



A Course in Living 7-Day Self-Study

A simple daily study guide for looking, choosing, practicing and moving forward.

How to Use This Course

Every day follows the same simple pattern:

- Today's idea — a short reading
- What it means — simple definitions
- Takeaways — what is worth remembering
- Try it — one practical exercise
- Your response — space to write
- Tomorrow — one thing to notice

No exams. No grades. No right answers. You are doing the work.

DAY 1 — WHAT IS THIS FOR?

Today's Idea

Before we decide what to do, we should know what we want to come of it.

What do I want to come of this?

This is the first question. It establishes direction before action. Without a clear goal, things can simply happen and meaning may only be assigned afterward.

fivebyfive begins by asking you to decide what you want from the experience.

Definitions

Purpose — without purpose actions cannot be seen as moving towards anything. Actions are more random occurrences than steps towards the stated desired outcome. No judgement is needed when we believe that every action leads us closer towards the target. We may not know how but we know why, and that is way better.

Direction — where you have decided you want to go has been clearly, though generally expressed, direction does not establish route, but it does emphasize destination. The limitless possibilities can work with that much easier than a rock solid detailed plan that you already know is mostly out of your control.

Choice — recognizing that you have something to decide and deciding before you head off, makes way better sense.

Takeaways

- Know what you want before deciding what to do.
- A goal gives action a direction.
- Your answer belongs to you.
- The answer may change. That is also information.

Try It

Write your answer to: What do I want to come of these seven days?

Then ask: How will I know if I got it?

Your Response

What do I want to come of this?

What would tell me that I am moving toward it?

Keep Noticing

Notice how often you act without first asking what the action is for.

DAY 2 — THE CORE

Today's Idea

The primary feature of fivebyfive is the construction and understanding of your own core.

What is it that all other things build upon?

We begin with what you already know—or think you know—about yourself.

Then we look deeper.

Definitions

Core — the beliefs and understanding upon which you build.

Belief — something you currently accept as true.

Awareness — seeing what is there before deciding what to do with it.

Takeaways

- You don't have to accept everything you believe.
- You don't have to reject everything you believe.
- First, look.
- Understanding comes before construction.

Try It

Complete these sentences:

I believe...

I value...

I know...

I am not sure about...

Don't try to make the answers impressive. Make them honest.

Your Response

What did you discover?

Keep Noticing

Notice when you act from a belief without realizing that a belief is involved.

DAY 3 — STOP THE SIGNAL

Today's Idea

There is a great deal of noise.

Thoughts, opinions, expectations, fears, habits, memories, other people's ideas and all the stuff and things competing for attention.

Stop the Signal does not mean making the world silent. Although it does not not mean that.

It means recognizing that you do not have to listen to everything. At this stage we are simply looking for ways to slow down the chatter, the onslaught of information that has no useable qualities right now. An example would be the guy who cut you off in traffic. Was it close? Did an accident occur? If not, then the event is over. Nothing more is happening. But you may still be thinking about it. The event is over; only the thinking about it is happening now. And while you are thinking about something that is already over, something happening now is not being thought about. Which is more significant to you??

Definitions

Signal — what you choose to pay attention to.

Noise — everything competing for your attention.

Attention — where you place your awareness.

Takeaways

- Not everything deserves equal attention.
- You can notice a thought without following it.
- You can hear the noise without making it your direction.

Try It

For one hour today, notice every time something interrupts your attention. Write it down if you want.

Don't fight it.

Simply ask:

Why is this something I choose to listen to?

Your Response

What did you notice?

What signals seem to create the most noise for you?

Keep Noticing

Notice what changes when you stop giving every thought equal importance.

DAY 4 — SET THE TONE

Today's Idea

Once the noise has been interrupted, decide what you want this to be for.

Return to the question:

What do I want to come of this?

This is Set the Tone.

You are not controlling everything that happens. You are choosing the direction you want your participation to take.

Definitions

Tone — the character or direction you choose to give something.

Intention — what you deliberately mean to do.

Outcome — what eventually happens; something you may influence but cannot completely control.

Takeaways

- You cannot control every outcome, nor should you want to. Do not limit the universe to only what you know or think you know. What you think is best is likely nothing compared to what you have not considered.
- You can choose your intention, and if you are not, who is?
- Your intention gives your actions a direction.

Try It

Choose one situation today.

Before acting, ask:

What do I want to come of this?

Answer - Then act.

Your Response

What happened?

Did knowing what you wanted change what you did?

Keep Noticing

Notice whether your actions follow your stated intention. If not, why? What stopped them? or is this judgement?

DAY 5 — PICK THE STATION

Today's Idea

There are always other stations.

