct reports to encourage key principles – face-to-face meetings, meeting guidelines, nutritional and fitness guidelines.*

*Demonstrate “top-down commitment” by modeling the rituals I wish others to follow.*

*Offer e-mail etiquette training to keep messages productive.*

*Call on assistant to talk through the future plans every three months at weekly meeting.*

*Once a weekend, lay out completed tasks for the week.*

*Set aside 30 minutes per day to plan and lay out the most critical tasks for the next day before shutting down my computer at 4:30 p.m.*

*Get alignment on priorities at work by meeting with boss on a weekly basis.*

*To increase enthusiasm and passion for work, connect each day at work with ultimate purpose in life.*

*When experiencing a setback in the training mission at work, review new story repeatedly.*

### **Family Rituals:**

*Call on the way home to get mentally prepared.*

*Turn off cell phones and PDA systems before getting out of the car coming home.*

*Home for two fully engaged dinners per week (Monday and Tuesday).*

*No TV during dinner.*

*Read mail, do personal e-mails and return phone calls 9:15 p.m. - 9:45 p.m.*

*One note or call home daily when traveling (even when at work late).*

*Focus on one personal activity per week with husband and kids, their choice – i.e., French horn, shopping, review fabric selection. Be engaged.*

*Family fun event weekly. Plan this Sunday afternoon (bowling, games, biking, etc.).*

*Once a week spending time on the phone or in person with a family member.*

*A weekly “engagement report card” from family for nine weeks.*

*Take one Friday afternoon off per month to spend special time with family.*

*Go on a creative trip with family two times a year.*

#### **Spouse/Partner Rituals:**

*Have dinner 3 to 4 nights a week with spouse – no TV, no cell phones, no PDA systems.*

*Home by 7:00 p.m. three times per week to spend time with my husband.*

*“Work-free” weekends, dedicated to my wife.*

*Date night or lunch date with my husband at least twice per month.*

*Engage fully with my wife during the limited time we have together.*

*Speak to my wife by phone at least once a day just to let her know I am thinking of her and looking forward to seeing her that night.*

*Tell my husband how much I love him every morning and before going to bed.*

*At least three times a week, tell my husband what I am happy about and why I am happy.*

*Quality time with my wife before extended travel periods.*

*Fax or e-mail my husband every day when traveling.*

*Hold hands more often for deeper, focused communication.*

*Do one act of kindness for my spouse every week.*

*Engage in activities my wife wants to do (not my lead).*

*Exercise with my spouse once per week.*

*Take a 10-minute walk with my wife and dog after dinner.  
Read new story and review mission first thing every morning and share with my husband.*

*Enroll my wife actively in my "health improvement plan".*

*Leave one weekend each month where nothing is scheduled.*

*Couple's get-away once per year.*

### **Children Rituals:**

*Tell my child I love her and give her a kiss before leaving for work every day.*

*Find something to tell my son every day why he is so special to me.*

*Turn "off" my work (including cell phone) at least 10 minutes prior to picking up kids.*

*Every night after work spend 15 to 30 minutes with kids fully engaged.*

*20 to 30 minutes of TV with my son before bedtime.*

*No work, no phone calls or e-mails until my children go to bed.*

*Read through my daughter's book bag every night and talk to her about what is being taught at school.*

*Give bath to kids and eat with family at least four nights per week.*

*Take my children to school twice per week.*

*Once a week family day engaging with my children.*

*Put a date on calendar once per month for each child.*

*Put a new picture of my teenagers on my screensaver every month.*

*Take a weekend trip with each child, once per year.*



*Take my son on hunting trips.*

*Taking my daughter to England at least once per year.*

### **Recovery Rituals:**

*Work in 90-minute intervals. 90 minutes of high intensity, focused work followed by 10 to 15-minute recovery breaks.*

