**A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO HELP YOU CREATE THE BEST STRATEGIES TO SET, PURSUE AND ACHIEVE YOUR BIG GOALS**
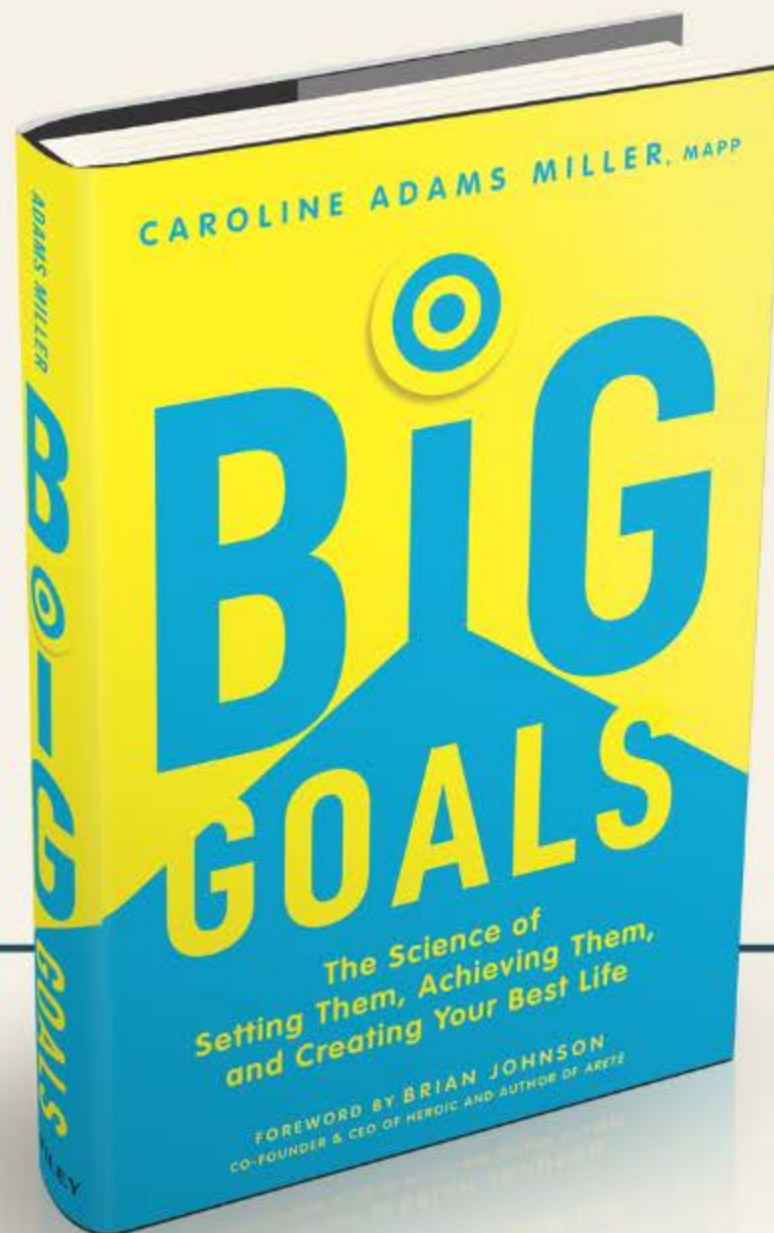
# WORKBOOK



CAROLINE ADAMS MILLER, MAPP

# BiG GOALS

The Science of Setting Them, Achieving Them, and Creating Your Best Life

FOREWORD BY BRIAN JOHNSON
CO-FOUNDER & CEO OF HEROIC AND AUTHOR OF ARETE

## Caroline Adams Miller MAPP

BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF CREATING YOUR BEST LIFE,
GETTING GRIT & MY NAME IS CAROLINE

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# WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF "BIG GOALS"!

This workbook is designed to give readers an overview of the concepts and worksheets in *Big Goals: The Science of Setting Them, Achieving Them, and Creating Your Best Life*, which will be published in November 2024.

The book opens with an overview of goal-setting practices beginning in the early 1900s and walks readers through the commonly used systems that have predominated in most organizations to achieve productivity and goal success. These have included Management by Objectives (MBOs), SMART goals, and OKRs and KPIs (Objectives and Key Results, and Key Performance Indicators), but none of these are evidence-based, and all were tilted to favor how white men have historically set, pursued, and achieved goals, often in technological and industrial settings. This has inadvertently created systems that don't support the big goals of more diverse populations, which I have been working to address for many years.

