This planner belongs to:

Any decision is a bet on
what will likely create
**the most favorable future
for you.**

~ Annie Duke

Possible Projects

Record any fun, meaningful or major ideas you want to work on
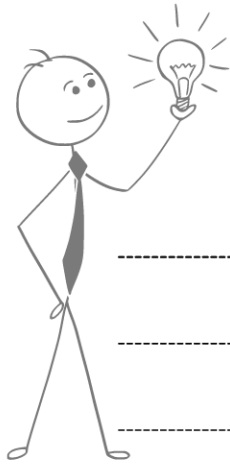
Done?

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A note from the creator:

I don't know about you, but I used to cringe at the idea of setting goals.

It wasn't something I thought I was good at.

And so naturally, I didn't like it very much.

But my pesky perfectionist tendencies weren't my only problem.

The idea of goal-setting also ignited an abundance of *fear* and *doubt* inside my head.

Setting goals that I might actually have to achieve sounded scary.

Committing to work that I didn't yet have the confidence to pull off was uncomfortable.

And with that toxic combination of perfectionism and fear swirling around in my head, anytime I thought about setting some goals, my brain would just overwhelm itself with doubt and *what if's:*
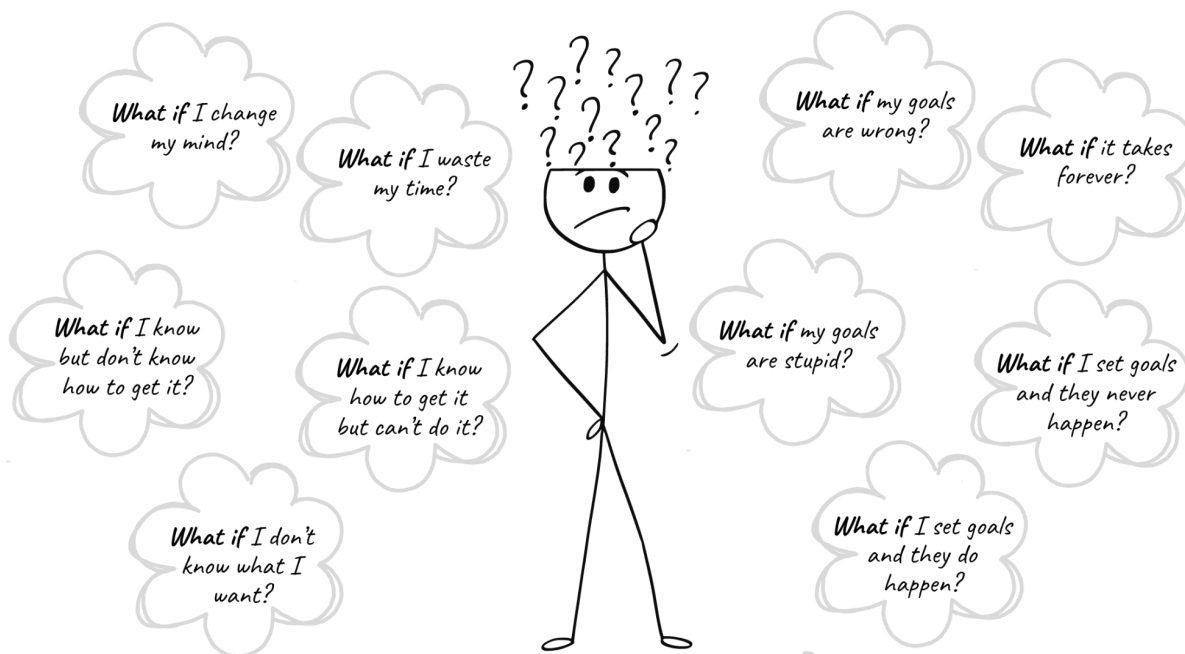
I think you get the point.

There was always this high level of uncertainty poisoning my thoughts and inspiring extreme levels of procrastination. Predictably, this leads to almost zero progress.

Goals suck the joy out of the journey.

Planning for a better future shouldn't be a frustrating or stressful activity you dread.