*Remember recovery breaks with a timer.*

*Schedule recovery breaks on my computer for first 30 days.*

*Breath deeply, relax muscles under pressure.*

*Smile more often.*

*Listen to music and disengage on way home – no work, no cell phone!*

*No cell phone use during last 15 minutes of drive home.*

*Create and use a decompression ritual before going in the house after work.*

*15 minutes of quiet time each day.*

*Yoga 5 to 10 minutes at 8:30 p.m. – Monday, Wednesday and Friday.*

*Breathing exercises in bed to decompress and fall asleep sooner.*

*Night time ritual – in bed by 9:00 p.m., lights out at 9:45 p.m.*

*Shift bedtime back to 10:00 p.m. and make awake time at 5:00 a.m.*

*Keep week days' sleeping habits on weekends.*

*Once per month have a massage for stress reduction.*

*Schedule vacations at least three months in advance.*



**Miscellaneous Rituals:**

*Journal 10 minutes before bed and fill out daily accountability log.*

*Repeat the words, "kindness matters", when I feel myself starting to get impatient, take a deep breath, put a smile on my face and say something that builds confidence.*

*Say, "How can I help you?", more often.*

*Listen with an open mind when others are speaking. Let others finish their thoughts before speaking.*

## Miscellaneous Samples of Program Components:

### Sample 1

#### Ultimate Mission:

*Extraordinary father to my two daughters, extraordinary son to my parents, extraordinary husband, extraordinary leader at work and in my community. A person whose character, honesty and compassion for others are beyond reproach.*

#### Training Mission:

*Become more engaged with my wife at home and direct reports at work.*

#### Old Story:

*I carry a deep resentment for the fact that my work is all-consuming and I have so little time for myself and for my daughters. I cherish my daughters beyond words. I am envious of all the time my wife has with our two children, her time to work out, socialize with friends and have a great life. I am super critical of her when she doesn't do what I believe she should around the house because I sacrifice so much. I have a similar, but not as lethal, attitude toward my direct reports when they don't work as hard and not make the same sacrifices I do. Virtually all my direct reports feel I am too demanding and lack compassion for them. This is not new feedback. I blame my poor health (I am 58 pounds overweight), my shaky marriage and my demanding attitude at work on the impossible demands of my job. I often find myself thinking, "Anyone in my situation would feel and respond the way I do.", and, "I am underappreciated by almost everyone."*

#### New Story:

*The truth is that I am too demanding and lack compassion at home with my wife and at work with my direct reports. If I continue to respond to my wife in my "victim" mode, divorce is inevitable. It would be my ultimate failure in life were I to lose my marriage and break up my family because I am resentful that my wife has it better than I do. As I write this, it is making me sick. I have lost three valuable people in my department and, deep inside, I know they left because of me. I push people until they are as overwhelmed and unhappy as I am. The truth is, the job is not the problem – I am! My wife is a fabulous mother to my children, is completely devoted to me and deserves so much better from me. I am going to change my sick story and find ways to start investing energy in our relationship in a whole new way. I am also making the commitment to change the way I invest energy with my direct reports. I am holding myself to a whole new standard of respect and compassion for others. I will complete this mission!*

**Most important rituals supporting your new story and your training mission:**

1. Read new story and review mission first thing every morning.
2. Find two things to complement my wife on every day.
3. Date night with my wife every other Saturday.
4. Be more engaged in the time together with my wife.
5. Work out 5:00 a.m. - 5:45 a.m. five days a week.
6. Home for dinner at least three times per week and encourage direct reports to do the same.
7. Listen more and talk less in time with direct reports.
8. One-on-one lunch with direct reports every Thursday.
9. Thank direct reports for their hard work and contributions at least once every week.
10. Devote 10 minutes of weekly meeting for direct reports to discuss matters affecting their work/life balance.

**Sample 2****Ultimate Mission:**

*My mission is to live out my life as an extraordinary wife, mother and business leader in order to deeply impact and empower as many people as I can over the longest period of time possible.*

**Training Mission:**

*My training mission is to be fully engaged with my family regardless of the demands of my work and regardless of whether I travel.*

**Old Story:**

*My job requires long hours and much travel. My family should be able to understand that I am doing all this for them – providing a home and financial security to allow them to do and have the things I didn't have when I was growing up. When I am home that is the only down time I have, and most times I am just too tired. When I am home and not on the road, my husband and kids should be glad that I am even home at all without making all these demands that they know I am just too tired to meet. I need for them to be more understanding. If they were more patient and understanding, then life at home would be a lot better for all of us. I know my family gets my energy leftovers, but that is all I have got. I sacrifice everything for them, so the least they can do is to let me shut down when I am finally home.*

**New Story:**

*The truth is that working long hours and constantly traveling is no excuse for disengaging with my family when I am home. If I simply would be more disciplined in my eating, sleeping, exercising and drinking. I will have the energy I need to show them how much I care about them as well as allow me to be more patient and understanding*