In 1990, Gary Latham and Edwin Locke proposed Goal Setting Theory (GST), which is now rated the #1 management theory for goal success and has been replicated hundreds, if not thousands, of times. Unfortunately, most people have never heard of GST, and few use it because it has rarely been publicized outside of *Creating Your Best Life* (2008, 2021), which was the first scientifically based book on goal setting that married the research on success and happiness together for mass market audiences all over the world.

My focus on bringing clients, audiences, and readers the best possible research on making their big goals come true led me to compile many findings that will update and improve GST and offer a new way of going from setting goals to achieving goals: the BRIDGE methodology.

BRIDGE stands for Brainstorming, Relationships, Investments, Decision-Making, Good Grit, and Excellence. I take people through each step with questions, worksheets, and exercises that illuminate every aspect of goals so that an effective strategy can be created.

Thank you for your interest in my work, which I hope will be shared with students, adults, athletes, leaders, and anyone who wants to create their best lives. We all need to have dreams to live with optimism and zest, and this book is the first to pull together the approaches and answers that have languished in academia, but that can now be applied to help all of us succeed.

I offer workshops, private coaching, and offsite strategy retreats in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, to teach and certify others in these concepts so they can reach the widest possible audience.


Please contact me for coaching at caroline@carolinemiller.com and Melissa Spencer for all other events at Melissa@SpencersConsulting.com.
Thank you!

Caroline Adams Miller, MAPP
April 2024

# VIA CHARACTER STRENGTHS SURVEY

Created by Positive Psychology pioneers Martin Seligman and Chris Peterson, the VIA (Values in Action) Character Strengths Survey is one of the most popular and well-validated strengths tests available in the world today. To date, it has been taken by almost 30 million men and women in more than 190 countries and has become a leading tool used in a variety of settings from corporations to schools that helps people understand how they most authentically experience and thrive in the world.

The VIA test doesn't measure weaknesses or deficits; it ranks one's character strengths (such as wisdom, kindness, gratitude, zest, bravery, love of learning, etc.) from one to 24.
Research has found that understanding and using one's top strengths can not only make people feel more positive but can also lead to greater fulfillment and success with one's goals.

Additionally, when people develop their top strengths in new and creative ways, it can significantly impact their quality of life and have a positive effect on relationships, careers, and personal growth.

One of the most powerful ways to use the VIA is to do a writing exercise called *Me at My Best*. To do this, the participant assesses their top five strengths and then writes about a time when those strengths were all used together in a harmonious and positive way. Doing this exercise reminds people of who they are when they feel most comfortable in their own skin and demonstrates how combining one's top strengths in specific doses can be a winning combination.

Discussions of strengths also include examining the ways in which one might overuse or underuse one's strengths to one's detriment and finding new ways to identify and work around difficult challenges using one's strengths more appropriately.

To get started, register for a free account at the VIA Institute website here:
https://www.viacharacter.org/Survey/Account/Register.
The test itself is 120 questions and takes about fifteen minutes to complete.

# EXAMPLES OF STRENGTHS OVERUSE / UNDERUSE

Contrary to some reports, it's not always a good idea to maximize one's top strengths to exclude lesser strengths. More is not always better, something that Aristotle noted several centuries ago when he called for the "golden mean" when pursuing virtues, athletics, or any behavior. Courage, he said, was reckless when overused, and cowardice when underused. The VIA Institute in Cincinnati, OH, has also published research showing that the overuse/underuse of several strengths, like social intelligence and zest, can predict social anxiety.

