

Unleash  
your  
potential

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**3 KEYS TO LIVING AN EXTRAORDINARY, FULFILLING LIFE**

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# 1. Put yourself first

*“Serve from your overflow, don’t serve from your cup.”*

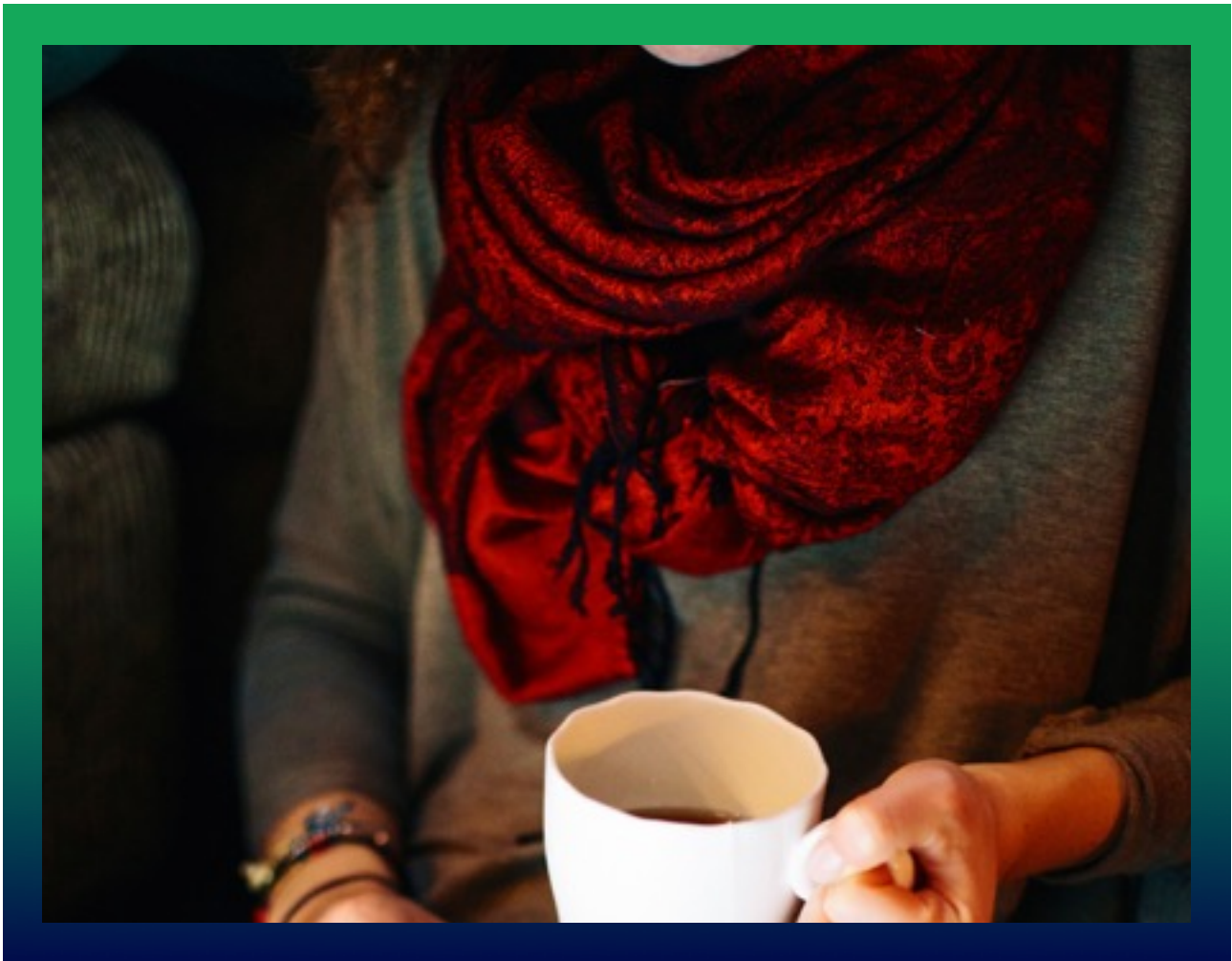
- Lisa Nichols

This is probably the most important but most often overlooked aspect when it comes to potential: you must make meeting your needs a priority.

Putting yourself first isn't selfish, it's sustainable.

If you are continuously giving to others without ensuring your own needs are being met, you will end up feeling depleted, resentful, and unfulfilled. And from that place, you most certainly will not be operating at your best.

You cannot reach your true potential when your own “cup” isn't full.



## *Activity #1*

The following exercise will help you identify any areas that might be in need of your attention.