*when I am with them. When I think about the message I am sending to my husband and kids with my lack of energy and passion, I am both embarrassed and disgusted with myself. The people I care most about get so little of my energy – and when I do give it, it is all too often negative and critical. From this day forward, the people I care most about will get my absolute best energy. I am going to train every day to ensure that I can deliver on this commitment. I am totally committed to this mission.*

#### Most important rituals supporting your new story and your training mission:

1. Read my mission first thing in the morning and before bed each night.
2. Eat strategically every 2 to 3 hours, going no longer than 3 hours without food.
3. Eat snacks that are low glycemic.
4. Hydrate every hour (carry a water bottle everywhere).
5. Take a 10 to 15-minute recovery break every 90 minutes.
6. Exercise for 30 minutes five times per week.
7. Date night with husband at least twice a month.
8. Notes, calls, etc. to family when traveling.
9. Family fun night once a week.
10. Home by 7:00 p.m. at least three days per week, unless traveling.

#### Sample 3

##### Ultimate Mission:

*To be an extraordinary father, husband and leader at work who is compassionate and inspires others to achieve their goals.*

##### Training Mission:

*To be more engaged at home with my wife and children and at work with my direct reports and extended team.*

##### Old Story:

*I have an overwhelming, all-consuming drive for results, holding myself totally accountable for my company's performance, especially poor performance. And this is how it is supposed to be for a leader. It comes with the territory. My family just doesn't get it! I am ultimately doing all that I do to provide the best for my family which they neither seem to appreciate or accept. They don't understand, especially my wife (!), that I need the time at home to work through the issues I have in my job. At work, when we are having tough results, I need to jump into the business to understand the issues and direct our course of action to turn things around. I will be the one that ultimately gets asked what we need to be doing to fix the situation. I need to have the answers, which means I don't have time to let the team find their way.*



**New Story:**

*The truth is, I have a neurotic need to be in control at work, especially when the business is not performing well, which undermines the confidence and effectiveness of my team – just when their talent and skills are needed the most. At home, I repeatedly allow myself to become disengaged with my wife and kids and use the demands of my work to justify it. I do little to help my wife achieve her goals and aspirations because mine are seemingly at risk. I have been a lousy spouse and life partner to her by letting my selfishness get in the way of what should be my support of what is important to her. My wife and children mean the world to me and I want to and need to start acting like it. My actions need to convey to them that they are my world. At work, I have lost sight of the importance of working supportively with others, failing to fully develop the team's skill set and not inspiring them to achieve their goals. I have fallen into a command and control style which has resulted in my alienation of all those around me. If I continue on this path, I will lose my wife and family and alienate everyone around me. Going forward, I am going to devote myself to being completely engaged at home, especially with my wife, reigniting our relationship and helping her to pursue her goals. At work, I am going to invest my energy into my direct reports to fully develop their confidence and belief in themselves to inspire them to achieve new heights. In doing this, it will ensure sustained extraordinary performance.*

**Sample 4****Ultimate Mission:**

*To excel as a wife, mother and business leader who demonstrates authentic empathy and compassion. To demonstrate an unfailing conviction to my values and positive energy that inspires others.*

**Training Mission:**

*To be more engaged with my husband at home and with my staff at work.*

**Old Story:**

*I have to be focused on success at work in order to ensure that my family is financially secure and that we can live comfortably. Why can't my husband understand this? If he knew what I faced on a daily basis, he would understand that this is the way it has to be for now. I don't have an 8 to 5 job that I can simply turn off when I get home. I need this time at home to catch up on work, and I especially need the time after the kids go to bed to do the work. I know this frustrates my husband, but I am doing it all for him and the children. At work, business demands and other priorities are more important than personally connecting with my staff. What they see as my being too formal and regimented, I see as being focused on the business and business results. Nine out of ten members of my team are new, which requires significant time to bring them up the learning curve – all the more reason why I cannot let up just yet.*