Below are examples of how strengths can manifest when they are overused/underused:

| VIRTUE | OVERUSE | UNDERUSE |
|---|---|---|
| Gratitude | Obsequiousness | Thoughtlessness |
| Wisdom | Over-Reliance on Past | Shallow Thinking |
| Zest | Over-Exuberance | Dullness / "Eyeore" |
| Self-Regulation | Lack of Spontaneity | Addiction / Rashness |
| Humility | Can't hear / Believe Praise | Bragging |
| Love of Learning | Analysis Paralysis | Ignorance |
| Curiosity | Nosiness / Prying | Self-Absorption |
| Kindness | People Pleasing / Doormat | Indifference |
| Courage | Recklessness | Playing it Safe |
| Love and Be Loved | Blindness to Others' Flaws | Superficial Friends |
| Appreciation of Beauty | Perfectionism | Mediocrity |
| Judgment | Self-Critical / Too Critical | Poor Judgment |
| Hope / Optimism | Dreamy / Unrealistic | No Goals / Pessimistic |
| Teamwork | Too much Collaboration | Won't Ask for Help |
| Leadership | Dictatorship | Lacks Responsibility |
| Creativity | Too many ideas | Stale Thinking |
| Social Intelligence | Hypersensitive | Oblivious |
| Forgiveness | Being Disrespected | Holding Grudges |
| Humor | Making Fun of Others | Humorless |
| Perseverance | Stupid Grit | Giving Up |
| Prudence | Editing Oneself a Lot | Being Reckless |
| Spirituality / Purpose | Dogmatic | Aimless |
| Fairness | Unfairness to Oneself /Others | Discriminatory |
| Honesty | Hurtful / Tactless | Evasive |

# ME AT MY BEST

Take 15 minutes to complete the free VIA Character Strengths test at www.viacharacter.org. Consider the top five strengths that have been identified. Think of a time or period in your life when you had a "peak" experience, made a difference, succeeded at something important, or others told you they admired how you had done something specific. Think of how your strengths played a role in this experience and write a few paragraphs about it, singling out each one and how it manifested in that situation.

Some people have an initial "What?!" reaction to seeing their strengths because we often take our strengths for granted. They feel natural to us, so we go to them naturally and easily and don't always realize that other people don't see the world as we do. Research has found that people who deliberately use their top five strengths in new and creative to pursue their goals are happier and more successful. Other people also see them as "more authentic" and comfortable in their skin, indicating that they are not trying to lead with a behavior or strength that has not brought out the best in them. For example, people with humor towards the bottom of their strengths cannot pull off jokes as easily as those who are naturally wired that way.

One interesting note: a sure sign that you have a top five strength is when you are *offended by its absence* in others. You don't understand how someone else might not be kind, patient, zestful, or curious if they are your strengths, which is why it is so important to learn how to "spot strengths" in others so that you can adapt to how they see the world.

It is also important to know that overusing strengths can turn them into weaknesses. For example, too much honesty can become cruel candor, and leadership can turn into bossiness.

Knowing who you are "at your best" is a big step towards understanding what situations and people can elicit your top strengths in the right dose, also known as "the golden mean."

# WHY IS HAPPINESS THE ROCKET FUEL OF SUCCESS?

In 2005, a meta-analysis of success by three leading researchers, Sonja Lyubomirsky, Ed Diener, and Laura King, concluded that **all success in life is preceded by being happy first** – **not vice versa.** For this reason, any discussion of goal setting, goal pursuit, and goal success must include the important information that we all need to voluntarily amplify our well-being daily to set the stage for any success. While we all have genetic setpoints for well-being, and some find it easier to generate and savor positive emotions, everyone can rise to the top of their genetic setpoint range through the practice of behaviors that have been found to positively impact most people, such as meditation, journaling, the practice of gratitude, and acts of forgiveness.

Top empirical reasons why **success follows** emotional flourishing:

- Emotional flourishing promotes superior mental health, including cognitive flexibility and the ability to broaden one's thinking with curiosity and a "growth mindset."
- Higher well-being promotes physical health because people are more likely to engage in healthier behaviors like regular exercise, a balanced diet, and good sleep habits.
- Happiness brings more hope and optimism, which leads people to persist longer and harder at goal pursuit.
- Flourishing people are more likely to build positive relationships with others because they exhibit better interpersonal skills such as empathy, good communication, and generosity.
- Happiness reduces anxiety and depression, leading to greater emotional resilience.
- When workers experience higher well-being, they are more engaged, motivated, and focused, leading to greater productivity, increased job satisfaction, more career advancement, and overall success in the workplace.
- Increased well-being can provide a sense of purpose and fulfillment, leading to greater self-acceptance and self-actualization.

