

t

Life Development Planning



thrive
Personal Growth Skills

Copyright © 2022 by Project Exodus
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means - for example electronic, photocopy, recording - without the prior written permission of Project Exodus. All Project Exodus material is protected IP.
Please contact us for written consent to use any content herein.

Project Exodus SA NPC (2020/510738/08) / NPO 255–619.
Anthem Church. 37 Mackeurtan Avenue.
Durban North. KwaZulu-Natal. 4051
+27 (31) 563 9605 | info@projectexodus.net
www.projectexodus.net | www.facebook.com/projectexodusrecovery/

thrive Personal Growth Skills_Version 2

thrive – Personal Growth Skills

LEARN. REFLECT. APPLY.



*The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it **in abundance** [to the full, till it overflows].*
(John 10:10 AMP)

thrive is a cutting-edge personal development programme designed to equip and empower the body of Christ. Informed by decades of experience and expertise in the field of recovery, **thrive** delivers a current and best-practice approach to maturing in mental health and wholeness.

We have an enemy who is described as a thief attempting to derail us from God's purposes for our lives, to kill our dreams and to destroy us. As a result of the trials, temptations and battles that we fight, we may find ourselves white-knuckling through life trying to merely survive, rather than to **thrive**.

Growing in maturity requires uprooting flawed beliefs and interrupting unhealthy patterns of thinking and behaving. By replacing these with healthy core beliefs, realistic perceptions and informed choices, we are able to reclaim and restore God's original plans for us. He desires that we live in peace, purpose and continual progress; and that we experience abundance and overflow in every area of our lives.

By reflecting on and applying what you learn in this workbook, you will be better positioned to face, stand and walk in victory over all that may come against you – to **thrive**.

How to use this Workbook

Each **thrive** module is separated into several chapters. The chapters are then divided into:

- a) sections for learning and
- b) sections for reflections and/or application.

The icons below appear in the workbook in the margins for easy reference.



Scripture verses are taken from various versions of the Bible as indicated



Knowledge about the core concepts related to this topic will be taught



Opportunities for reflection based on your lived experience are provided



Opportunities for implementation of the knowledge, attitudes and skills you have learnt about are provided

When prompted, record your responses in this workbook. There are notes pages at the end of the workbook should you require additional space for further writing.

CONTENTS

Life Development Planning

1. Roadmapping Personal Growth	4
2. Proper Prior Planning	6
3. Taking Ownership of Positive Choices	8
4. Building with Blocks	10
4.1. Building Block 1: Picture It	11
4.2. Building Block 2: Speak It	14
4.3. Building Block 3: Plan It	16
4.3.1. Abstinence	16
4.3.2. Lifestyle (Routine)	18
4.3.3. Triggers	21
4.3.4. Accountability	24
4.3.5. Wise Counsel	26
4.3.6. Foundational Pillars	28
4.3.7. Warning Signs	32
4.3.8. Boundaries	36
4.4. Building Block 4: Develop It	38
4.4.1. Professional Consultation	38
4.4.2. Mooring Lines	40
4.4.3. Personal Development	43
5. Regular Maintenance	47
Appendix A: Life Development Plan Template	48



Life Development Planning

Without good direction, people lose their way. (Proverbs 11:14 MSG)

Module Outcomes

In this thrive module, you will learn about:

- o The value of a Life Development Plan (LDP)
- o A suggested LDP structure
- o The ideal language to use in an LDP
- o The recommended components of an LDP

You will reflect on:

- o Your vision for the future
- o Personal affirmations
- o Your commitment to abstinence
- o A balanced schedule for daily living
- o An appropriate support system
- o Your individual Warning Signs
- o Your most significant Mooring Lines
- o Avenues for continued personal growth

You will apply what you have learnt to craft and create your own Life Development Plan



1. ROADMAPMING PERSONAL GROWTH

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have **become new**. (2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV)*

LEARN

It is a universal truth that when we fail to plan, we plan to fail. If we want to thrive in life, it is even more important to have a plan. This is why crafting and creating a Life Development Plan (LDP) is a fundamental part of every vibrant and successful journey of life.

When we travel somewhere new, we need a map or directions to tell us where to go. Without a route to follow, we waste precious time and resources, we make more mistakes, and we often don't end up where we wanted to go.

An LDP is a personalised roadmap that we purposefully develop for ourselves to direct our path forward. In this way, an LDP is an individualised strategy to thrive and a record of the goals that we are working towards at any given time.

Deliberately crafting an LDP is the best way to factor all the components of a holistic process into our journey. An LDP also safeguards this process by predetermining possible pitfalls. When we are aware of potential stumbling blocks, we can ensure that measures are in place to protect us from risky situations and to prevent a return to unhealthy and/or selfdefeating thinking and behaviour.

More importantly, however, an LDP redirects our focus away from the past, towards a better future, by mapping out a completely new way to live. At the same time, an LDP identifies opportunities and practical, proactive ways for us to realise our full potential as new creations.