**New Story:**

*The truth is that in my efforts to personally deliver against business objectives and reinforce my need to achieve, I have lost track of what really counts – connecting with my husband and kids. I have given zero effort to seeing the situation through their eyes. When I tell them how important they are to me, my words must ring a bit hollow, since my behavior isn't always consistent with what I say. If I don't change, I will lose the happy moments I will never be able to recapture. Once a moment passes, it is gone forever. Giving my best and full energy is going to mean I need to do a better job at prioritizing, delegating and taking care of myself, so I have the energy to give. Building a stronger, more effective team at work will require developing a deeper level of personal connectedness with my direct reports and instilling in them a vote of confidence in their abilities no matter how new they are to the team. I need to be making work more rewarding for them and recognizing them for their accomplishments more often. I need to trust and empower them in order for them to grow and feel truly valued.*

**Sample 5****Ultimate Mission:**

*To be an extraordinary father and husband and to impact positively the people around me.*

**Training Mission:**

*To be fully engaged with my sons.*

**Old Story:**

*I work long hours and am the family's sole provider. Working hard and long is a requirement of my role and will have to be something that my sons will have to get used to. I provide them with a spacious home, nice clothes, a private school education and many materialistic things, so for that they should feel fortunate. It is so much more than I got from my Dad when I was growing up. I am raising them to be tough sons who will grow up to be strong men. They have to learn early that life is tough and that things cannot always be what you want them to be. Everything I am doing is for them, and what I am doing is the best that I can do.*

**New Story:**

*The truth is that if I really want to be an extraordinary father, I must start working on it now! If I really care about my sons as I claim, I need to start making space for them in my life. I have used my own childhood with my father as a model for my sons, when deep down I know that this model caused deep pain for me growing up. I have to break this cycle or I am destined to see it repeated with my own sons. I will reorganize and prioritize in order to spend quality time with them. When I am with them I will avoid*

*multitasking, not watch TV while they are talking to me, and not take calls on my cell phone when I am with them. I will be an attentive Dad who is dedicated to their needs – a Dad they will always be proud to call Dad.*

### Sample 6

#### Ultimate Mission:

*To consistently instill in my family the feeling that I love and care deeply about them and that they are the most important and cherished part of my life. Also to have a positive impact on others' lives by imparting a genuine sense of warmth and caring to all with whom I come in contact – "... to be the living expression of God's kindness ... let them walk away better and happier".*

#### Training Mission:

*To become more engaged in taking better care of myself (so I have the energy and resources to care better for others).*

#### Old Story:

*My life – the way that it is – does not allow any time for myself, and I am okay with that. Exercise time is time that I need to spend with my family or get work done. I don't have the luxury of time to focus on something so selfish. Also, eating right is too difficult – so why even bother? The main thing is that I eat something, anything. The right food is not readily accessible anyway. I have a pretty high metabolism, so it is not a big deal when I don't eat right. Sometimes it just feels good to eat a lot of unhealthy things. It is a huge stress reliever for me.*

#### New Story:

*The truth is that I can make time to do things that are for me, and that will ultimately improve the time I spend and the engagement and impact I have with others. If it is important then I can carve out time for exercise without negatively impacting my family or my work. If I continue to not take care of myself, there is no doubt in my mind that I will self-destruct. I need to make healthy, balanced, non-binge eating a priority and not take my health for granted. From now on, I will view being fit and healthy as priorities that will positively impact all other areas of my life. I will live out an extraordinary life because I will start with myself!*

### Sample 7

#### Ultimate Mission:

*To be an extraordinary mother to my children so that we will always be close. To be*

*an extraordinary manager who leaves a lasting impression on the people and the organization. To be an extraordinary partner in a long-term committed relationship.*

#### **Training Mission:**

*To become fully engaged in taking care of myself so that I can be fully engaged with my family and my job.*

#### **Old Story:**

*My demands and expectations of myself and occasionally others are unreasonable. Anything short of perfection to me is a failure. I want to do everything for everyone, and I always do what I say I will, but it comes at a cost. I sacrifice sleep, exercise, nutrition and sometimes other very basic health and wellness. My feedback is consistent in that I don't take time for myself. I am too hard on myself. My direct report feedback is consistent in that I try to do too much and need to better manage my priorities and commitments. My high demands and sometimes low perceived compassion and openness to discuss things undermine people's level of enjoyment in working for me. My family feels I am engaged at home but also focus too much energy on work and don't transition to home. I am a slave to my PDA systems. For me, it is more important to define success at work and to excel on performance than invest in relationships.*

