

Week Three

Week Three

Welcome to Week 3 of the Blue Binder Project. You are continuing with your decision to make your life more enjoyable, and you are taking action to make this a reality. Be proud of this – you’re doing something that most people shy away from, so let yourself feel good about your accomplishments.

During Week 3, you will explore the qualities and actions that are most important to you, your core principles, that guide you to be your most authentic self. Clarity about these principles will help you make decisions and take actions that are the building blocks of a successful and satisfying life.

This week you’ll also check in with yourself about what you’ve achieved since you joined Blue Binder Project, and you’ll make an educated decision about what is best for you - to continue on with the next three week section of Blue Binder Project, or to end your journey here.

For right now though, take a moment to savor what you have accomplished and learned about yourself in just two short weeks. It hasn’t been (and won’t be) always easy, but each step moves you that much closer to improving your enjoyment of life. If you have any questions or need additional help from us – don’t hesitate to email us at info@bluebinderproject.com.





Section 1 — Core Principles

Introduction
Core Principles

Section 2 – Looking Back and Looking Forward

Looking Back
Looking Forward

Section 3 — Journal

Journal Pages

Section 4 — Being of Service

Being of Service Reflection Pages

Section 5 — Week 3 Summary

Reading Reflections



There is a tremendous power that comes from understanding the 'rules' of a game, regardless of the game. To use a simple sports example, imagine you know nothing about baseball, and you've somehow found yourself as the pitcher on a baseball team, pitching the ball to a hitter. Sometimes you throw a pitch and the umpire behind the plate says 'Strike!' and your team cheers, and sometimes the umpire says 'Ball!' and your teammates groan. So, you know the difference between feeling good (a strike) and bad (a ball), but it seems random; you feel like you have no control. You don't know how to adjust your pitching to be successful. You feel like a victim to the whims of that heartless umpire.

But what if you add one 'rule' to what you understand about the game of baseball – that you get a strike when you throw the ball over home plate anywhere above the knees and below the chest of the hitter. All of a sudden, you realize this isn't random. You aren't victim to this heartless umpire – you understand how to succeed. You understand the rule, or, to say this a different way, you understand the cause and effect relationship of what you need to do to get the outcome you want - if you want a strike, you have to throw the ball into the strike zone!

Now let's shift 'games' from baseball to real life. In real life, I know there are 'rules' that, if I follow them, will improve my enjoyment of life. Some of these are pretty simple cause and effect relationships – for example, if I eat junk food, I feel bad. Some of these are much deeper though, and may be more difficult to see, and even more important to understand. One of these deep-seated, real-life rules has to do with uncovering and understanding your core principles and then making sure your life is aligned with those principles.

So, what are core principles?

Core principles are the foundation of who you truly are once you scrape away all the clutter of what everyone else (your family, your social network, heck, our society as a whole) wants you to think is important. Your core principles are so integral to who you are as a unique person, that it can sometimes be challenging to 'pull them out' to see and identify what they are. And, once you are able to do so, you have gained an incredible power. You will have figured out one of the ground rules to living an extraordinary life (a ground rule that, sadly, the vast majority of folks don't realize) - that living the life you want is all about living your life in ways that are in alignment with who you truly are.

We all know that life is all about making decisions and choices, and understanding your core principles will offer guidance as you make decisions in the future. When you are living in alignment with these beliefs, you increase your confidence and your self-esteem. Your choices become stronger, more effective. Life becomes clearer, decisions simpler. You lose that guilty feeling that you should be doing things differently. You see yourself acting in integrity, satisfied with who you are being in this moment. On the other hand, you also have likely experienced

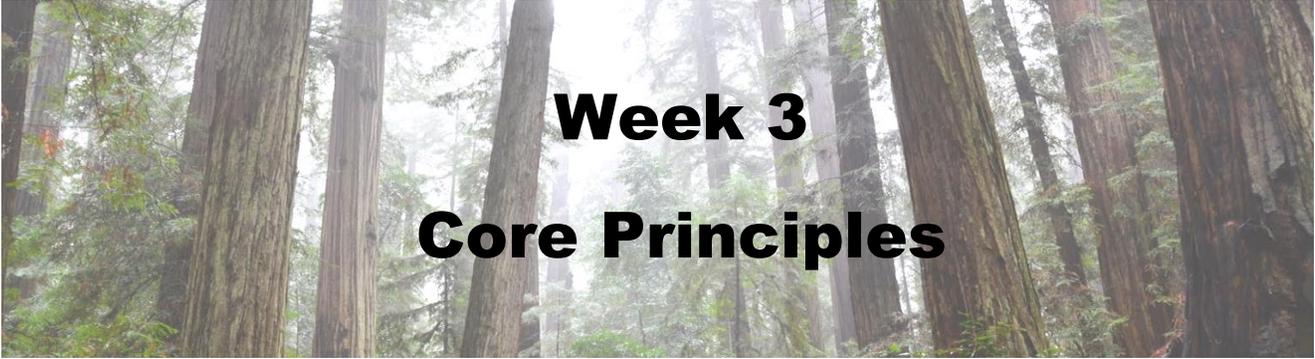
moments when your actions weren't consistent with what is most important to you. Perhaps a time when you just felt "off" about what you were doing. That "off" feeling meant what you were doing was probably going against what you believed to be important. When life is frustrating and you don't know why, chances are that part of the issue is that you're not living in alignment with your principles.