*Source: Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? Psychological Bulletin, 131(6), 803-855.*

# POSITIVE ("WISE") INTERVENTIONS

A seminal paper, "Benefits of Frequent Positive Affect" (2005), is one of the most noteworthy findings from Positive Psychology research. Authored by Laura King, Sonja Lyubomirsky, and Ed Diener, the study summarizes hundreds of all kinds of research to identify the determinants of success across multiple realms of life – health, friendship, career, etc. After considering longitudinal, correlational, causal, and other types of research, the trio concluded that **success across all domains of life is preceded by being in a flourishing place first**. In brief, happiness precedes success; happiness does not follow achieving goals.

Accordingly, it isn't possible to responsibly address goal setting and grit without first discussing its necessary antecedents: positive (or wise) interventions (PIs). These habits of mind and behavior have been found to generate emotional flourishing, which has many descriptors, including contentment, joy, pride, happiness, awe, joy, peacefulness, ecstasy, and cheerfulness. Positive emotions have multiple outcomes that are evolutionarily beneficial, making it possible for people to succeed in important goals and survive.

For example, Barbara Fredrickson's "Broaden and Build" Theory states that generating and experiencing "micromoments" of well-being causes people to become more curious, prosocial, kind, zestful, and diligent, thus broadening their "thought-action repertoire," while simultaneously making it harder to feel cynicism, bias, pessimism, and hopelessness, among other negative emotions. When people experience positive emotions, they also have a greater capacity to "build" strong relationships with others, which assists them in challenging and sad times while building a network of proactive support.

Thousands of studies are coalescing around several behaviors and ways of thinking that enhance well-being for everyone, and even unleash the "undoing effect" of neutralizing negative moods and situations. These PIs are now known as "wise" interventions because some are more suitable to certain types of people than others and thus generate greater returns after an early investment than other PIs might.

To create and sustain a ratio of 5:1 (5 positive emotions or behaviors to 1 negative), the ratio most often seen in flourishing work teams, individuals, and couples, one must be "wise" about matching their character strengths to a PI. For example, an individual high in zest might find more positive results from exercise, while another person with top strengths of judgment and a love of learning might prefer to spend time in altruistic activities like teaching adults to read or volunteering for a non-profit like Habitat for Humanity.

Here are the most popular, well-studied PIs that everyone can experiment with and use to prepare for success in one's personal and professional lives. These can have many unique variations that fit your life circumstances, but the most important thing is that you take control of your well-being instead of simply waiting for happiness to arrive.

## Proven Positive Interventions

**Meditation:** Apps like Calm.com or GetSomeHeadspace.com bring mindfulness to you. As little as seven weeks of short, daily meditation have been found to alter brain structure while also improving emotional regulation, mood, and feelings of joy and peace.

**Exercise:** All types of movement make a positive difference, but aerobic activity tends to have a more immediate, lasting impact than activities like lifting weights. Being in nature while exercising is an extra plus that boosts vitality for hours.

**Gratitude:** Cultivating an attitude of gratitude through exercises like "Three Blessings" and "The Gratitude Visit" are popular. As you count blessings, it becomes easier to notice good things as they occur around you and build a habit of looking for good.

**Giving:** Altruism is one of the highest forms of morality in many spiritual traditions, but it is also beneficial to anyone who takes the time or resources to give to others. The person who gives has been found to experience the "helper's high." Many people find that doing random acts of kindness is an easy, optimal way to boost mood.

**Music:** Listening to music that reminds someone of a positive time in life evokes happy memories, and it's been found that livelier, upbeat music can cause depressed people to think and move more quickly, reversing the sluggishness they experience.

**Journaling:** Writing down one's thoughts and feelings and journaling about past experiences doesn't just improve the immune system; it also helps people "make meaning" of their lives and see silver linings and positive outcomes from adversity. Blogging has also been found to have a similar impact on well-being.

**Using Strengths:** Knowing one's top strengths is a PI for people because we often take our unique character strengths for granted. We inaccurately assume that if it comes naturally to us, it must come naturally to others. Understanding how your strengths accentuate and define your "best self" has been found to improve well-being. Other research shows that you must use your top strengths every day in new and creative ways to maintain that well-being.

# BUILDING THE MUSCLE OF SELF-EFFICACY

There are four different ways to build self-efficacy, which is a path to motivation and goal accomplishment that was studied and refined into self-efficacy theory by Dr. Albert Bandura, who has spent most of his adult years in residence at Stanford University as a professor of psychology.