But for many of us, goal-setting is precisely that.

> Instead of fun, we get *fear*.

> Instead of progress, we get *procrastination.*

In other words, goals often get us nowhere. (And they make us feel like sh*t in the process.) But I have a fix for this (and it's simple, too).

My best advice — for turning a wish into a win — is to **make it a project.**

Goals guide, but projects propel.
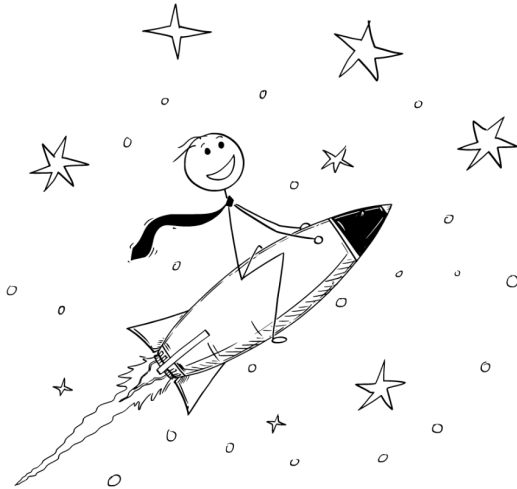
A well-built project is what every good goal should look like (but often fails to be).

✔ They're meaningful.

✔ They have a concrete (and desirable) result.

✔ And by definition — they come with an action plan to make it a reality.

But best of all...

We don't do goals; we do projects.
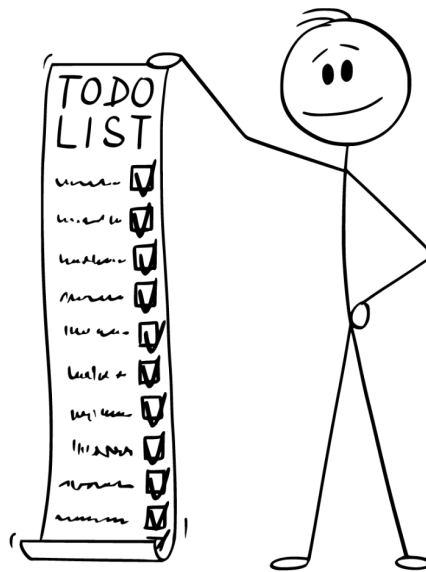
The problem with goals is that they lack that necessary conversion from vague ideas to concrete action.

And what's worse — is that the structure of goals makes you a failure until you succeed. You don't get any kind of win until it's met.

But projects are different.

With a project, you're successful until the moment you fail.

Because they're not something you work toward — they're something you work on.

With a project —
your focus shifts
to daily actions
that take you
where you want to
go.
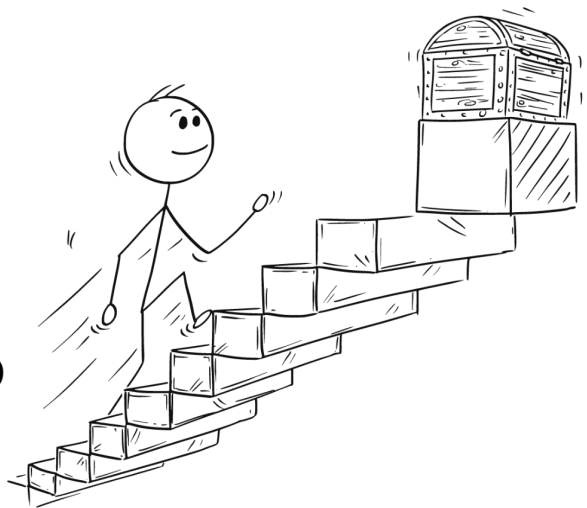
And with that shift — you move from wishing for something to working on making it happen.

With a well-built project:

✔ you know the way;

✔ you know how long you have to get there;

✔ you know what might veer you off track or distract you from your intended route.

Your Possible Projects Planner

How it works

If you've ever worked with clients, you know clear communication is critical.

And it's just as important when you're working with yourself.