As you move forward in this week, you will be clarifying what your core principles are. You will look at what you believe is important in yourself, in your actions and in your relationships, and then distill those things down into a few core principles to focus on. No two people will have the exact same set of principles - these are part of what makes you unique - and your happiness and success won't look exactly like anyone else's.

As we go through this Covid-19 pause in our everyday life, the work you are doing here is especially important. Though we don't have an exact timeline, we do know that 'real life' will come back, and when it does, we will each have a choice to make. We can choose to either reengage with life in the same way as we did before Covid-19, or we can choose to make some changes to help us get more out of life.

If you choose to make positive changes, your core principals are the evaluation tool for you to use to see your pre-Covid life in a new light, and then make decisions about what you want to experience in your post-Covid reality. The clearer you are about what is important to you, the more likely you are to make choices that create the fulfilling life you want to be living.





Week 3

Core Principles

In this exercise, you will be clarifying what your core principles are so your choices and actions can be better in alignment with what is most important to you. You will look at various experiences, choices and relationships in your life and distill what you find into three core principles that guide your life and best represent who you are. This is not about adopting new ideas. It's about discovering what is already most important to you.

You will first fill out the questions below about significant moments, people and personal qualities in your life. These answers will start to show you what the common themes and elements are that point you toward your core principles and define who you are.

Step One

Answer the following questions to begin to explore what is most important to you.

Personal Qualities

What three qualities do you admire most in others? In yourself? _____

What three qualities do you criticize most in others? In yourself? _____

What three qualities did your family praise most in others when you were growing up? _____

What five qualities do you want to be remembered for? _____

Relationships

Think about the most meaningful relationships you've had in your life. What do/did you appreciate about them?

Think about the toughest relationships you've had in your life. Why were they difficult? _____

What are you proud of regarding how you contribute to your relationships? _____

Actions

What are three accomplishments you are most proud of in your life? Why? _____

What are three of the most meaningful experiences you've had? What makes them stand out as important? _____

What was the best job you've had in your life? What did you love about it? _____

What was your least favorite job you've had in your life? What was difficult about it? _____

Step Two

Go back over your answers and identify the values that show you what is important to you. Are there common behaviors or qualities that keep showing up? For example, in your answers about relationships, do your most meaningful relationships often show the value of loyalty? Do your accomplishments show that you are you most proud of yourself when you are ambitious and move up the company ladder? You're looking for what is important to you in how to be as a good person, how to relate to others well and how you choose the best actions in your life. Remember, this isn't about what others think, it's about what you believe is important. From your answers, list the values you see in each category below. If a value doesn't quite fit in one of the first three categories, list it in the "Other" category for now.

Personal Values: Qualities present when I feel like my best self.	Relationship Values: Qualities present in my most satisfying relationships.	Action Values: Qualities present in my most successful choices and actions.	Other Values:

Step Three

Now it's time to test these values and determine the ones that fit you best. As you go through life, it is easy to adopt the values of the people around you - your parents, your friends, your colleagues. Many of these values will work well for you, but sometimes you can absorb a value that doesn't really fit who you are. It seems to work for someone else so you take it on, but, at your core, it's not what you believe in. It feels hollow or like something that "should" be important to you but just isn't. This is the moment to be deeply honest with yourself. It doesn't matter what someone else values; it matters what you value. To truly live in alignment with your core principles and find that strike zone of effectiveness in your life, those principles must be absolutely true for you.

Ask yourself the following questions about each value that you have identified. Mark an X next to any values you answer yes to on these questions.

1. Is this something that I may have adopted because I believe others see it as valuable, but it's not truly important to me?
2. Is this something I grew up believing is important, but it isn't as meaningful to me now?
3. Is this something that I can imagine steering me wrong somehow, taking me away from the life I want to create?

When you've worked through these questions and eliminated the values that are not a good fit for you, circle the remaining values. These will make up your core principles. These are the qualities and actions that you value most.

Step Four

Fill in the following sentences with the concepts you have identified above. If you feel you have too many ideas in one area, narrow them down to the top three for each area. If you have one or two ideas in an area, that's fine too. Below each sentence, write a short explanation of how you see these concepts working to help you be your truest, most authentic self.