Self-efficacy is one of the four traits of happy people, and those traits can be cultivated. They also include optimism, extraversion, and self-confidence. There are four ways to build self-efficacy, and without self-efficacy, one often cannot pursue important goals that allow one to feel competent, autonomous, and connected to others. That is why self-efficacy is frequently called, "the muscle of goal accomplishment."

Here are the ways we can build this important trait:

1. **Mastery experiences**. The most powerful way to build self-efficacy is to break large goals into smaller ones that are accomplished step-by-step. Confidence arises from methodically taking the steps to develop mastery and skills that allow bigger and more complicated goals to be tackled.

2. **Good stress responses**. People who can respond to difficulties, setbacks, challenges, and failures by restoring their equilibrium with responses like mindfulness techniques, humor, meditation, deep breathing, and other techniques can cope better than those who give up, ruminate, and become pessimistic about their chances of success.

3. **Persuasive other**. We begin to believe in ourselves and our ability to do hard things when someone we admire and trust believes in us. This person can be a mentor, role model, teacher, parent, godparent, spiritual leader, or someone who has observed you long enough to accurately understand who you are and what you are capable of.

4. **Proximal role model**. When we can see someone in our environment doing something that we want to do or who has already accomplished something we long to accomplish, it flattens our learning curve and allows us to more easily visualize ourselves in their shoes. One of the sayings in goal setting is, "You can't hit a target you can't see," so seeing a role model makes our movement toward the finished product much easier and boosts hope.

Recent research has also found that inspirational leaders skilled at public speaking can inspire enthusiasm, motivation, and self-efficacy in others through persuasive storytelling, powerful visioning, and personal sharing. John F. Kennedy's famous speech about sending a man to the moon, which included the phrase, "We do these things not because they are easy, but because they are hard," is one example of masterful oratory that inspired self-efficacy.

# LEARNING GOAL CHECKLIST

According to goal setting theory by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham, many of the goals we pursue are what are called "learning goals," which means that we have not taken these actions or pursued these goals successfully before. For that reason, they are initially called "do your best goals," but that doesn't mean they cannot be "challenging and specific," too, which is what Locke and Latham found always create the best outcomes. Learning goals become performance goals after we have flattened our learning curve and gotten some experience under our belt because we will have learned how quickly we can carry out the checklist steps, what efforts will create excellence, and other variables that make a difference (people, weather, materials, etc.). Everyone learns differently, so learning goals should be individualized to each person so that their character strengths are applied in a way that makes knowledge/skill acquisition easier. For example, someone with curiosity might want to ask a lot of questions, while someone with appreciation of beauty and excellence might want to study paragons of excellent outcomes.

The BRIDGE framework is helpful in pursuing learning goals for the first time. Once you have established the reason behind the importance of the goal accomplishment, follow this: BRAINSTORMING – who has accomplished this goal before? Can they give you a checklist of how they do it? Where else can you gain knowledge? Do you have any previous experience that is relevant? RELATIONSHIPS – Who will you need to accomplish this goal? Who should not be in your life in this process? INVESTMENT – How much time/money/energy will you need to invest? DECISIONS – When will you take action and how will you know it's stop and try again? GOOD GRIT – When will you need to be positively persistent, passionate and persevering in the pursuit of this goal? How will you handle obstacles? EXCELLENCE – What are the standards of excellence that you will use to judge progress and success? You can hold yourself to "challenging and specific" standards while gathering information – for example, interviewing five people instead of just one each day.

Use this sheet to answer the questions and take notes as a checklist begins to emerge for this goal that can guide you and others going forward.

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Add any notes below to clarify how you learned to proceed, who was particularly helpful, and what to avoid next time. Use this sheet on every iteration of pursuing a learning goal, refining your approach every time. When it has become a performance goal, transfer the steps to that worksheet and explain the steps to someone else to be sure they are easy to understand.

# PERFORMANCE GOAL CHECKLIST

According to goal setting theory by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham, many of the goals we pursue are what are called "performance goals," which means that we have pursued and successfully achieved those goals before. This means that we can generally identify the same steps we need to take to succeed again and, in what order, to be able to set a metric of progress, a specific outcome, and the date by which that outcome can be achieved. Locke and Latham found that the best results always come from setting "challenging and specific goals," which means goals that are not easily accomplished with a minimum of effort and relative certainty that the goal can be reached.