How are the actions that you are taking today leading (or not leading) to the tomorrow that you hope for?

2. PROPER PRIOR PLANNING

Careful planning puts you ahead in the long run; hurry and scurry puts you further behind. (Proverbs 21:5 MSG)

LEARN

When we implement proper prior planning in our lives, we put well-thought-out strategies in place to help us to achieve clearly defined, positive outcomes. Some of the benefits of proper prior planning are decreased anxiety, increased motivation, improved self-confidence, greater success, and fewer negative consequences.

Despite these advantages, the practice of planning is often neglected. Common reasons for not planning properly include:

- o Arrogance: "I know better."
- o Laziness: "It's too much effort."
- o Procrastination: "I'll do it tomorrow."
- o Low self-esteem: "I'll get it wrong."
- o Impatience: "It takes too long."
- o Victim-mentality: "It won't make a difference anyway."

*Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success. **Pablo Picasso***

REFLECT

- o How much time and effort have you put into life planning in the past?



- o What have the results been?



- o Which of the suggested reasons for not planning properly resonate with you?

- o How could proper prior planning benefit you in your journey to **thrive**?

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11 NIV)



3. TAKING OWNERSHIP OF POSITIVE CHOICES

Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the mind and healing to the body.
(Proverbs 16:24 AMPC)

LEARN

An LDP is an empowering collection of positive, personal choices that we willingly make for our own benefit. To harness the immense power of language, it is best when resolution-orientated, life-affirming statements are used, rather than negative directives, and punitive and restricting conditions. Avoid self-limiting phrases such as, “I can’t,” “I mustn’t,” “I need to,” “I won’t,” and “I should not,” in favour of choice-driven statements including, “I choose,” “I will,” “I commit to,” and “I have decided.”

FOR EXAMPLE

We can say: “I choose to make healthy new friendships in my journey.”

Rather than: “I must not socialise with my previous negative influences.”

We can say: “I will maintain a clear mind by committing to good sleep patterns.”

Rather than: “I am not allowed to go to sleep after 10 p.m.”

It is essential that we take responsibility for compiling our own LDP. Taking ownership does not mean that we don’t seek counsel when creating it or that we keep the contents of our LDP to ourselves. Input and accountability are valuable and necessary. Sharing our LDP with our support structure keeps everyone on the same page and helps significant others to support us appropriately.

REFLECT

Practice using empowering language by changing the following negative directives into positive choice-driven statements.

- o I must stay away from bars and clubs.



- o I have to go to 3 church meetings a week.

- o I can't watch explicit movies.

- o I am obligated to be here an hour before the meeting to help set up.

- o I must never lose my temper.



4. BUILDING WITH BLOCKS

Is there anyone here who, planning to build a new house, doesn't first sit down and figure the cost so you'll know if you can complete it? (Luke 14:28 MSG)

LEARN

How do you build a home? One brick at a time!

An LDP is best completed one step at a time. It is for this reason that we will work through the construction of your individual LDP in a series of four Building Blocks.

APPLY

- o Start your LDP by creating a document (ideally in a digital format so that it can be easily updated). You can also use the LDP template at the end of this workbook (Appendix A).
- o Title your LDP to include your name and the date.
- o Preferably, get creative! Start a habit of adding design elements, colours, images, photographs, drawings, words, scriptures, quotes or whatever else will make your LDP personal, engaging, and inspirational to you.



4.1. BUILDING BLOCK 1: PICTURE IT

Where there is no vision, the people perish. (Proverbs 29:18 KJV)

LEARN

When we are caught in chaos, unhappiness or destructive behaviours, we battle to focus on the future. Hopes and dreams become a blurry smudge on the distant horizon. We may feel despondent about the future and unmotivated to fully commit to a personal development process. “What’s the point!” becomes our narrative.

Developing a vision is, therefore, a foundational first step in constructing an LDP. A well-defined vision provides hope, direction, purpose, and drive. Knowing where we are going motivates us to make necessary changes and to remain steadfast, even in the face of obstacles and challenges along the way.

You will begin your LDP by sketching out your future vision. In your vision, you will picture your preferred and possible future. This could include finding true love, achieving career success or travelling the world. It could be finding employment next week or family reconciliation in a few months. While any time frame is appropriate, what is important is that your vision holds the things that you aspire to and long for most.

REFLECT

o Create a Vision Board

A Vision Board is a collection of images and words that represent our hopes, dreams, and aspirations for the future. Creating it is a valuable exercise that encourages us to tap into our imaginations, a place where all things are possible. Placing our Vision Board where we can see it every day can help us to keep striving for the things that really matter to us.

Using old books, magazines, and newspapers, gather images and words that express your hopes, dreams, and aspirations. Find pictures that portray your vision, images that move you, and words that motivate you. Arrange these into a collage and paste them in place. This can also be completed digitally. Feel free to add photographs, handwritten statements, and/or hand-drawn elements. When you are done, display your Vision Board at home, school, or work.