#### **New Story:**

*The truth is that for the first 28 years of my life I always had a purpose and goals. My Mom used to gently tease me that I always had a plan. My father consistently pushed me to do more, be smarter, stronger, etc. I learned to accept nothing short of perfection in myself. I have a distinct memory of driving home from winning the interclub tennis championship ten years ago and thinking life was perfect – the kids, work, husband, family – all going according to plan. The next day my grandmother told me she had stage IV breast cancer. The next week we found out one of my daughters needed to have brain surgery. Over the next year, one of my daughters had brain surgery twice, my grandmother died, and two weeks before my second daughter had brain surgery my husband announced he was "cutting his losses and moving on". My life plan was devastated and, since that time, I have lived my life like a pinball – bouncing off what makes noise – without a plan. Just trying to be a good Mom and do well at work but with no clear definition of what that means. Having a couple of stormy years is no excuse to abandon my goals, my vision. Having a failed marriage doesn't make me a failure. It makes me sad that I have lost my vision and inner strength. I want my daughters to be happy, healthy, well balanced adults capable of strong long-term relationships. I will be an extraordinary Mom by managing my energy by getting more sleep, exercising regularly and eating strategically. I will do this for myself and to be a visible example for my daughters. I will be an extraordinary manager by being more thoughtful and clear on my work priorities and set a visible example for my direct reports. I will be fully engaged in developing them as people and employees. I will not*

*be so hard on myself. I am committed to my mission and regain the courage to have a plan and the energy I need to be a visible positive example for others and have a lasting impression on their lives.*

#### Most important rituals supporting your new story and your training mission:

1. Read my mission every day.
2. Each day when I get home wash my face and change into comfortable clothes.
3. Eat strategically every 3 hours.
4. Log my exercise and food daily.
5. Hydrate every hour. Carry water with me all day.
6. Take a vitamin every morning.
7. Take a 10 to 15-minute break every 90 minutes – listen to music.
8. Leave notes, send e-mails to my children when I travel.
9. Work out twice per week with my children.
10. Plan my exercise and meals every Sunday night.
11. Go to bed by 11:00 p.m. each night.

#### Sample 8

##### Ultimate Mission:

*I am committed to being an extraordinary husband and father, an extraordinary manager and developer of people resources, an extraordinary community and church volunteer.*

##### Training Mission:

*Give my full and best energy to my wife unconditionally (fully engaged).*

##### Old Story:

*I am confident, capable and successful. I deserve recognition and praise simply because of who I am and what I have done. I have made the investment in the past and am due the credit now and going forward. If that is not happening, it is because there is something wrong with the other people. They obviously don't understand. It is theirs to fix, not mine – they have work to do. If the others would just get it right, they would see it my way. Then I would get the recognition and praise I deserve. I cannot do more than what I am doing now.*

##### New Story:

*The truth is that if I don't start investing more energy in my marriage, I will lose the best thing that has ever happened in my life. I have always said your world is a reflection of yourself. Well, now is the time to prove it beyond reproach. I am burning the ships behind me, there is no turning back. I have not invested my best energy*

*into the relationship with the most important person in my life – my wife. Not even close. The relationship is dying. I am sick about it. It drains life out of me every day. I am abandoning my naive and immature attitude of the past that has kept me from delivering the proper energy. I will become extraordinary with my wife to invest for growth to gain a true life partner. Because of this, my marriage will flourish beyond my wildest dreams and we will share a long, happy and fulfilling life together. I am absolutely committed to this mission.*

#### Most important rituals supporting your new story and your training mission:

1. Nutrition – maintain level glucose.
2. Exercise – resistance and aerobic training three times per week at lunch.
3. Daily yoga relaxation and breathing exercise before bed (disconnect).
4. Some form of activity daily.
5. Find regular activities me and my wife can do share together (dancing, massage, golf).
6. Review new story daily.
7. Be home for dinner twice per week (Monday and Tuesday).
8. 20 to 30 minutes of TV with my wife before going to bed.
9. Call on my way home to get mentally prepared.