Other opinions. Other possibilities. Other ways of seeing things. It is good practice to always consider, at minimum, 2 points of view. Even 20 viewpoints are not necessarily enough to discover truth. What would someone else do, perhaps someone you hold in high regard. What do you think they would think about this? Pick the Station means choosing where you want your attention to go. The other stations do not have to disappear. You simply don't have to listen to all of them. This is where all the work on core development really begins to play a role.

Definitions

Station — the source or direction you have chosen to pay attention to.

Choice — selecting one possibility from all others. Knowing there are many and knowing what they are makes choice much more valuable. Like picking a number between 1-10 or between 1-100 and knowing you want the one you want regardless of the numerous options. Knowing what you want, and knowing what is out there, are not the same at all.

Discernment — recognizing the difference between the stuff and things and deciding what matters to you.

Takeaways

- You cannot listen to everything.
- Choosing one direction does not require pretending other directions don't exist.
- Discernment is not judgment.
- Choice creates direction.

Try It

Identify one area of your life where you are receiving too many signals.

The stations available to me:

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

The station I choose to listen to is: _____

Why? _____

Your Response

What did you choose?

What did you notice about the choice?

Keep Noticing

Notice whether your attention follows your choice.

DAY 6 — LISTEN

Today's Idea

Choosing the station is not enough.

You have to listen.

Listen means paying attention to what you have chosen and noticing what happens. This is where practice begins.

Definitions

Practice — doing something repeatedly so that understanding can become usable.

Observation — noticing what happens without immediately needing to judge it. Let me put this thought in here.

Judgement, at this stage, is using what knowledgebase to make a judgement? If you are on a journey to change, using the past to judge is only giving you feedback based on the life that you are actively trying to leave behind for something new and better, so, to judge using your past will only lead you right back to the same choices that lead you here. You do not have any new, better, choices to judge with yet, so the best choice is to simply not judge at all. Don't use old information to condemn a new attempt before you've had the opportunity to experience the new choice.

Experience — what happens when an idea is actually lived.

Takeaways

- An idea is different from an experience.
- Practice makes concepts usable.
- You don't need to judge every result immediately. You will most likely be wrong anyway.
- Notice first.

Try It

Return to the choice you made yesterday.

Practice it deliberately today.

Then ask:

What happened when I actually did it?

Not: Was I good at it?

Simply: What happened?

Your Response

What did you observe?

What surprised you?

Keep Noticing

Notice what you learn when you observe before judging.

DAY 7 — LOVE WINS

Today's Idea

Love Wins is not another task.

It is the fifth element.

It represents what may emerge when the preparation has been done, awareness has grown, and you begin to live from the core you have carefully constructed and come to understand as desirable. Love wins is getting what you want only after you decide what you actually want. This is something that most do not know or understand as the root cause for failure and suffering. Getting what you don't want ain't great and, this is what you always get, if you do not know, in advance what you do want. You can rationalize after the fact that it was mostly what you want, I guess, but that seems silly to me.

The experience is yours to discover.

Definitions

Love — something fivebyfive invites you to explore rather than something we need to define for you.

Happiness — within fivebyfive, something that may become easier to recognize as distractions, habits, beliefs and stuff and things that obscure it begin to fall away.

Competence — becoming capable of using what you have learned for yourself. Proper preparation prevents poor performance.

Takeaways

- fivebyfive does not promise an outcome.
- You choose.
- You practice.
- You discover.
- The goal is not dependence.
- The goal is competence.

Try It

Return to Day 1.

Read your original answer: What do I want to come of these seven days?

Now answer again: What do I want to come of this?

Has your answer changed? Why?

To wrap up this last section before your final thoughts, let me leave you with a few on love.

Love is.

Love does – hate thinks. you could also use fear, or guilt, or anger or any of them bad vibe words here.

Love is to me like electricity, it powers everything and we think we know how it works; we are pretty sure how to use it although, we have no idea where it is until it's exactly where we need it to be. It exists everywhere all the time. Even now it is all around me. No matter how much is being used, it will continue, recharge, regain, reform, repair and respond. Love is and will never not be. Finally, Love has no opposite – there is no counter to Love, no opposing force, there is only thinking there is :)

Your Response

What have you discovered?

What will you continue?

What will you leave behind?

Keep Noticing

Notice what you want to carry forward.

The Five

1. Stop the Signal

I don't have to listen to everything.

2. Set the Tone

What do I want to come of this?

3. Pick the Station

I choose where my attention goes.

4. Listen

I pay attention to what I have chosen.

5. Love Wins

The experience is mine to discover.

The Final Page

What do you want to come of this?

You already have the basic tools.

Your attention.

Your choices.

Your willingness to look.

Forever Forward. Nothing Lost.

And as always — Love Wins. :)