MY VISION BOARD



- o Brainstorm your hopes, dreams, aspirations and goals for each area of your life. Remember that a vision doesn't have to be long-term; it can also be a picture of what you would like to achieve in the immediate future. Because an LDP is a living document, you can update your vision as you progress in your journey.



Physical Health	Relationships
Mental and Emotional Wellbeing	Finances
Values and Character	Work or Studies
Self-worth	Recreation
Spirituality	Purpose

APPLY

- o Add your final vision to your LDP.



4.2. BUILDING BLOCK 2: SPEAK IT

Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit – you choose.
(Proverbs 18:21 MSG)

LEARN

In this block, you will develop a series of declarations. Declarations are positive self-statements or scriptural certainties that counter negativity and affirm an anticipated reality, e.g., “I am a worthwhile person.” With regular repetition, declarations redraft what we consider to be truth and redefine what we deem acceptable for ourselves.

As God created the world through His Word, so we also hold power to create or to destroy ourselves and others through what we say. The words we use both reflect and impact our beliefs, thoughts, attitudes and behaviours.

When used intentionally, our words have potential to reprogramme our reality. We can use this to our advantage by choosing to speak and to write in positive, non-ambivalent terms that empower us to take hold of our new identity and revolutionised lifestyle.

Employing the ability of words to intentionally influence our lives is applicable throughout our LDP. Crafting specific, individualised affirmations to speak over ourselves, however, is given unique attention in Building Block 2.

Affirmations are most effective when they are concise, unambiguous, and written in the present tense. Ideally, avoid using “not” when creating declarations, e.g., use the phrase, “I am well,” rather than, “I am not sick.” Making declarations personally relevant can be achieved by crafting positive statements opposing our regular negative self-talk.



REFLECT



- o Write down 5 of your most prevalent negative thoughts or self-criticisms, e.g., “I’ll never amount to anything,” or, “I can’t cope.”

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

- o For each of the above, write a positive, opposing declaration, e.g., “God has good plans for my life,” or “I can handle any challenge that comes my way.”

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

APPLY



- o Write out your declarations and display them where they are clearly visible to you on a daily basis.
- o Set aside a time each day to repeat your declarations out loud.
- o Include your declarations in your LDP.

4.3. BUILDING BLOCK 3: PLAN IT



Write down this vision. Write it clearly on tablets, so that anyone who reads it may run. (Habakkuk 2:2 VOICE)



LEARN

Building Block 3 is made up of eight smaller blocks. These blocks all pertain to immediate strategies that we can put in place to safeguard and fast track our development and growth process.

4.3.1. Abstinence



Abstain from evil [shrink from it and keep aloof from it] in whatever form or whatever kind it may be. (1 Thessalonians AMPC)



LEARN

Self-destructive habits often develop in response to traumatic events, chaotic situations and/or toxic people. Continuing with these behaviours may offer temporary relief, but will eventually harm our mental, emotional and relational health.

Abstaining from self-defeating and destructive behaviours lays a solid base for a life that is then able to **thrive**. In this block you will pledge to abstain from unhealthy, problematic, dysfunctional, and even addictive behaviours.



REFLECT



From which behaviours do you choose to abstain? Select those that apply.

Problematic, destructive and addictive behaviours

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aggression | <input type="checkbox"/> Overspending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoiding conflict | <input type="checkbox"/> Over/under-eating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blaming others | <input type="checkbox"/> Overworking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Codependency | <input type="checkbox"/> People pleasing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comparing ourselves to others | <input type="checkbox"/> Perfectionism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Complacency | <input type="checkbox"/> Pessimism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Complaining | <input type="checkbox"/> Pretending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Control | <input type="checkbox"/> Pride |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Defensiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> Procrastination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dishonesty | <input type="checkbox"/> Refusing help from others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disorganisation | <input type="checkbox"/> Risky sexual behaviours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Avoidance | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-criticism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enabling | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-harm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entitlement | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-neglect |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive use of digital media/TV | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-pity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gambling | <input type="checkbox"/> Staying in toxic relationships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gossiping | <input type="checkbox"/> Stubbornness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hoarding | <input type="checkbox"/> Substance abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Isolating from others | <input type="checkbox"/> Unforgiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laziness | <input type="checkbox"/> Victim mentality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lustful thoughts | <input type="checkbox"/> Watching pornography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

APPLY



- o Add an abstinence pledge to your LDP, in which you commit to abstain from your selected behaviours.

4.3.2. Lifestyle (Routine)

LEARN

The secret to your success is found in your daily routine. John C. Maxwell

Disorder is unproductive and stressful. Developing a regular routine establishes daily order in our lives, an order that allows us to **thrive**. Proper prior planning protects us by ensuring that time previously consumed by unhealthy habits is now assigned to productive pursuits.

Although the word *routine* may sound monotonous, the practice of routine is anything but that. Balance and order introduce the joys of variety, stability, purpose, motivation, productivity, success, growth, health, meaningful relationships, and so much more.