### **Health and wellbeing:**

1. True / False I rarely feel stressed
2. True / False I eat a balanced diet including lots of fresh foods
3. True / False I drink plenty of water each day
4. True / False I exercise or engage in a form of physical activity on most days
5. True / False I feel generally well
6. True / False I can easily recall the last time I really laughed
7. True / False I get enough quality sleep so as to wake feeling refreshed and energized
8. True / False I am regularly in out in nature
9. True / False I take some quiet time each day to relax
10. True / False I like myself

### **Finances:**

1. True / False I am happy with my income
2. True / False I make regular contributions to my savings account
3. True / False I make regular contributions to my retirement account
4. True / False I pay my bills on time
5. True / False I have a budget that I use
6. True / False I know how much I owe and when it will be paid off
7. True / False I use my credit card wisely
8. True / False I have an active long-term financial plan
9. True / False My tax affairs are up to date
10. True / False I regularly negotiate to make sure I get the best deal

### **Personal relationships:**

1. True / False My partner and I communicate well
2. True / False I am happy with the level of intimacy in my life
3. True / False I trust the significant people in my life
4. True / False I am satisfied with my social life
5. True / False I consider myself to be a good friend
6. True / False I am open and honest about my feelings
7. True / False I make amends easily with people I have had conflicts with
8. True / False I let others know I appreciate them
9. True / False I see people who are important to me regularly
10. True / False I am considerate of others

### **Career:**

1. True / False I have good relationships with my colleagues
2. True / False I feel respected and supported by my boss
3. True / False I know where my career is headed
4. True / False My work is fulfilling to me
5. True / False I know what is expected of me at work
6. True / False At work I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day
7. True / False There is someone at work who encourages my development
8. True / False I have opportunities at work to learn and grow
9. True / False I am happy with my work hours
10. True / False I am comfortable receiving good and bad feedback

**Performance and personal growth:**

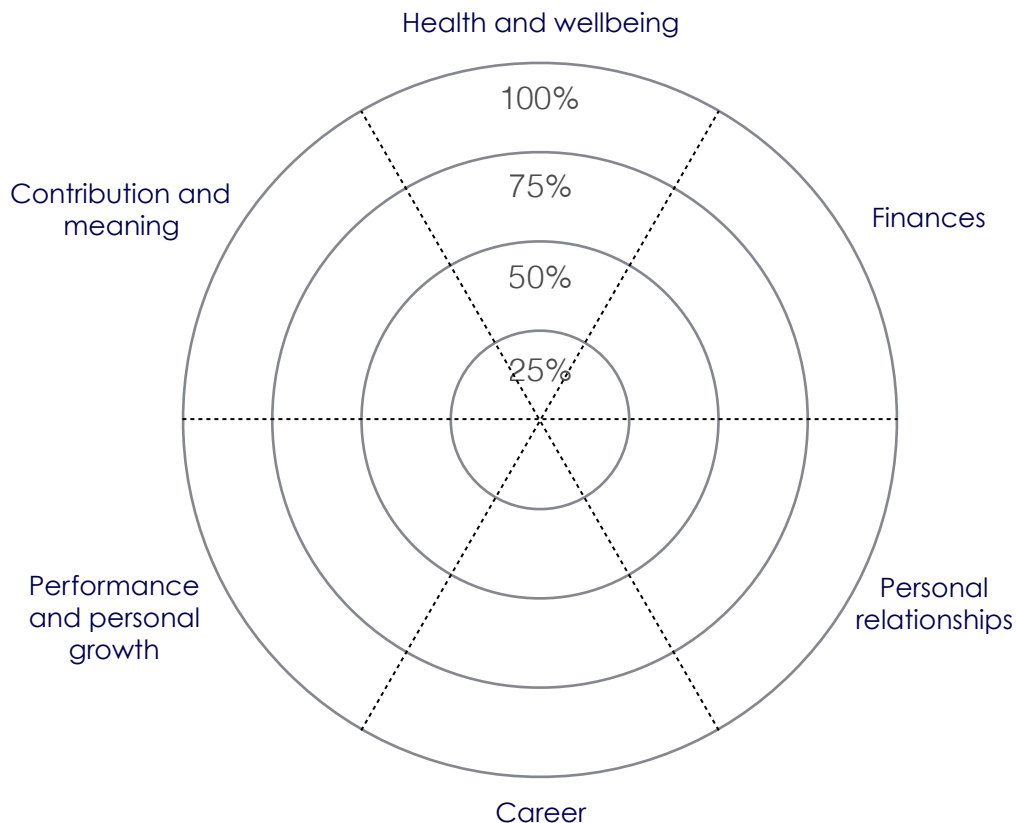
- 1. True / False I am proud of the quality of work I produce
- 2. True / False I readily ask for help when I need it
- 3. True / False I manage my time well
- 4. True / False I delegate without guilt
- 5. True / False I have enough confidence to do what I want in life
- 6. True / False I am comfortable saying "no" when I need to
- 7. True / False I have clear personal development goals
- 8. True / False I know what my strengths are
- 9. True / False I keep track of my accomplishments
- 10. True / False I am constantly learning

**Contribution and meaning:**

- 1. True / False I like to be an example to others
- 2. True / False I like to give my time and energy to good causes
- 3. True / False I am a leader
- 4. True / False I feel like I make a difference
- 5. True / False I am on track to leave the mark I want to in the world
- 6. True / False I have a mission in life
- 7. True / False I practice gratitude daily
- 8. True / False I live my life in alignment with my core values
- 9. True / False I am happy with how I spend my time each day
- 10. True / False I believe I can accomplish anything I set my mind to

Add up the number of times you answered 'true' in each area. Then shade in the segment to get a clear visual sense of each area.