Some tactics might change slightly to accommodate a new workplace, an updated process, or slightly different materials to be used, for example, but a performance goal checklist ought to be usable by others if you cannot perform the task yourself. The best checklists are not overly detailed but contain the most important steps of completion. How someone performs the steps might vary, but the building blocks of accomplishment should remain the same.

Before creating your checklist, write down anything new or different from the previous goal pursuit. Are there any potential obstacles to consider in pursuing the goal that must be discussed or thought through before initiating action? Think these through and write down the appropriate questions that need to be answered to fit this goal, and make them part of the checklist. Next, list every step, including what metric must be used to gauge progress towards the best outcome. Always ensure that this list can be easily followed by someone other than yourself.

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Add any notes below to clarify an instruction or explain a measurement. Remember: the checklist ought to be so clear that these extra notes are kept to a minimum, but if they will impact the safety or excellence of the final product, please include them here:

# WHO BELIEVED IN YOU?

Many of us credit important actions we took at some point in life to the fact that someone believed in our potential and our ability to do something before we had done it before.  Think of a time when this happened for you. Who believed in you? What was your situation, and what was holding you back? How did the person communicate their belief in you? Why did you believe him or her? How has your life changed as a result of this relationship? Who has received this blessing from you?

# INVESTMENTS IN MY SUCCESS

A thorough assessment of the resources and information necessary in goal pursuit can include items you may overlook in your haste to get going and make progress. But skipping any step in the BRIDGE methodology can undermine forward movement because you'll often have to return to the investment you didn't make and spend the money and time, anyway. Investments take many forms and can include education, coaching, legal advice, clothing, updated technology, books, energy systems, and environments. Think carefully about what you will need to invest in now or in the process of pursuing the goal so that you make necessary budget adjustments and don't lose time making up for missed actions.

Make a comprehensive list of the investments you will be making and how you can make them happen:

# UNDERSTANDING "NOISE" AND "BIAS" IN DECISION-MAKING

In this worksheet, we explore the concepts of "noise" and "bias" as described by Nobel Prize-winning behavioral economist Daniel Kahneman, whose years of research on decision-making, "anchoring," and loss aversion changed many theories and led to different ways of judging successful decision strategies. Understanding these concepts can help improve your decision-making by identifying and reducing errors.

*Part 1: What are "Noise" and "Bias"?*
"Noise" is the unwanted variability in judgments that should ideally be consistent. This type of variability happens when different people make different decisions in identical situations or when the same person makes different decisions at different times under similar circumstances.

"Bias" refers to a consistent deviation from the truth in judgments. It's a systematic error that can lead either to overestimating or underestimating the true value or outcome of decisions.

*Part 2: Question Prompts to Evaluate Your Decision-Making*
Answer the following questions to assess whether your decision-making process might be influenced by noise or bias and think about how you can make improvements.

- Describe a recent decision you made at work or in your personal life.


- Do you think this decision was influenced by external factors that varied from one occasion to another? (Consider factors like mood, time of day, who was around).


- Think of a similar type of decision you made in the past. Was your decision-making process consistent?


- If there were differences, what factors contributed to this variability?

- Looking back at the decision described, can you identify any biases that might have influenced your judgment? (e.g., overconfidence, preference for a certain outcome)

- How do you gather feedback on your decisions?

- How could feedback help you identify and reduce biases and noise in your decision-making process?

- Based on your answers, what steps can you take to reduce noise and bias in future decisions? Consider strategies like setting clear guidelines for decision-making, using checklists, or seeking diverse perspectives before finalizing a decision.

*Conclusion*
You can make more accurate and consistent decisions by understanding and addressing noise and bias.

- Reflect on the insights gained from this worksheet and plan how you can implement changes to your decision-making processes.

# DECISION-MAKING:
## WHEN AM I AT MY BEST & WHEN AM I NOT AT MY BEST?

We all go through our days making decisions about matters big and small that involve how we spend our time and energy. Some are reactive and require little energy because we have done them so often – deciding what to order for lunch, choosing a driving route to get to the airport, deciding what to wear at a work gathering – and some are more consequential and proactive.