In this block, you will design a routine that best supports a lifestyle in which you are able to **thrive**. While doing this, remember that a routine is not the same as a day-to-day calendar. Rather, it is an outline of a rhythm of life that you would like to develop.

REFLECT

- o Which areas of your life require nurturing?

- o Which of your regular activities are non-negotiable, e.g., work, church groups, school lifts?

- o What activities contribute to your overall well-being, e.g., sleep, exercise, life coaching?



- o What activities do you find enjoyable, e.g., rock-climbing, reading, travelling?

- o What activities motivate you, e.g., daily devotionals, church, exercise?

- o What activities empower you, e.g., life groups, Bible study lectures, upskilling?

- o What activities add meaning to your life, e.g., devotions, family time, random acts of kindness?

- o What activities build your relationships, e.g., being helpful at home, spending quality time with my family, being punctual and reliable at work?

APPLY

- o Using the table format on the next page, structure out a weekly routine, from Monday to Sunday, in relevant time blocks.
- o Include activities that you identified in the previous REFLECT section as well as other aspects of a healthy, balanced lifestyle.





WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
First Thing							
Early Morning							
Late Morning							
Lunch Time							
Early After-noon							
Late After-noon							
Evening							

- o Give your routine a catchy name, e.g. My Rad Routine or Schedule for Success.
- o Add your routine to your LDP.



4.3.3. Triggers

Don't be fooled. "Bad company ruins good character." (1 Corinthians 15:33 CJB)



LEARN



Triggers are prompts that are subconsciously connected to our unwanted behaviours through repetitive association. These include emotions, occasions, people, places, situations, things, even certain times of the day. The degree to which something or someone evokes in us the urge to act inappropriately, identifies that stimulus as a trigger.

TYPE OF TRIGGER	EXAMPLES
Emotions	such as insecurity, loneliness, and depression
Occasions	such as parties or sales
People	such as family members who are highly opinionated
Physical states	such as exhaustion or isolation
Places	such as the mall or a bar
Situations	such as payday, losing a lucrative deal, or disrespect by a colleague
Things	such as online shopping apps or explicit movies
Thoughts	such as self-doubt or obsession
Time of day	such as when it gets late at night

Strong neurological connections between triggers and our behaviours means that triggers have the potential to initiate powerful automatic, often negative, reactions. It is, therefore, critical, to identify our most significant triggers and to put strategies in place to avoid or manage them. The more that we can steer clear of our triggers, through Avoidance Strategies, the better. Avoidance Strategies are the plans that we make to avoid exposure to triggers.

Many triggers will be unavoidable, however, or we may encounter them without planning to. This is why it is also important to have Resilience Strategies in place. Resilience Strategies are the plans that we make to safely handle triggers in the moment.



REFLECT

- o Brainstorm 10 triggers that are strongly associated with your problematic behaviours.



- o For each trigger, devise one Avoidance Strategy and one Resilience Strategy.



Trigger	Avoidance Strategy	Resilience Strategy
E.g. Friends that use drugs.	End toxic relationships physically and on online platforms. Cultivate new, healthy friendships instead.	Leave the situation immediately and call my support system.
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		



APPLY

- o Using a table format, record your Avoidance and Resilience Strategies for dealing with triggers in your LDP.

4.3.4. Accountability



As iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens [and influences] another [through discussion]. (Proverbs 27:17 AMP)



LEARN

In our personal development journeys, it is helpful to have people to whom we choose to be answerable for our actions. They can help us by overseeing practical aspects of our life journeys, such as behaviour, online activities, personal development, and finances.

Accountability Partners are not appointed to police us but rather to help us stay on track. They help to disempower problematic behaviours and attitudes, such as impulsivity, complacency, dishonesty, secrecy, reactivity and irresponsibility. In this way, Accountability Partners can help us to achieve our goals and to keep us from regressing in our journeys.

They also protect us from significant triggers, such as cash, time wastage, and toxic relationships. Appointed Accountability Partners are, ideally, aware of our specific triggers and Warning Signs.

Depending on our situation, we may have one Accountability Partner or a few. It is recommended that spouses, partners and close family members are not appointed as Accountability Partners as the role could be toxic for them and not helpful for the relationship.



REFLECT



- o Think of people in your life who could fulfil the role of an Accountability Partner. Identify their helpful attributes and how they could assist you.

Accountability Partner	Attributes as an Accountability Partner	How they could assist me in achieving my goals (e.g., financial oversight / monitoring of online activity / behavioural feedback)

APPLY



- o Have a conversation with each individual about their prospective role.
- o Once they have agreed to be an Accountability Partner (and the nature of the role has been defined), add them to your LDP.