> When you treat your personal projects as you would a client project — you take them more seriously, show up intentionally and communicate more effectively.

Using the simple template inside this notebook you can shape your next project.

And 10x your chances of actually getting it done and out the door!

Why does project shaping work so well?

By shaping your work — before you commit to working on it — you can make a more informed and intentional decision about whether it's worth your time, energy, and attention.

Shaping is simply the pre-work you do on projects before you consider them ready to schedule. It's just like writing out your headline and outline for a blog post before trying to write something amazing.

And it's that rough-draft mentality that you need to bring to the shaping process.

> Unshaped work leads to uncertainty and doubt.

> Shaped work forces *focus* and encourages *execution.*

By shaping a project, you define your problem and the critical elements of the solution you're proposing, and only then — once you have that complete picture — do you consider a project ready to bet on.

Each time you're thinking about working on a new idea or have a project to work on for yourself or a client, you can use a "new project template" to map out the key elements and form a more actionable, concrete plan.

Here's what each New Project Template uncovers:

What

Define the problem and solution you'll focus on for the project cycle using the four core questions.

- *What is the problem you're solving?*
- *What is the solution you're trying?*
- *What is the desired outcome or result of this project?*
- *What does DONE look like for this project?*

When

This is the appetite you have for the work.

Your appetite is the amount of time you WANT to spend on an idea instead of an estimate of what you might need.

Rather than asking how much time it will take to do some work, you ask:

How much time do we want to spend? How much is this idea worth?

My go-to project length is six weeks:

- One week to shape and prep,
- Four weeks of shipping work,
- One week for a cool-down period.

Boundaries

NO-GOs — Anything expressly excluded from the project, so you know exactly what *not* to worry about.

Rabbit holes — Details about the solution worth calling out to avoid problems. List anything that might trip you up in this project.

Required Resources — Address any knowledge gaps you've uncovered. List what resources and learning material might help to avoid your rabbit holes. Include courses, tools, templates, and people who might be able to help.

What's the first step? — Give yourself a headstart by determining the easiest way to get started with this project.

Think: *What could you do in 1-hour to kick it off?*

How

Options — your list of imagined tasks: This is where you want to note everything and anything that comes to mind about shipping the project. Every job you can think of right now can go in this space.

Key Scopes — major and minor components of your project: List the key elements (that you know of) that you need to execute for the project to be completed and considered a success. You'll want to group your initial list of imagined tasks into "buckets" of work you can complete before moving on to the next scope.

Project Checklist

I've included a checklist in each project template — not only because it feels good to tick things off — but also so you can easily track your progress.

With that visual cue, you gain tangible momentum to help you keep going (until you can check all the boxes.)

Cool Down and Post-Mortem

If you were to run project cycles without a cool-down period — there wouldn't be any time to breathe and think about what's next.

This is why we schedule a week for cool-down after each intensive work phase. A period with no scheduled work where you can reflect and consider what to do next.

Use the template to answer some questions and perform a post-mortem on your project.

Beware! The (often) missing ingredient

Accountability is a big part of being able to execute your best work.

So it's a good idea to build some skin in the game by leveraging any communities you're a part of, finding a buddy, or getting a coach/mentor who can guide you.