In goal pursuit, we need to make big decisions about whether it's a good time to proceed, what to do if we face an unexpected event, and whether we should deploy our financial and mental resources to change course at midlife, for example. Too often, I find that people have made good and bad decisions in their lives at key moments, but they've never studied what was involved in those situations, and what they'd replicate or do differently going forward.

In the military, sitting down and assessing your decision-making excellence is part of an "after-action review" or ARR. In business settings, it's been called a "Post-Mortem Assessment." Regardless of what you call it, list below the common denominators in your decisions that led to the best outcomes and what made up your poorest decisions. Are you surprised by what you see?

BEST DECISIONS




WORST DECISIONS

# HOW DO YOU GROW GOOD GRIT?

To accomplish big, hard goals, one of the most common denominators of flourishing people, you must possess grit. Being resilient, creative, conscientious, optimistic, and ambitious aren't enough by themselves. Good grit is the combination of these and other qualities, and the good news is that they can all be acquired. *Getting Grit* (SoundsTrue 2017) is devoted to helping readers understand grit and its importance and includes chapters covering topics such as goal-setting science, finding purpose, humility, and willpower. Since Dr. Angela Duckworth's Grit Scale was developed and she popularized grit, hundreds of studies have validated the science and narrowed down some of the most helpful ways to cultivate good grit. Here are a few:

- **Self-regulation strategies:** Strategies such as temporal perspective, perpetual evaluation, motivational orientation, strength, and resource gathering, system thinking, and framing have been linked to higher levels of grit.
- **Relationship choices:** Theories of social contagion posit that we catch behaviors and moods from others, which Duckworth discovered when cadets at West Point improved their grit scores after being housed with cadets with higher scores.
- **Social factors:** Positive social factors, including harmonious relationships with peers, school connectedness, and classroom peer grit, have been associated with higher levels of grit in student populations.
- **Satisfaction of psychological needs:** Satisfaction of basic psychological needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence has been found to mediate the association of grit with well-being, thus contributing to the development of grit.
- **Mindfulness and belief in free will:** Mindfulness has been shown to positively predict grit, while belief in free will has been associated with increased perseverance in individuals.
- **Purpose, spirituality, and hope:** Purposeful goals, success-focused purpose, time spent in socializing, time spent in academic activities, religious beliefs, and spirituality have all been linked to the development of grit in individuals.

It is important to note that the development of grit is a complex process influenced by various factors, and individuals may benefit from a combination of these strategies to foster grit.

# EXPLORING EGO DEPLETION AND SELF-CONTROL

Ego depletion is a concept that suggests self-control or willpower is a limited resource that can be used up by mental exertion, leading to decreased self-control for subsequent tasks. This worksheet will help you explore how this theory might apply to your own experiences and decision-making processes. Initial studies showed decreased performance in tasks requiring self-control after a different task that also required self-control. However, recent studies have shown inconsistent results, suggesting that the effect might not be as robust as previously thought.

### *Personal Reflection on Self-Control*
- Think about a recent day when you had to perform tasks that required significant self-control or decision-making. What tasks did you perform that required self-control?

- Did you notice any decrease in your ability to control impulses or make decisions as the day went on?

- Did you feel more tempted by distractions or less motivated after performing certain tasks?

- How might ego depletion influence your decisions in areas like diet, exercise, spending, or studying?

  Based on the understanding that motivation and incentives can counteract ego depletion effects, what strategies can you implement to maintain high levels of self-control throughout the day? Examples include setting clear goals, taking breaks, or creating rewards for task completion.

  Reflect on what you have learned about ego depletion and how it might apply to your life. Consider any changes you might want to make in how you manage your self-control resources to optimize your decision-making and productivity.

# KEYNOTE DESCRIPTIONS

**Are You Getting Goals Right? (Based on Caroline's upcoming book, Big Goals (Wiley)**
The 21st-century business climate is described as "VUCA All the time" or a "White Water Rapids" environment driven by geopolitical shifts, changes brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, supply chain disruption, and the permanent establishment of a hybrid workplace.

Companies must be agile and forward-thinking to train employees, empower managers, and lead with fresh tools like artificial intelligence that enable them to take advantage of fast-moving developments. Business consultants and workplace researchers agree that the most necessary change is creating more effective goal-setting methods that improve upon 20th-century methods like OKRs and KPIs.