4.3.5. Wise Counsel

Without good direction, people lose their way; the more wise counsel you follow, the better your chances. (Proverbs 11:14 MSG)

LEARN

When it comes to making important decisions and to navigating challenging circumstances, it is important to appreciate the value of guidance and feedback. Counsel from wise, experienced individuals is highly beneficial. Wise Counsel helps us to avoid impulsivity, to maintain alignment with our values and goals, and to make choices that move us towards the achievement of our vision for the future.

In this block, you will select a small group of people to speak into your life in a helpful way as members of your Wise Counsel.

To minimise dependency on a single individual, and so that you have access to different people in their individual strengths, it is important that your Wise Counsel consists of more than one person. For example, you could select a pastor for spiritual leadership, an appropriate mentor in your community to guide you in your personal development programme and a life coach to help you achieve goals.

It is not uncommon for an individual to be appointed as a member of Wise Counsel and as an Accountability Partner at the same time. However, this does not always have to be the case. Members of Wise Counsel have a guiding role, while Accountability Partners have a more practical, oversight function.

Like with Accountability Partners, it is critical to discuss Wise Counsel roles with selected individuals so that they can agree to the responsibility and fulfil the position effectively.



REFLECT



- o Think of people in your life who could fulfil the role of Wise Counsel. Identify their helpful attributes and how they could best guide you.

Wise Counsel	Attributes as Wise Counsel	How they could assist me (e.g., spiritual growth / goal setting / personal development / decision making / finances)

APPLY



- o Have a conversation with each selected individual about their role.
- o Once they have agreed to be a member of your Wise Counsel (and the nature of the role has been defined), add them to your LDP.

4.3.6. Foundational Pillars

In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets. (Matthew 7:12 NASB)

LEARN

The more airtime we give to our problematic and self-sabotaging behaviours, the less important our values and morals become to us. Compulsion and obsession can drive us to compromise our integrity and character in many different ways.

In our **thrive** journey, we can choose to live by principles that respect others, bring us honour and help us to achieve our goals. Because we can't achieve our full potential without certain elemental values in place, we can think of these values as Foundational Pillars.

Foundational Pillars are the fundamental values that sustain a lifestyle we are wanting to create for ourselves. These could include responsibility, gratitude, humility, honesty, teachability, faith, trust and surrender.

In this block, you will identify and define the Foundational Pillars that are especially important to you. You will then commit to live by such values and will describe how you will practically apply them in your own life.

REFLECT

- o What, if any, basic morals and values have been absent from your life?

- o How has a lack of, or compromised, morals and values impacted yourself and others?



- o To what basic morals and values would you like to commit yourself in your **thrive** journey?



- o To complete the following section, look up each value and write down its definition.
- o For each value, describe how you will practically apply the value in your life, i.e., for each value, describe what that value “looks like” in terms of behaviour.

FOR EXAMPLE

Pillar: Humility - Fostering a modest, teachable spirit and having a realistic understanding of my own strengths and limitations.

This looks like: Practicing humility means that I am prepared to honestly admit my flaws and failings. It means respectfully listening to and learning from the experiences and wisdom of other people. It means responding to feedback with reflection rather than defensiveness.

Pillar:

This looks like:



Pillar: _____

This looks like: _____

Pillar: _____

This looks like: _____

Pillar: _____

This looks like: _____



Pillar: _____



This looks like: _____

Pillar: _____

This looks like: _____

APPLY



- o Add your Foundational Pillars to your LDP.

4.3.7. Warning Signs

Sensible people will see trouble coming and avoid it, but an unthinking person will walk right into it and regret it later. (Proverbs 22:3 GNT)

LEARN

A relapse refers to a return to a prior state of being. Relapsing back into unhealthy, self-destructive behaviours, from which we are trying to abstain, does not happen suddenly or without warning. Rather, this is the result of a process that includes a series of stages. Typically, significant shifts in our emotions, attitudes, thoughts and behavioural patterns precede any regression.

For example, prior to losing our temper, once again, we may become complacent about our sleep patterns and connect with friends who are negative. We call these mental, emotional and behavioural shifts Warning Signs because they are indicators that we may be veering off track.

Common Warning Signs include:

- o **Cognitive Warning Signs:** complacency, denial, justification, rationalisation
- o **Emotional Warning Signs:** resentment, anger, blame, self-pity, anxiety, boredom
- o **Behavioural Warning Signs:** dishonesty, defensiveness, withdrawal, crisis building

The sooner that we can recognise regression, the easier it is to turn around. It is, therefore, imperative, that we know what our individual Warning Signs are and how to manage them.

REFLECT

- o In the past, what faulty thinking patterns were prevalent in your life, e.g., denial, justification, rationalisation, blaming, entitlement, victim-mentality, complacency?



- o In the past, what emotions preceded and led to regrettable behaviours, e.g., anger, resentment, self-pity, anxiety, depression, boredom, rejection, fear, inadequacy, and shame?

- o In the past, what behavioural patterns were associated with an unhealthy lifestyle, e.g., dishonesty, defensiveness, withdrawal, crisis-building, entitlement, impulsivity, isolation, rebellion, self-neglect, self-medicating, self-sabotage?

