



# LIFE DYNAMICS

## EXTENDED REPORT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date 1st August 2007 \_\_\_\_\_

*"What got you here  
won't get you there."*

**Marshall Goldsmith**

*"Wisdom entails a  
convergence of  
means and ends  
towards excellence."*

**Baltes & Freund**

# STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report summarises the results of the Life Dynamics questionnaire you completed. This analysis is intended to stimulate your thinking about:

- what is important to you in life
- the tactics that are helping or hindering you make progress towards your goals
- how you manage the opportunities and risks of life's challenges

We hope you find working through this report a thought provoking exercise. The language is intentionally direct. It is not our aim to offend but to provide clarity of meaning to stimulate your thinking.

We recommend that you have an initial review of the report, familiarising yourself with the material and evaluating the key themes from your specific results. Then put the report to one side for a while. You may also want to share the findings with a family member, friend or work colleague. Talking through the results with a trusted advisor or coach will open up new insights. Then work through the Action Planning section, noting your conclusions and next steps. You may find it useful to return to this report and your actions in twelve months to evaluate your progress.

*Please note that these prompts are computer generated based on the pattern of results from the questionnaire; not all will therefore be applicable to you personally. Use your common sense to identify those which seem especially relevant to you.*

If you are viewing this report in pdf format, you can also click at various points to access development prompts from the Life Dynamics Directory. Alternatively, go to:

[www.lifedynamicsdirectory.com](http://www.lifedynamicsdirectory.com) for detailed prompts – the “do’s and don’ts of life” to trigger your thinking about next steps.

**Life Outcomes:** a summary of how you rate your overall life well-being and satisfaction with different aspects of life

**Life Focus:** a review of your life priorities to help rethink what it is that is important to you in life

**Deploying Life Tactics:** an evaluation of your tactics in life to assess what is and isn't working well for you and to identify any changes you think you need to make

**Meeting Life's Challenges:** highlighting the life challenges you will encounter as part of your progress in life

**Action Planning:** a format to bring your thinking together to a conclusion and map out next steps

*“If you always do what you've always done you'll always get what you've always got.”*

**S Jeffers**

1

# Life outcomes

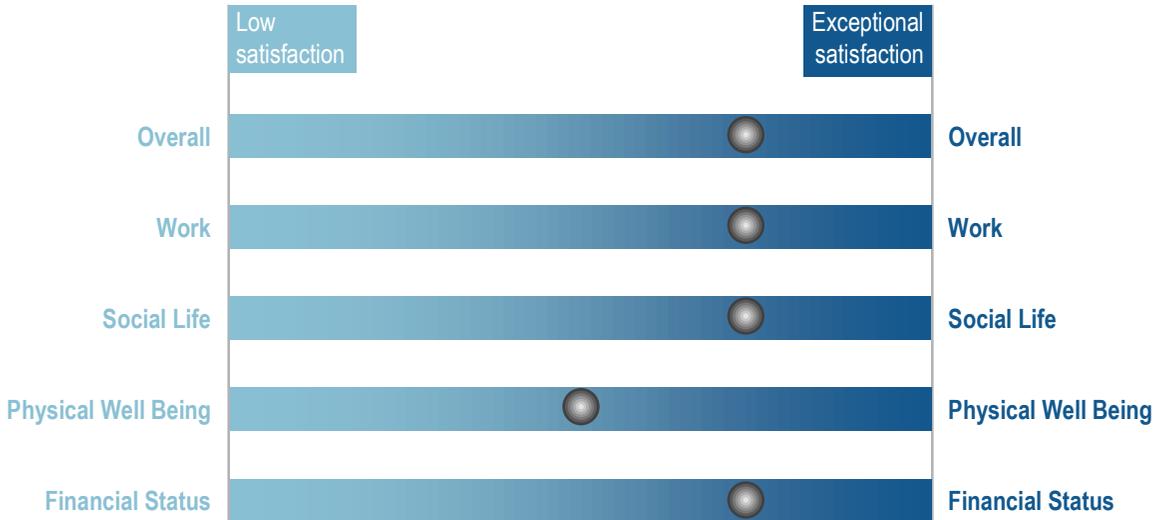
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*“What is happiness  
except the simple harmony  
between a person and the  
life they lead”*

**Albert Camus**

# LIFE OUTCOMES

How did you evaluate your overall life well being and satisfaction with different aspects of life?