#### Sample 9

##### Ultimate Mission:

*To be an extraordinary mother, grandmother, sister, daughter and friend. To be an extraordinary leader at work. To show love and respect to family and co-workers, and leave a legacy so that all feel that I left a special blessing to each of them personally.*

##### Training Mission:

*To become fully engaged with my work team (direct reports and peers). To focus on my own physical balance between stress and recovery.*

##### Old Story:

*My adult life has been made up of cycles of deep disappointments and pain. At the age of 17, my father told me he planned to help his two sons go to college – but not me and not my sister. I was deeply hurt. A few years later, I married a man who became an abusive alcoholic. He directed all of his self-hatred toward me. I divorced him after ten years of marriage when our son was five years old. I was just starting to get myself back together when I was diagnosed with a spinal cord tumor. I was told I would be paralyzed for sure without surgery and might still be with surgery. I have worked hard and seemingly overcome these obstacles; I got a B.S. in 1994 and a M.S. in 2001. My ex-husband is deceased – his alcoholism having played a large part in his early death. I can definitely say I survived him. I was even able to set things up so that our son saw him often and had a positive relationship with him. I have had three surgeries for the spinal*



*cord tumor and ten years later I am still walking. I do have losses from the tumor and the surgeries, but I'm not seeing things with anger anymore. People complain because I am too direct. They say I seem oblivious to how I hurt their feelings. Well, I am just being truthful. I never would have been able to get as far as I have if I didn't face the facts. They should too. They need to toughen up. My sister says we are not as close as we used to be. Well, I had to tell her some things she didn't like. If she didn't want my opinion, she shouldn't have asked for it. I don't trust those around me because I can't. I have been hurt too much. I can't show any weakness or they will think I am weak. I have to keep my feelings to myself. I mistrust leaders and authority because some have failed me and hurt me in the past.*

### **New Story:**

*The truth is that my old sick story is causing me to hurt those I care the most about. I present myself as an open, honest, caring person, but this is only partly true. I can show more compassion and caring to those I don't care that much about than those I care most about. My relationships with family, friends and co-workers are dying because I am either choking them or starving them. I am hurting them and I am hurting myself. From now on, I am going to trust my co-workers with my feelings. I am committed to spending more of my time with my wife and daughters. I will stop cutting them off, cutting them down, holding them at arm's length. I will protect and honor them and their feelings. I will use my best energy to engage more on an emotional level ... .*

### **Most important rituals supporting your new story and your training mission:**

- 1. I will review my training mission daily.*
- 2. I will change my eating habits – focus on eating right at each meal.*
- 3. I will change my exercise habits – work out every morning six days per week.*
- 4. I will mentally prepare for my meetings with direct reports each day.*
- 5. Each day I will find something that emotionally connects each team member to our work.*
- 6. Once a week I will spend time on the phone or in person with a friend or family member.*
- 7. Create and use a decompression ritual (home by 6:00 p.m.).*
- 8. Keep weekdays' sleeping habits on weekends more often.*

### **Sample 10**

#### **Ultimate Mission:**

*To be extraordinary – as a husband, a father, a business leader, and a friend who positively impacts and genuinely grows those I touch.*

#### **Training Mission:**

*To be fully engaged with each member of my family and each of my direct reports.*

#### Old Story:

*I run from task to task, trying desperately to get it all done, and I normally do. I want it all, and I want to do it perfectly. I pedal and pedal as fast as I can. I understand things very quickly and draw fast conclusions and develop ideas rapidly. I expect others to “catch on” just as quickly and I am often impatient when they don’t. I don’t tolerate it well when people seem lazy or incompetent. I focus hard on getting the task done, which is usually more important to me than the relationships along the way. I have done okay up to now, so things must be okay. If I don’t change much, everything will be okay. I will just keep working hard and it will all work out.*

#### New Story:

*The truth is that I haven’t cared enough about my relationships with my reports and family. I have often been too demanding and lacking compassion, too critical and not supportive enough, and too impatient and reactionary ... I am hurting people. I have not invested, truly invested, in improving myself in ways that would make me an awesome father, husband and boss. Things are okay but should be much better. I am not extraordinary YET! I am changing myself. I will be fully engaged with my family members and employees. I will train daily to ensure I successfully complete this mission. I am going to be outstanding, I am going to “light it up”!*

#### Most important rituals supporting your new story and your training mission:

1. Every morning review new story and grade self nightly.
2. Work out with intensity Monday through Friday: 3x aerobics, 2x strength training.
3. Eat proper foods every 2 to 3 hours (snacks, meals) – correct proportions, balanced.
4. Do not overreact. Don’t be confrontational, don’t be impatient (unwind, relax).
5. Casual chats with employees weekly. Thank them for their hard work.
6. Work in 90-minute intervals with intensity and focus. 10 to 15-minute recovery breaks.
7. Focus on people in my organization – full attention, no multitasking.
8. At least 1 hour each weekend dedicated to my daughter. Plan this Sunday afternoon.
9. Family fun event weekly. Plan this Sunday afternoon (bowling, games, biking, etc.).