- o Of these mental, emotional and behavioural patterns, select your top eight Warning Signs.
- o For each, describe how the Warning Sign manifests, i.e., what it *looks like*.
- o For each Warning Sign, brainstorm appropriate Resilience Strategies, i.e., plans to deal with the situation.

FOR EXAMPLE

Warning sign: Complacency

This looks like: Believing that I no longer need to keep on developing myself personally once I am married.

Resilience Strategy: Share my attitude with group members and my support system. Put plans in place for personal growth and share these with my Accountability Partners.



Warning Sign: _____

This looks like: _____

Resilience Strategy: _____

Warning Sign: _____

This looks like: _____

Resilience Strategy: _____

Warning Sign: _____

This looks like: _____

Resilience Strategy: _____

Warning Sign: _____

This looks like: _____

Resilience Strategy: _____



Warning Sign: _____

This looks like: _____

Resilience Strategy: _____

Warning Sign: _____

This looks like: _____

Resilience Strategy: _____

Warning Sign: _____

This looks like: _____

Resilience Strategy: _____



APPLY

- o Add your Warning Signs and Resilience Strategies to your LDP.



4.3.8. Boundaries

Don't let people look down on you because you are young; see that they look up to you because you are an example to them in your speech and behaviour, in your love and faith and sincerity. (1 Timothy 4:12 Phillips)

LEARN

Boundaries are limits that define what we will and will not allow in our lives. In relationships, poorly defined and porous boundaries leave us open to manipulation and abuse, while rigid and inflexible boundaries create a rift between us and others and can lead to isolation. The motivation behind a boundary is not to push others away, but to protect ourselves from the effects of toxic behaviours. Intrapersonally, boundaries help us remain true to our personal values and priorities.

We can set boundaries in many different areas of our lives:

- o Emotional such as exiting the room if someone gets aggressive
- o Financial such as sticking to a budget
- o Intellectual such as not letting someone disrespect our opinion
- o Material such as only lending possessions to those who look after them
- o Mental such as resting when not at work
- o Physical such as speaking out when we are touched inappropriately
- o Sexual such as not giving in to sexual coercion or manipulation
- o Social such as always respecting those of different cultures
- o Time usage such as spending a limited amount of time on digital devices

REFLECT

- o On the table on the next page, fill in the specific boundaries you feel you need to put in place in your life. Use the different categories as guidelines.
- o Then, capture the action that you will take if that boundary is compromised.



Type of boundary	What this boundary will look like in my life	Action I will take if this boundary is compromised
Emotional		
Financial		
Intellectual		
Material (possessions)		
Mental		
Physical		
Sexual		
Social		
Time usage		



APPLY

- o Include your boundaries in your LDP with their relevant action steps.



4.4. BUILDING BLOCK 4: DEVELOP IT



You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:22–24 NIV)



LEARN

In Building Block 4, which is made up of three smaller blocks, we put further strategies in place to achieve the meaningful personal transformation that results in a sustainable journey of abundant life.

4.4.1. Professional Consultation



On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.” (Mark 2:17)



LEARN

Living in chaos, crisis and/or trauma can cause physical and psychological damage. For some of us, complete healing and recovery may necessitate the intervention and support of medical professionals. Seeking professional assistance, as necessary, and complying with treatment recommendations are vital for ensuring a healthy body and stable mind, without which it is impossible to **thrive**.

In this block, you will put measures in place to protect your physical, psychiatric and psychological well-being. You will record the professionals with whom you have consulted as well as their treatment recommendations, noting prescribed medications and dosages. If you typically have difficulty adhering to a treatment plan, you will include a strategy to assist with treatment compliance.



REFLECT



- o In the last 6 months, which professionals have you consulted with to address physical and/or psychological issues?

- o Have you scheduled follow-up appointments?

- o What medications and treatment recommendations have been made?

- o What are your decisions in relation to treatment compliance?

APPLY



- o In your LDP, record the measures that you have taken to maintain your physical, psychiatric and psychological well-being.
- o If you have not yet consulted with professionals, come back to this section once a consultation has been completed.

4.4.2. Mooring Lines

We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. (Hebrews 2:1 NIV)

LEARN

Mooring Lines are the personalised positive practices and regular routines that keep our lives anchored at all times and in all situations. Dropping one, or more, of our Mooring Lines can result in us drifting out of safe and secure territory.

In this block, you will identify your personal Mooring Lines and put measures in place to regularly check that they are secure.

REFLECT

- o Rate each of the items in the list on the next page in terms of how significant it is to keeping your progress anchored.