What do the results tell you about how you are managing these different areas of your life? Is there anything you will do differently as a result?



## 2. Tap into your talents

*“Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.”*

- Albert Einstein

You want to be extraordinary? You want to feel energized, fulfilled and love what you get to do each day? You want to make a difference, a big impact in your lifetime?

Then tap into your talents.

The things you are drawn to, naturally good at, the things that seem to come most easily to you are your unique gifts. These are the areas where you have the greatest potential for growth, to excel, and make your greatest contribution. Often, too, these provide clues to your passions, what you will most enjoy doing.

Tapping into your talents starts you on an energizing cycle: you learn and advance quickly so you soon start to see results, and you enjoy what you are doing and so have the motivation to persevere and continue to develop.

Cultivate your talents, use them every day and you will turn them into strengths - your personal superpowers.



## Activity #2

According to the authors of *Now, Discover Your Strengths*:

"There is one sure way to identify your greatest potential for strength: Step back and watch yourself for a while. Try an activity and see how quickly you pick it up, how quickly you skip steps in the learning and add twists you haven't been taught yet. See whether you become absorbed in the activity to such an extent that you lose track of time. If none of these has happened after a couple of months, try another activity and watch - and another. Over time your dominant talents will reveal themselves, and you can start to refine them into a powerful strength."

Use the table below to track how tasks made you feel as you were doing them.

I felt strong (energized, engaged):	I felt weak (drained, bored):

What one action are you willing to do tomorrow to start leveraging one of your strengths and/or neutralizing one of your weaknesses?

### 3. Choose your response

*“You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control your attitude toward what happens to you, and in that, you will be mastering change rather than allowing it to master you.”*

- Brian Tracy

While you cannot control everything that happens in your life, or what others say or do, you can control how you respond - that's where your true power to control your experience of your life lies. If you want to remain calm, you can choose to remain calm. If you want to speak up, you can choose to speak up. If you want to forgive, you can forgive.

You are not destined to continue to react the way you have in the past. Many people make the mistake of thinking 'this is just the way I am' but this is a victim's mindset and does not at all reflect the scientific truth. While you may very well have developed a default reaction to certain stimuli or situations over the years, in terms of the brain, this habit is simply a very well connected pathway in your brain.

The truth is our brains are constantly changing in response to changes in our environment, our behavior, exposure to new things, etc. All it takes to change a habit is to make a new connection/pathway in your brain and then reuse it again and again. Just as your body requires workout after workout to get physically fit, your brain requires that you regularly repeat an action, thought, or behavior in order to develop a habit.

The thing to understand is that while you may have a default reaction - stressing out, meekness, anger, etc - you can change it. But just as a child doesn't learn to walk by reading a manual or theorizing about walking, you too must practice and try, try again. Decide what you want your response to be and commit to carrying it out, again and again.





### Activity #3

It can be difficult when you're entrenched in a situation to see that there is any alternative at all, let alone muster the energy to go against your default reaction. Try this: when you are outside of the situation, make some time to take on a different perspective.

This exercise is most effective if you imagine the perspective of a real person, someone that you admire. This could be a friend, colleague, even a celebrity. Ask yourself, if that person were in my situation, what would that person think, say and do? How would they view and approach the situation? Use the grid below to consider a few different perspectives and approaches to a situation that has you stumped.

Name	Their view and approach	What would they think?	What would they say?	What would they do?

What insights do you get about how you could choose to respond in this situation?

## *About Aenslee Tanner*

**My goal is to help you unleash your potential and achieve success on your terms.**



Aenslee Tanner is a NeuroLeadership Institute certified and International Coach Federation credentialed leadership and performance coach.

She is a thought-leader and Huffington Post columnist, and specializes in using neuroscience-based techniques to help ambitious people deepen their self-awareness, shift mindsets, and rewire their brains to powerful effect.

A former Division I athlete, engineer, and management consultant for some of the world's top professional services firms, Aenslee now serves as a confidant, coach and advisor to international-level athletes that want to perform at their best, managers who aspire to the C-suite, as well as career-changers and professionals with entrepreneurial ambitions.

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