#### Sample 11

##### Ultimate Mission:

*To be an extraordinary wife and mother in my “home” life and an extraordinary contributor in my business/professional life. Really light it up!!*



**Training Mission:**

*To be fully engaged and “present” with my husband and children in particular so that they are recipients of (my best) extraordinary energy. To rebuild my mental and emotional strength through recovery/renewal rituals.*

**Old Story:**

*I don't have enough time and can't do everything. There are only 24 hours in the day and I am doing my absolute best. I try to keep up with the kids, their interests and their lives, but always seem to be one step behind. I don't know how others do it. I don't feel that I make time for myself and when I do I feel guilty. I am very hard on myself and question myself at every turn. I think my mind and body are showing signs of “wear and tear” and I need to respond quickly.*

**New Story:**

*The truth is that my husband and children are the most precious gifts in my life. My family deserves more. I want them to know the wife and mother that I am capable of being – through not only my words but also my actions. Over the coming years, the memories we create together as a family will last a lifetime for each one of us. I want my daughter to have fond memories of our specials times – our “girl time” – talking, laughing, being silly. I want my son to just blossom from this amazing little boy to a very special young man, and know that I was even a small part of his success. I want my husband to be proud of the partnership and sense of family that we have built together. And for me? At the end of the road I want to know in my heart and soul that I gave my absolute best to my family – no regrets, no excuses, no guilt – only joy. To this end, I commit to being fully engaged and “present” with my family so that they are recipients of my best, extraordinary energy. I will also work hard to rebuild my strength through recovery and renewal, as this is key for sustaining my energy. I am fully committed to this as a new mission in my life. And I will succeed. I will “light it up”!!!!*

**Most important rituals supporting your new story and your training mission:**

1. Read new story and review mission first thing every morning – share story with my husband.
2. Turn “off” my work (including cell phone) at least 10 minutes prior to picking up kids.
3. Use car time home consistently and constructively to talk about our days.
4. Read through my daughter's book bag every night and talk to her about what is being taught at school.
5. Eat dinner at home at least three days per week.
6. Date night with husband at least twice per month.
7. Family fun night once per week – try something new.
8. Minimize multitasking – give full undivided attention.
9. Follow nutrition recommendations.
10. Stay disciplined with fitness routine.



## Sample 12

### Ultimate Mission:

*I want to be an extraordinary wife, daughter, step-parent, grandparent and colleague at work to impact a sense of passion, health and harmony.*

### Training Mission:

*My training mission is to be fully engaged with my husband and to spend “quality” time with him regardless of our work commitments and travel schedules.*

### Old Story:

*My job requires long periods of travel away from home. My husband needs to be more helpful with home responsibilities (groceries, cleaning, bills). When I come off the road, I need down time and I am often tired. Sometimes I have very little energy for family and social obligations. I resent that his travel is not as comprehensive as mine. I resent that he plays golf every Friday and it is considered work. In his job that is okay and in mine it is not. I have a tendency to get very hard on myself and expect the same from everyone else at work and in my personal life.*

### New Story:

*The truth is that the people I care most about are the ones I dump on. I will accept and make peace with my extended periods of travel. I need to create rituals to become more disciplined in my fitness, eating and drinking. This will allow me to have more energy with my husband, family and co-workers. The level and depth of frustration, panic, impatience and multitasking is unacceptable to my family, co-workers and myself. Going forward, starting today, the people I care most about will get my full engagement and my best energy. Daily self-reflection and monitoring will ensure that I can complete this mission.*

### Most important rituals supporting your new story and your training mission:

1. Read mission twice a day.
2. Aerobic exercise with heart rate monitor three times a week.
3. Weights twice a week.
4. Eat strategically every 2 to 3 hours.
5. Kitchen timer set for recovery break every 90 minutes – movement and stretches.
6. Notes and cards to husband when traveling – faxes.
7. Fully engaged phone calls to husband when traveling.
8. Quality time with husband before extended travel periods.
9. Checklist for monitoring progress.
10. Sleep/Bedtime: Breathing exercise.