Use the scale below

1	2	3	4	5
Not applicable	Unhelpful	Insignificant	Inconsequential	Helpful
6	7	8	9	10
Valuable	Significant	Important	Fundamental	Critical



- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Abstinence | <input type="radio"/> Accountability |
| <input type="radio"/> Counselling/therapy | <input type="radio"/> Church meetings |
| <input type="radio"/> Daily routine | <input type="radio"/> Faith |
| <input type="radio"/> Family time | <input type="radio"/> Gratitude |
| <input type="radio"/> Healthy nutrition | <input type="radio"/> Hobbies |
| <input type="radio"/> Interpersonal boundaries | <input type="radio"/> Journalling |
| <input type="radio"/> Life plan | <input type="radio"/> Personal development |
| <input type="radio"/> Physical exercise | <input type="radio"/> Positive declarations |
| <input type="radio"/> Praise and worship | <input type="radio"/> Prescribed medications |
| <input type="radio"/> Recreational time | <input type="radio"/> Service to others |
| <input type="radio"/> Scripture | <input type="radio"/> Social interaction |
| <input type="radio"/> Sufficient sleep | <input type="radio"/> Wise counsel |
| <input type="radio"/> Other | <input type="radio"/> Other |





- o List your top 10 rated items as your Mooring Lines.

- o Are there other things, not yet listed, that serve as Mooring Lines for you?

- o How will you check that your Mooring Lines are secure, i.e., in place and active?

- o How often do you plan to do this?

APPLY

- o Add your Mooring Lines to your LDP.
- o Include your method of checking that your Mooring Lines are secure.





4.4.3. Personal Development

Let wise people listen and add to what they have learned. Let those who understand what is right get guidance. (Proverbs 1:5 NIVR)



LEARN



Ongoing change and growth, across all areas of our lives, is the essence of a vibrant personal development journey. This process requires intentional investment to equip and empower ourselves; to mature spiritually; to free ourselves from self-defeating patterns; and to pursue our vision for the future. It is not something that just happens on its own.

In this block, you will identify advancement strategies to intentionally apply in key areas of your personal development.

o Empowerment

Acquiring new perspectives and abilities empowers us to meet the challenges of everyday life more easily. This is facilitated through activities such as life groups and personal development programmes that equip us with the knowledge, attitudes and skills required to make constructive choices and function confidently in society.

o Spiritual Growth

Existential crises, or predicaments that question our purpose and worth, are often resolved by choosing to live in a more valuable way, according to spiritual principles and in relationship with God. A programme of spiritual growth can be worked by engaging with scripture, prayer, mindfulness, growth plans, spiritual literature, and a church community.

o New Patterns

By challenging our habitual cognitive-behavioural cycles, we can replace dysfunctional ways of thinking and behaving with productive, adaptive alternatives. In this way, we can develop a fresh identity, in the present, that is not limited by our self-defeating patterns of the past. Establishing a new normal for ourselves is facilitated through consistent practices, e.g., seeking counsel, and activities, e.g., life groups. These provide us with direction, different perspectives, and new experiences. In the area of personal development, a long-term investment into a culture of thriving is key.



o Goal Setting

By marking out manageable steps along the path, goals make our vision for the future reachable. Goal setting is a crucial personal development tool that keeps us focused and motivated. Studies show that setting goals in an area of our lives exponentially increases our chances of achieving desired outcomes.

The more precise and quantifiable a goal is, as opposed to vague or abstract, the more likely we are to realise it. The SMART Goal framework is, therefore, often recommended when setting goals. This framework teaches us to structure our goals to be:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| o Specific | clearly defined |
| o Measurable | measurable by actual evidence |
| o Achievable | challenging but also realistic |
| o Relevant | in keeping with what is personally important |
| o Time-Related | linked to a time frame |

For example, if my goal is to improve in running, I could make this a SMART Goal in the following way: "My goal is to run 5 km in under 30 minutes by the end of the year."



REFLECT

- o How will you equip yourself with powerful knowledge, positive attitudes and constructive coping skills?

- o How will you pursue spiritual growth and a deeper relationship with God?



- o How will you work towards freeing yourself from self-defeating patterns?

- o How will you pursue your vision?

- o What are your short-term and long-term SMART goals?

Short-term

Long-term





- o How do you plan to continue to **thrive**?



APPLY

- o Add your personal development strategies to your LRP.



5. REGULAR MAINTENANCE

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. (Galatians 5:1 NIV)

LEARN

An LDP is a time-specific, evolving document. In other words, an LDP has a limited time period for which it is valid. This period is defined by the pace at which we change and grow. As we make personal progress, an LDP can quickly become outdated if it is not maintained. This leaves us with a set of obsolete instructions to navigate a lifetime of uncharted territory.

To keep an LDP relevant and functional, it is essential to update it on a regular basis.

REFLECT

- o How often will you update your LDP?

- o Make a commitment to yourself here to keep your LDP current.



6. APPENDIX A

LIFE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

NAME _____

DATE _____

This Life Development Plan is a written record of the personal development programme that I intend to follow. My aim is to maintain sustainable freedom from unhealthy and self-sabotaging behaviours, and to live up to my true potential and purpose.

BUILDING BLOCK 1: PICTURE IT

VISION

My vision is a picture of my possible future, as I would like it to be.