I can't stress how helpful it is to have that support spur you on and keep you on track.
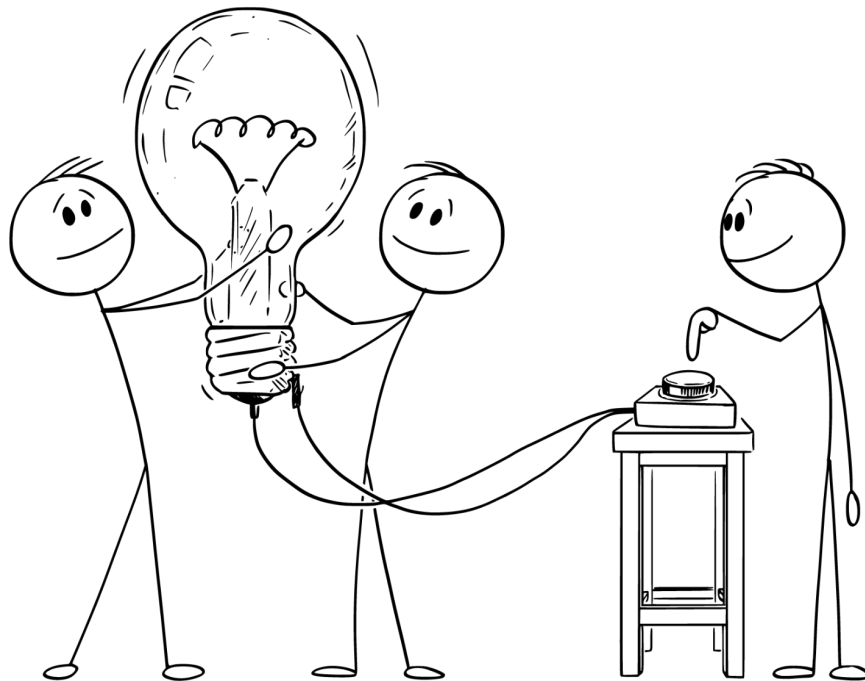
Ready to ship your best work?

You have the process.

It will help you commit to your practice and stave off procrastination.

And that combination is what helps you make consistent progress and produce the results you want.

Let's get planning!

We either live with intention or exist by default.

~ Kristin Armstrong

Date: __ /__ /____

PROJECT: _____

WHAT

What is the problem you're solving?

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What is the solution you're trying?

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What is the desired outcome or result?

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What does "done" look like for this project?

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Time appetite: _____ weeks   Approx hours: _____

NO GO'S (EXCLUSIONS)

List anything being excluded from this project on purpose.

RABBIT HOLES?

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REQUIRED RESOURCES

List anything that will help you complete your project (including courses, templates, tools, etc)

WHAT'S THE FIRST STEP?

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OPTIONS

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What are the major and minor elements of the project?

A scope is any piece of the project that has more than one task associated with it. Look at your list of assumed tasks and group together related jobs into one key scope (name it). Consider the "must have" and "nice to have" scopes, and arrange accordingly.

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Task Management and Organisation

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- [ ] Schedule time into calendar to ship the work

- [ ] Perform project post mortem (next page)

Date: __ /__ /____

COOL DOWN & POST MORTEM

What was the end result that I achieved?

What went well during the project cycle?

Where did I get stuck or struggle the most?

What can I improve for next time?

The price of anything is the amount of life you exchange for it.

~ Henry David Thoreau

Date: __ /__ /____

PROJECT: _____

WHAT

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What was the end result that I achieved?

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Optimism is the faith
that leads to
achievement. Nothing
can be done without
hope and confidence.

~ Helen Keller

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It is fatal to know too much at the outset. Boredom comes quickly to the traveler who knows his route or the novelist who is over certain of his plot.

~ Paul Theroux

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Every day of our lives,
we are on the verge of
making those slight
changes that would
make all the difference.

~ Mignon McLaughlin

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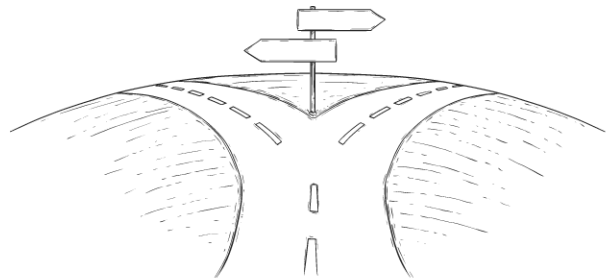## COOL DOWN & POST MORTEM

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In theory, there is no
difference between
theory and practice. But
in practice, there is.

~ Jan L.A. van de Snepscheut

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People think focus is saying yes to the things you've got to focus on. But that's not it at all. It means saying no to the hundred other good ideas that there are. You have to pick carefully.

~ Steve Jobs

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Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.

~ *Theodore Roosevelt*

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Your habits reflect your identity, so if you struggle to change a particular habit, re-think your identity.