What does this summary indicate:

- a flourishing life, in which you are “living the life well lived” across the full range of different life outcomes?
- doing well, but some areas need to be enhanced?
- doing OK, but with concerns about one or two specific themes?
- a recognition that “all is not well” and a major rethink is required?

Work through the report to identify the dynamics of your life goals and tactics to identify opportunities to put in place a practical action plan for the future.



# 2 Life focus

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*“Unhappiness is not knowing what we want and killing ourselves to get it.”*

**Don Herold**

Life throws up a series of options and choices. By pursuing some activities rather than others, options open up but others close down and these choices begin to create your goals – what is fundamentally important to you in life. This section summarises which of six fundamental goals are more or less important to you. The upside and downside of each life goal is described indicating the gains and hazards of “high” scores as well as the potential benefits and risks of “low” scores.

SATISFACTION	SECURITY	SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
STATUS	SEARCH	SPIRITUALITY

# LIFE FOCUS

## Satisfaction



### LOW: THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS

- the refusal to take the easy way out and the commitment to push and work hard for longer-term goals
- a serious minded outlook which is concerned to do what is of lasting importance rather than what feels good in the immediate
- uncompromising in a dislike of the consumerist society and its concern with material possessions and the pleasurable life

### LOW: THE RISKS

- an intense outlook that focusing on work priorities and neglecting the enjoyment of the simple things in life
- the preoccupation with today's problems which becomes detached from the full range of life aims
- an irritable approach which may find it difficult to switch off and relax from life's pressures

### HIGH: THE GAINS

- a relaxed outlook that is sociable, valuing friendship and companionship, and keeping a sense of perspective to balance work priorities with leisure pursuits
- an easy going and light-hearted approach that enjoys life on a day-to-day basis, taking pleasure from the "nice" things in life
- seeing life as fundamentally about the attainment of a life of contentment and finding ways to optimise that sense of "well being"

### HIGH: THE HAZARDS

- a potentially frivolous life outlook looking only for the pleasure of the moment
- a potential to "coast", doing the minimum to keep going in the short-term rather than push ahead for longer-term goals
- a reluctance to take on the tough challenges and the avoidance of the conflict and pressure situations of life

## Status



### LOW : THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS

- the willingness to do what is of personal importance rather than allow others' expectations to determine life priorities
- an independence of mind which avoids competitive struggle and disengages from advancement through the "social pecking order"
- a maturity of outlook which values others for who they are rather than their standing and position within the "hierarchy"

### LOW: THE RISKS

- a difficulty in finding that "niche" in life that plays to your personal talents and strengths to help you stand out as distinctive
- the refusal to play the "social game" which fails to make a positive impression on others and may be overlooked
- being outmanoeuvred by more ambitious peers determined to advance and progress and finding it difficult to realise your potential and maximise your contribution