Personal Core Principles:

I am happiest with myself when I am _____, _____, and _____.

Because _____

Relationship Core Principles:

My most satisfying relationships demonstrate _____, _____, and _____.

Because _____

Action Core Principles:

I am most successful when I _____, _____, and _____.

Because _____

These statements make up your personal code. This is your individualized formula for success. When facing a tough decision or struggling with a difficult life event, staying true to your core principles will mean you are more likely to choose a path through it that serves you well. You can use these Core Principle Statements as a check that you are being authentic, thoughtful, and focused in your decisions. You are more likely to feel you have made a good decision and have been true to who you are. It doesn't mean all those decisions and choices will succeed. It does mean you will be able to trust that you brought your best self to the table. You are living in personal alignment.



Week 3

Looking Back and Looking Forward

Looking Back

You're reading these words about three weeks from when you first began Blue Binder Project, and I'd like you to take a moment now and read back through a few of the first journal sheets you completed. Go ahead, read enough just to remember a little about where you were from a headspace perspective when you started this experience.

Now think about how you are doing today - there is a real change in your thought patterns between then and now. It is a little crazy, but in this short time, you've grown in your depth as a person, your headspace has improved, and you're feeling better about yourself and your life situation. You're feeling better, not necessarily because of external life changes, but because you've put in the work to earn a little space and clarity in your mind.

Now let's say you have a friend who could use your help right now because he or she is in a tough place in life. If you could boil your take away from Blue Binder Project into three nuggets of advice to help this friend get to where you are today, what would they be?

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

After you've written these out, take another look, because these nuggets are your key takeaways from the work you've done here, and you need to remember them for yourself!

Looking Forward

Now that you're nearing the end of this three-week journey, let's look forward from here and ask - what is next for you? "What do you mean by 'next'", I can hear you say, "haven't I made it, aren't I done with this?" Well, that is entirely up to you! The purpose of this class is to give you a solid foundation to work from, and to make decisions from – what you do from here is your choice.

What I will say is that nature doesn't seem to like the status quo very much – things don't usually stay the same for too long; they tend to either improve or decline. In my experience this is especially true for positive mindsets! You've worked hard to improve yours, so don't stop now! Find a daily practice that works for you.

My daily practice includes spending time every day reading or listening to mindset materials, meditating, and exercising, and the more challenging the exterior world is, the more work I know I have to put into myself. Am I perfect at this? Of course not, but I do know that I can't pause this routine for more than a few days, because if I do, my mindset goes downhill quickly. When my mindset goes down, that means that my enjoyment of life goes down with it.

Take a few minutes to choose now what the right thing is for you – it is my sincere hope that you continue to move yourself forward, intentionally and deliberately, but the choice is yours to make, so make it now:

Yes, I feel better now than when I started Blue Binder Project, and I don't want to slip backwards. I choose to keep moving myself forward!

No, I don't want to continue with my forward momentum.

If you marked 'Yes', fantastic! Next, please think through what that means for you. Although you can create your own daily practice, one (great!) option for you is to continue working with us at Blue Binder Project by joining our next three-week class, because we'd love to keep working with you!

This class is for you if you've begun feeling inspired and excited by the work you've done here, and you recognize that this is truly helping your outlook on life. Our next class picks up where this class leaves off, and is a deeper dive into you and your pre-Covid life, a look at what good has come from this Covid pause (and yes there are a lot of good things to learn from right now), and then looking towards the life you truly want once our 'regular life' starts up again.

To join us for the next three weeks, please go to www.bluebinderproject.com/covid/2nd3weeks to sign up and for more information. We would truly enjoy working with you!

Lastly, though everyone going through Blue Binder Project is responsible for their own experience, it is my sincere hope that your experience was one of growth and positivity. You'll soon receive an email survey – please take a few moments to fill this survey out – anything you share, whether good or otherwise, will help us improve our programs moving forward.

Journal

Date: _____

How do I feel today?

<i>Mentally</i> - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 +
<i>Physically</i> - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 +
<i>(circle one)</i>

Thoughts of the day:

Exercise I did today...

What I'm grateful for today...

What am I looking forward to tomorrow?

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Week 3

Being of Service Reflections

Name of Activity:	Date:	Time:
	Headspace Level:	

What had the biggest impact on me today, and why?

What did I do to reward myself today?



Name of Activity:	Date:	Time:
	Headspace Level:	

What had the biggest impact on me today, and why?

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Week 3 Summary

In general, how do you feel about this week? What were the highlights?

A month from now, what do you want to remember most about this week (perhaps a realization you had, or something you learned)?

Is there something you want to do differently or improve this next week?

Reading Reflections

How much have you read this week? Page: _____ through page: _____

What are the two most thought-provoking concepts from this week's reading? Why? _____

How can you implement these concepts in your life? _____