~ Gretchen Rubin

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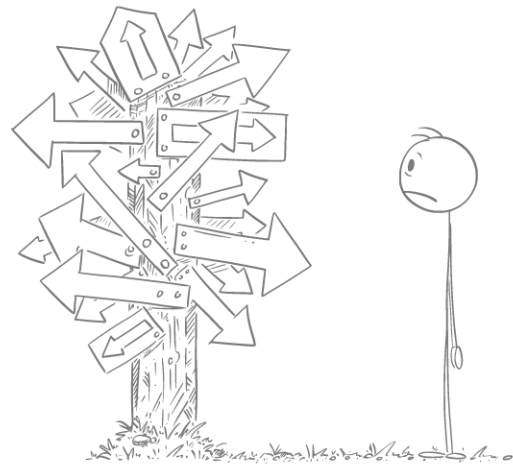
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What you choose to
work on, and who you
choose to work with, are
far more important than
how hard you work.

~ Naval Ravikant

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- ☐ Perform project post mortem (next page)

Date: __ /__ /____

COOL DOWN & POST MORTEM

What was the end result that I achieved?

What went well during the project cycle?

Where did I get stuck or struggle the most?

What can I improve for next time?

A great decision is the result of a good process – not that it has a good outcome.

~ Annie Duke

Date: __ /__ /____

PROJECT: _____

WHAT

What is the problem you're solving?

What is the solution you're trying?

What is the desired outcome or result?

What does "done" look like for this project?

Time appetite: _____ weeks   Approx hours: _____

NO GO'S (EXCLUSIONS)

List anything being excluded from this project on purpose.

RABBIT HOLES?

List anything that might trip you up in this project. And identify any knowledge gaps.

REQUIRED RESOURCES

List anything that will help you complete your project (including courses, templates, tools, etc)

WHAT'S THE FIRST STEP?

What is the easiest way to get started with this project? What could you do in 1-hour to kick off?

OPTIONS

List of imagined/assumed tasks to kick off the project

HOW

KEY SCOPES

What are the major and minor elements of the project?

A scope is any piece of the project that has more than one task associated with it. Look at your list of assumed tasks and group together related jobs into one key scope (name it). Consider the "must have" and "nice to have" scopes, and arrange accordingly.

MUST HAVE   NICE TO HAVE

PROJECT CHECKLIST

Task Management and Organisation

- ☐ Define your WHAT and desired outcome

- ☐ Determine time appetite and set BOUNDARIES

- ☐ Make a list of all the assumed tasks

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- ☐ Review and transfer project plan to online doc (optional)

- ☐ Decide WHEN you will start and finish the project

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COOL DOWN & POST MORTEM

REVIEW

What was the end result that I achieved?

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What can I improve for next time?

If you don't have time to do it right, what makes you think you'll have time to do it over?

~ Seth Godin

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PROJECT: _____

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COOL DOWN & POST MORTEM

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Discomfort is the price
of admission to a
meaningful life.

~ Susan David

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PROJECT: _____

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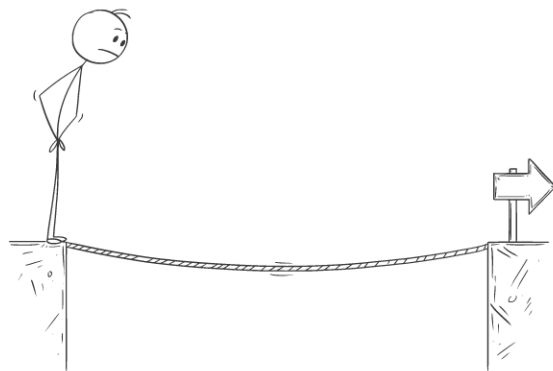## COOL DOWN & POST MORTEM

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Make mistakes of
ambition and not
mistakes of sloth.
Develop the strength to
do bold things, not the
strength to suffer.

~ Niccolò Machiavelli

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PROJECT: _____

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You don't find the time
to do something...
You make the time to do
things.

~ Debbie Millman

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