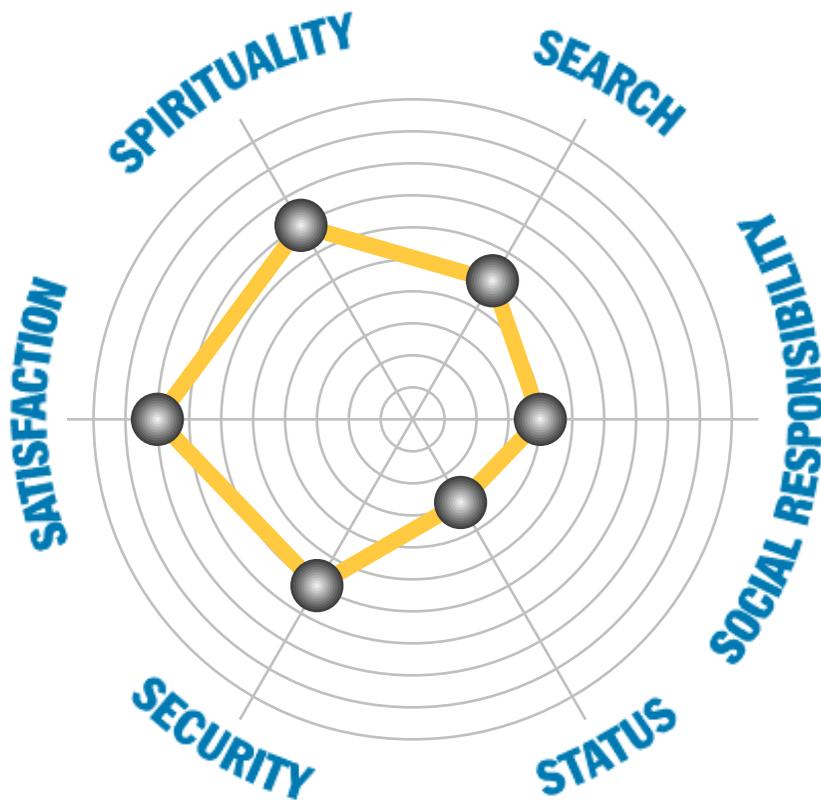
### HIGH: THE GAINS

- the recognition of the fundamental competitive nature of life that drives you to attain prestige and influence within your peer group
- the desire to stand out as distinctive and special and make an exceptional impact on others
- drawing on your unique talents and motivation to establish a position of personal power and influence and establish your personal agenda for change and improvement

### HIGH: THE HAZARDS

- a concern for others' perceptions and respect that deflects attention from the achievement of your own personal goals
- a highly competitive spirit which is more concerned with "winning the game" than the way the game is played
- judging others on the basis of position and status in life rather than the inner qualities of character

# LIFE FOCUS PROFILE



Review your profile to identify the overall pattern. Does the shape of the profile indicate a “balanced” outlook, one in which you are attempting to achieve “symmetry” in life to achieve a number of different aims? Or does it suggest an ambivalence in which you lack clarity about what fundamentally matters to you in life?

Or does the profile indicate one or two dominant themes? What might this combination add up to? Does it define a coherent life purpose based on complementary aims, or does it highlight a potential tension which is pulling you in different directions?

Which themes didn’t emerge as prominent? Are these obvious or are there any surprises?

Looking in overview at the profile what are the potential opportunities and risks of your life outlook? What are the possible implications now for how you direct your time and energies? What might be the longer-term consequences?

*“The first step to getting things you want out of life is this: Decide what you want.”*

**Ben Stein**

# 3

# Tactics being deployed

*“Life consists not in holding good cards but in playing those you hold well.”*

Anon

This section of the report outlines the specific tactics which are more or less prominent in your approach to life. It is Life Tactics which help and hinder you in overcoming life’s challenges. Some tactics – your repertoire of life wisdom and skills – will be important assets, others may be potential liabilities.