- o **Physical:** I see myself _____

- o **Mental:** I see myself _____

- o **Occupational:** I see myself _____

- o **Financial:** I see myself _____

- o **Spiritual:** I see myself _____



o **Relational:** I see myself _____

o **Personal:** I see myself _____

BUILDING BLOCK 2: SPEAK IT

DECLARATIONS

My declarations are positive statements that I can repeat regularly to affirm myself and proclaim a new reality.

o I declare . . .

o I declare . . .

o I declare . . .

o I declare . . .

o I declare . . .

BUILDING BLOCK 3: PLAN IT

ABSTINENCE

I understand that abstinence from problematic behaviours and self-destructive habits is essential to living an abundant life. I choose to abstain from the following behaviours.

SIGNATURE



LIFESTYLE (ROUTINE)

To optimally support my personal development, I have created the following balanced daily routine, which I will follow to the best of my ability.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
First Thing							
Early Morning							
Late Morning							
Lunch Time							
Early After-noon							
Late After-noon							
Evening							

TRIGGERS

A trigger is a cue that has been subconsciously paired with and could initiate an unhealthy behavioural response in me. To manage my triggers, I have put the following Avoidance and Resilience Strategies in place.

TRIGGER	AVOIDANCE STRATEGY	RESILIENCE STRATEGY



ACCOUNTABILITY

I have set up the following Accountability Partners to be answerable to in my recovery.

PERSON	RELATIONSHIP	CONTACT INFO	OVERSIGHT AREA

WISE COUNSEL

I have asked the following individuals to advise and guide me in my personal development.

PERSON	RELATIONSHIP	CONTACT INFO	REASON FOR ASKING THIS PERSON



FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS

I have committed to live by the following foundational pillars.

PILLAR	
	<i>Behaviourally, this looks like . . .</i>
	<i>Behaviourally, this looks like . . .</i>
	<i>Behaviourally, this looks like . . .</i>
	<i>Behaviourally, this looks like . . .</i>
	<i>Behaviourally, this looks like . . .</i>
	<i>Behaviourally, this looks like . . .</i>
	<i>Behaviourally, this looks like . . .</i>
	<i>Behaviourally, this looks like . . .</i>

WARNING SIGNS

I have identified the following Warning Signs and will address them, if they arise, using the following strategies.

WARNING SIGN	PLAN TO DEAL WITH WARNING SIGN



BOUNDARIES

I have identified the following boundaries that I need to put in place as well as the actions I will take if those boundaries are compromised.

TYPE OF BOUNDARY	WHAT THIS BOUNDARY WILL LOOK LIKE IN MY LIFE	ACTION I WILL TAKE IF MY BOUNDARY IS COMPROMISED

BUILDING BLOCK 4: DEVELOP IT

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTATION

Looking after myself holistically is essential to my mental health and personal development.

In the last 6 months, I have consulted with	Doctor (GP)	Yes/No
	Psychiatrist	Yes/No
	Psychologist	Yes/No
	Counsellor	Yes/No
	Social Worker	Yes/No
	Life Coach	Yes/No
	Pastor	Yes/No
My next appointments are scheduled for	Doctor (GP)	
	Psychiatrist	
	Psychologist	
	Counsellor	
	Social Worker	
	Life Coach	
	Pastor	
I am taking the following prescribed medication	Med:	Dosage:
	Med:	Dosage:
	Med:	Dosage:
	Med:	Dosage:
	Med:	Dosage:
	Med:	Dosage:



MOORING LINES

Mooring Lines are behaviours, attitudes and activities that keep me securely anchored in my personal development.

MY TOP MOORING LINES

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

EMPOWERMENT

I will empower myself with powerful knowledge, positive attitudes, and constructive coping strategies by . . .

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

I will pursue spiritual growth by . . .

NEW PATTERNS

I will free myself from self-destructive patterns by . . .

GOAL SETTING

I will continue to check in with my SMART goals on a monthly basis and to make adjustments to my lifestyle where necessary . . .

SMART GOALS**SHORT-TERM****LONG-TERM**

SIGNATURE:



WELL DONE! You have made significant progress in a very critical task. In this module, you have unpacked the purpose and structure of an effective Life Development Plan. You have reflected on how each Building Block applies in your own life, and, hopefully, you have begun to bring all these components together in a cohesive strategy for the future. Keep building!

REFLECT



- o What is the most significant thing that you have learnt in this module?

- o What important realisations have you had?

- o How will you put what you have learnt into practice?

You have completed the *Life Development Planning* workbook. Please provide us with feedback on this module by scanning the QR code alongside.

Next up is *Working on Self-Worth*.



NOTES



NOTES



PROJECT EXODUS



info@projectexodus.net



www.projectexodus.net



+27 82 692 3999



37 Mackeurtan Avenue
Durban North, South Africa



[projectexodusrecovery](https://www.facebook.com/projectexodusrecovery)



[projectexodusrecovery](https://www.instagram.com/projectexodusrecovery)