Locke and Latham's Goal-Setting Theory (GST) has been ranked #1 of 73 management theories, yet the findings from this open theory are not embedded in most organizations' planning. Without proven science undergirding employee performance reviews or annual goal-setting strategy meetings, it is difficult to create "role clarity," which Gallup says is the most important challenge an organization must resolve to have a thriving workplace of engaged workers that produces the best results.

Caroline's book *Creating Your Best Life* revolutionized goal setting in 2008 by introducing the science of goal-setting theory and integrating it with the newest research on flourishing mindset, and grit. Her upcoming book, *Big Goals* (Wiley, fall 2024), will update the science and introduce her new BRIDGE methodology, which advances goal setting with a holistic, step-by-step process of walking anyone through having a goal and creating a plan that is likely to succeed based on motivation, mindset, and success research.

A full-day workshop includes worksheets and handouts that help people learn the techniques, practice breaking down goals and establishing timelines for success, and how to mentor others in this process. Caroline will walk attendees through:
- Locke and Latham's Goal Setting Theory (GST), ranked #1 of 73 management theories, but still mostly unknown outside of academia, and why it is considered the scientific foundation of all goal success
- How to separate goals into categories as defined by GST – "performance" and "learning" goals – and why checklists matter in getting them right
- The dangers of mixing up these two goals and creating a "Goals Gone Wild" scenario, which was behind disasters like the Titan submersible, Boeing's 737 Max, and the FTX cryptocurrency implosion
- How to use the Values in Action Character Strength Survey to boost well-being, create employee engagement, and maximize chances of goal accomplishment
- How to integrate the BRIDGE Methodology into an existing OKR/KPI system without disruption but in a way that increases the likelihood of engagement and productivity
- The clear-cut evidence that career success is always boosted by beginning in a positive emotional state and the proven methods that work for everyone
- The correct ways to brainstorm that evoke disruptive thinking and why psychological safety can be helpful
- The hidden problems with where and how you get feedback to measure progress
- The role that good grit plays in accomplishing hard goals and how to avoid the three types of bad grit: faux grit, selfie grit, and stupid grit

[Bridging Grit, Resilience, and Happiness: A Revolutionary Approach to Game-Changing Results.](#)

With ever-increasing complexity, regulation, and competition, organizations need resilient leaders who can easily navigate change. Caroline's program presents cutting-edge, scientifically proven methods to help you succeed.

Caroline's BRIDGE method (brainstorming, relationships, investments, decisions, grit, and excellence) is the foundation for her program. She shares research on resilience, grit, gender differences, character strengths, goal-setting theory, and cultural differences. By implementing these principles, teams can establish clear expectations, accurately measure progress, and achieve successful outcomes.

The keynote is engaging because Caroline's personal and timely stories resonate with the audience. Attendees will better understand how to use grit professionally and personally to increase resilience, create success, and lead with happiness. Cultivating authentic grit will help you stay resilient in the face of change and challenges.

**Key takeaways include:**
- Practical strategies for defining purpose, developing harmonious passion, creating intrinsic motivation, and fostering a growth mindset.
- Establish accountability and build a culture of positive energizers that will encourage people to put forth their best efforts in a way that inspires others to do the same.

[Empowering Women to Win: Strategies for Cultivating Grit and Success in the Workplace and Beyond](#)

In today's world, women leaders face unique challenges, particularly in the wake of the pandemic. In *Empowering Women to Win*, Caroline Miller empowers women to achieve their personal and professional goals while avoiding the three types of "bad grit" that can undermine office culture. Caroline's presentation provides actionable advice on how to cultivate resilience and authentic "good grit," while also embracing a "believe and achieve" mindset that supports women's unique contributions to the workplace.

Through the use of her scientifically proven BRIDGE methodology, Caroline helps women identify their character strengths and set goals for themselves and their teams that lead to optimal outcomes. Attendees will leave this presentation feeling inspired to cultivate a team of positive energizers who support women's leadership and amplify each other's successes.

**Key takeaways include:**
- Identifying and using character strengths to achieve personal and professional goals
- Building resilience and authentic grit while avoiding "bad grit"
- Cultivating a "believe and achieve" mindset to support women's contributions to the workplace Using the BRIDGE methodology to set effective goals for themselves and their teams.

For questions or information on booking Caroline, please contact:

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