**MAXIMISING  
INTERPERSONAL  
INFLUENCE**

Easy Going Intimacy  
Power of Charm  
Staying Connected

**DIRECTING  
PERSONAL TIME**

Applying the 80-20 Law  
Disciplined Life Patterns  
Making it Stick

**DEPLOYING  
PROBLEM SOLVING  
POWER**

Devil in the Detail  
Exploring the New  
Clarity of Simplicity

**DEALING WITH LIFE  
REALITIES**

Managing Money  
Constructive Conflict  
Strength from Adversity

**MANAGING THE  
EMOTIONAL STUFF**

Conducting a Reality Check  
Thick Skin Response  
Recharging the Batteries

## Easy Going Intimacy

- a relaxed and approachable manner which establishes a rapport easily with others and encourages them to open up and discuss freely what is important
- attentive to others and what matters to them, making them feel valued and special and engaged in your plans
- a sensitivity to others which accommodates their needs and looks to resolve any interpersonal tensions which are holding back progress

## Applying the 80-20 Law

- a clarity of objectives which manages time ruthlessly to only address what is of major importance
- directing effort around only those critical issues which will leverage your personal resources efficiently
- the willingness to “say no” to others to maintain control over your own time and optimise your personal energies

## Devil in the Detail

- picking up the key facts to pinpoint the underlying causes of problems and the consequences of different options to formulate a robust plan of action
- precise and systematic with the details to explore problems fully and highlight the pros and cons of different options
- critical and questioning to explore beneath the surface, refusing to take issues at face value

## Managing Money

- a proactive stance to money management which sets financial priorities to build net worth for the long-term
- self controlled in financial decision making, operating within a defined budget to maintain control over your “life cash flow”
- conducting a thorough financial analysis in decision making to invest and spend shrewdly

## Conducting a Reality Check

- a willingness to ask yourself tough questions and being prepared to listen to the answers in planning out the next steps in life
- an alertness to a variety of signals from others to help re-evaluate your effectiveness and impact and modify your tactics
- undertaking a re-assessment of your personal strengths and shortcomings to identify how your strengths can be deployed; a humility which accepts any limitations which need to be confronted

## Power of Charm

- making a positive impression on others to gain their attention and interest and establish your credibility
- using an insight into what matters to others to reach out with persuasive and convincing communication
- alert to the emotional sensitivities of interpersonal situations and how to adapt your approach to the “mood” of others

## Disciplined Life Patterns

- planned and organised in managing the demands of work, home and social life to achieve a balanced life style
- a disciplined outlook which attends to physical and mental health through a commitment to maintaining “good habits”
- keeping to established routines to manage the “essentials of existence” and maximise your personal well-being

## Exploring the New

- a far ranging perspective which is alert to new ideas and thinking and keen to broaden knowledge and understanding
- an enthusiasm to take on new problems which engages energetically with fresh challenges
- receptive to unusual thinking which might challenge conventional wisdom; a willingness to abandon current thinking and rethink your tactics

## Constructive Conflict

- a directness of approach which expresses your personal views openly, accepting the need to negotiate disagreement in advancing your aims
- dealing with life’s difficult issues “head on” to bring them to a resolution and speed up the achievement of your goals
- tackling opposition to overcome resistance and establish a positive agenda for the way forward

## Thick Skin Response

- maintaining composure in high pressure situations to respond calmly to challenge or disagreement and enhance your credibility as a “safe pair of hands”
- keeping a sense of perspective about the “emotional ups and downs” of life to keep focused on what is important
- the recognition that attempts to do something new and different will face hostility and the refusal to allow petty criticisms undermine your resolve and purpose

## Staying Connected

- a proactive networker who keeps in touch with former friends and colleagues and maintains collaborative relationships
- interacting with a variety of people from different backgrounds and walks of life to broaden your set of life connections
- cultivating and nurturing a range of contacts you can access for information and support and help advance personal aims

## Making it Stick

- maintaining a focus on implementation which is alert to hold-ups and delays and is proactive in driving towards deadlines
- a rigorous follow through which perseveres to overcome any blockages and delivers against initial objectives
- maintaining high energy levels throughout the course of a project to keep progress on track

## Clarity of Simplicity

- drawing on established principles to separate the “wheat from the chaff” and eliminate the trivial and irrelevant
- asking the key questions to distil problems into a few manageable essentials and formulate practical solutions
- using a few simple “rules of thumb” to ignore the “irrelevant clutter” of daily life to identify the basics which matter

## Strength from Adversity

- a maturity of life outlook which recognises that long-term success requires consistency of courage and stamina
- the insight into the fundamental difficulties of life which accepts there are no short-cuts or “easy ways out”
- recognising that failure can happen when anything ambitious is attempted and drawing on inner reserves to bounce back quickly from set backs

## Recharging the Batteries

- a sensitivity to your moods and feelings which recognises how to pace activity and when to take time out to relax
- an involvement in a range of life interests which keeps your life outlook fresh and engaged in new challenges
- drawing on a strong support system to keep a sense of overall perspective about life’s priorities

# LIFE TACTICS PROFILE



# TACTICS: OPPORTUNITIES AND HAZARDS

## HAZARDS

- becoming caught up in competing goals and losing focus on what is important to you in life
- attempting to do too many different things and spreading your efforts too thinly and a difficulty in making a sustained impact
- allowing others to set the agenda and manage your time and effort around their requirements, deflecting you from your life aims
- an erratic life style that may neglect the essential tasks and 'chores' of life and expend unnecessary time disentangling the adverse consequences
- a disorganised approach which fails to plan and coordinate varied activities and is 'playing catch up' in life
- paying insufficient attention to the importance of a healthy life style and the routines of sleeping, eating and physical exercise
- a reliance on initial impressions that may lack the "cutting edge" of critical evaluation to identify the underlying causes of problems
- a dislike and impatience with the detail that may become bored quickly with the analysis of facts and figures
- falling back on emotional responses to shape decision making which short-circuits an informed examination of the full set of issues
- a wariness and suspicion of the unknown that avoids those life problems that appears ambiguous and uncertain

## OPPORTUNITIES

- making a positive impression on others to gain their attention and interest and establish your credibility
- using an insight into what matters to others to reach out with persuasive and convincing communication
- alert to the emotional sensitivities of interpersonal situations and how to adapt your approach to the 'mood' of others
- drawing on established principles to separate the 'wheat from the chaff' and eliminate the trivial and irrelevant in life
- asking the key questions to distil problems into a few manageable essentials and formulate practical solutions
- using a few simple 'rules of thumb' to ignore the 'irrelevant clutter' of daily life to identify the basics which matter
- a maturity of life outlook that recognises that long-term success requires consistency of courage and stamina
- the insight into the fundamental trials and tribulations of life, accepting the flow of 'good-times-bad-times' and that there are no short-cuts or 'easy ways out'
- recognising that failure can happen when anything ambitious is attempted and drawing on inner reserves to bounce back quickly from set backs

# 4

## Meeting life's challenges

Life throws at us many problems, dilemmas and decisions. This section of the report maps out six overall life challenges – “the tasks of life” to be undertaken to achieve the “good life”. For each challenge the opportunities and risks that might be relevant to you are highlighted.

*Please note that these prompts are computer generated based on the pattern of results from the questionnaire; not all will therefore be applicable to you personally. Use your common sense to identify those which seem especially relevant to you.*

*“We cannot solve life’s problems except by solving them.”*

**M Scott Peck**

# MEETING LIFE'S CHALLENGES

## The Six Challenges of Life

Life does not stand still. We progress through different stages of life, each phase throwing up different options and opportunities as well as distinctive risks and hazards. Our development and growth as individuals depends on how we overcome these challenges. The “good life”, the life of sustainable happiness, insight, fulfilment and virtue, requires us to tackle and overcome six fundamental challenges. They may emerge at different times in life and appear in different forms. We may find some of the challenges straightforward at the time, but then discover we need to revisit them at a future point. Others may be difficult and so demanding that we postpone them to a later point in life, or attempt to avoid them completely. But to live the “good life” we need to address all six.

### 1 **Enjoying the full flow of the moment**

experiencing life as it is; life to be lived to the full and gaining satisfaction from the “simple pleasures” of life

### 2 **Standing out as an individual in your own right**

optimising our unique talents and skills to stand out as in some way “special” and make a distinctive impact on the world

### 3 **Building a secure future**

establishing a life structure which prepares for the uncertainties of the future and helps protect us from life’s adversities

### 4 **Making sense of life’s complexities**

getting to grips with the “big questions” of life to formulate a belief system which understands life’s puzzles and paradoxes within a coherent life outlook

### 5 **Contributing to a better world**

making a positive and practical difference to others’ lives to leave the world in better shape than we found it

### 6 **Engaging with something bigger than ourselves**

finding spiritual purpose and connecting with a wider meaning in pursuing a life of authentic value and integrity of character

## ENJOYING THE FULL FLOW OF THE MOMENT

It may seem odd that the simple and straightforward enjoyment of the “simple” things of life should be a life challenge. Where is the difficulty in enjoying the obvious satisfactions of life? What is so arduous about the light hearted companionship of friends; the physical pleasures of good food, music or art; or simply relaxing and doing nothing but admire the scenery?

The challenge for many lies in engaging fully in the present rather than thinking back to the past and what might have been or to experience what is good now rather than anticipate the problems that lie ahead. For others the difficulty is in switching off from pressing work and domestic concerns to attend fully to what is enjoyable right now in the moment.

Others face a very different challenge: to enjoy the full pleasures of the moment with moderation rather than with that kind of reckless abandon or excessive indulgence which might jeopardise other life goals.

*“Anyone who tries to hold on to pleasure is bound to wind up disappointed in the end. The cause of most disappointment is trying to give permanence to the temporary. Since all things in life are transitory, you are continually disappointed.”*

**David Lieberman**

*“Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.”*

**Robert Brault**

# ENJOYING THE FULL FLOW OF THE MOMENT

## MANAGING LOW TACTICS

- Live for today but remember there will be a tomorrow. Be careful that you don't get caught up in the enjoyment of the moment to the extent that you forget the pressures and priorities of tomorrow. Review the full set of your work and life commitments, immediate as well as those for the longer-term, to evaluate the balance of activity.
- Don't let life get stale. Doing the same thing repeatedly may be enjoyable and comfortable in the short run but will become dull in the longer-term. Accept that you need to take some risks to take on different challenges and discover new experiences. Push yourself into different activities to learn more about what you do and don't enjoy. Don't assume that more of the same will continue to be stimulating and satisfying.
- Curb your enthusiasm. Don't be reckless in throwing yourself into situations, enjoyable in the short-term but with the kind of financial implications that might hurt you in future. Review your household budget to calculate what proportion of your monthly incomings is being spent on today's activities versus activities that will support your satisfaction in the longer-run. Life is a series of trade-offs between the present and the future. Manage the trade-offs wisely.
- Your intuition is an asset in sensing immediately which experiences are positive and enriching, and which might be unsatisfying. And your enjoyment won't be spoiled by a critical scrutiny of the minor imperfections. But some activities and pursuits in life benefit from attention to detail. Be prepared to take extra pains to enhance your enjoyment of the finer aesthetic pleasures of life.

## MANAGING HIGH TACTICS

- Enjoying the simple pleasures of life requires the insight to discern what matters and what doesn't. Draw on your clarity of thinking to identify what it is that you find appealing and satisfying. Use this insight to identify new activities you haven't experienced before but will find enjoyable in future.
- Life throws up a variety of challenges and experiences. When good times occur, see them for what they are: moments to be enjoyed. Not every life situation is a personal battle against the odds. Don't allow your finely tuned systems for managing threat and difficulty hold you back from taking pleasure from the light hearted and easy going moments of life.
- Allow others to shine. Draw on your charm to engage and involve others, to make them feel special and an important part of current activity. Resist the temptation to stay in the spotlight of attention. Utilise your sensitivity to others to bring them out and encourage their full involvement. Others' appreciation of your generosity and grace will enhance your own enjoyment.