

Lifestyle Review

(Home Workshop—Interview Format)

The Lifestyle Review is a means of periodically taking inventory of how your life is going. It can help you measure your progress; celebrate your accomplishments; spot trouble areas; and reset your direction. It's like taking a snapshot of yourself at this point in your life. Some parts will look good while others not so good. It's also designed to be used with another person. Although you can use it by yourself, the "personal touch" gives it increased power.

To get the most value from this review process, it helps to work with at least two other kinds of tools: methods for change and personal ongoing support. Personal change methods and techniques can be obtained through library books, the Internet, workshops, video rentals, community college courses and the people around you.

You'll also benefit from some kind of ongoing personal support to keep you moving forward, if you don't already have it. Two highly recommended ongoing support tools are the Goal & Growth small group format and the [Buddy System](#) format.

Preparation Directions

The initial commitment can be for just one meeting, but it's more effective when the commitment is for a year—for example, three meetings at four-month intervals, or two meetings at six-month intervals. Note: you may want to get two partners, so you can go through the assessment more often. If you do get two partners, it's good to have at least one partner who's not as experienced as you so you can be more of a mentor, and have at least one other partner more experienced than you so you can be the recipient of a higher quality of help. That way, in the overall scheme of things, everyone is giving and receiving about equally.

About a week before meeting your partner for the Lifestyle Review, call to remind him or her to prepare their answers ahead of time. Preparing your answers will allow you to go much faster and get much more out of your time together.

Set up the meeting for 45-90 minutes. It's strongly recommended that there be as little interruption as possible, in a relatively quiet, semi-private space. Though this can be done by phone or chat-line, face-to-face meetings are preferred because the quality of listening can be so much better.

Read through this interview and decide which questions you'd like your partner to ask you. Star or mark those, then write your answers or notes on a separate

sheet of paper. (Or make a copy of this interview to write on.) At the beginning of the interview, give this copy to the other person, and hold on to your notes.

Directions and Suggestions for the Actual Interview

1. Begin the session by agreeing to confidentiality and by deciding on a halfway point of time, after which the listener and speaker will switch roles.
2. During the interview, give brief answers to most questions, so you'll have enough time to go into more depth on the important "meaty" questions. It's recommended that you run through all parts of the assessment first, and then go back to explore the meaty questions more thoroughly.
3. The person who is listening can make short comments, but should wait their turn to share in depth. If the speaker's answers are vague or superficial, the listener ought to ask for more detail to help them clarify their thoughts.
4. There should be no distractions or division of attention. (Even eating a large meal may interfere with the quality of the listening. If you must eat, please eat first and ask questions afterwards.)
5. Basic active listening is recommended. That means occasionally reflecting the core message of what's being said by describing both the feeling and the situation (experience or behavior). An example would be: "Sounds like you're frustrated [the feeling] by his lack of communication [the experience or event]."
6. You can network, asking for references or contacts who have resources, but never ask your partner directly for money, volunteer time or other resources. Since your partner is obviously listening to you, let them make the decision to offer their help or resources.
7. We suggest that you keep a file or binder for your answers. That way, over the years, you can have a record of your personal growth.
8. The spirit of the interview isn't one of judgment or self-judgment for mistakes you made. Instead, it should be an affirmation of your efforts, and a celebration of your progress.

f) What are the different roles you fill in the areas below?

professional

volunteer

family

informal roles in other situations

g) In the last couple of months, which of these roles have been draining, and which have been stimulating and affirming?

h) What has been your stress level in the last month? How are you dealing with it? Do you think you're dealing with the stress adequately? If not, can you talk about a plan or goal to manage or reduce it?

i) Is there an individual or a group who you actively resent, or haven't forgiven?

j) Is there an individual or a group who actively resents you, or hasn't forgiven you?

Section II. Facets of Life Inventory

A. Assess yourself in the following areas, using either +, 0 or – to signify progress, no change or backward movement—or use a grading system, A to F. You can grade yourself in three ways: 1) recent changes over the period in question; 2) your efforts (which can be good, even though your situation might not be satisfactory); and 3) a lifetime average. For instance, your recent health might not have been good, but your efforts to improve your health might have been excellent, and your lifetime average might be satisfactory. If you want to grade yourself in all three aspects, you can draw two vertical lines through the following items to create three columns, one for each aspect. Otherwise, you might just want to assess the period in question.

a) Your health (diet, exercise, sleep, check-ups, chronic problems)

b) Your finances (salary, debts, savings, investments)

c) Your personal organization (planning, personal files, bills, financial records, health records)

d) Your mental health (stress, thought patterns, emotional patterns)

e) Your spirituality (study, prayer or contemplation, worship community participation, behavior, ethical development, openness to Higher Power)

- f) Your overall effectiveness, your capacity to change and adapt (time management, personal organization, reserve savings, energy, network of relationships)

- g) Your sexuality (self-expression, self-control)

- h) Your efforts to learn and change (habits, attitudes, skills, value clarification)

- i) Your living space (quality, maintenance, repairs)

- j) Your environmental, political, economic and community responsibilities

- k) Your job, career advancement and work life

- l) Your legacy—what you leave behind (children, creative work, estate, service, difference in the world)

- m) Your enjoyment and appreciation of life/pleasure (nature, the arts, people, popular culture)

- n) Your volunteer roles, if any

- o) Your organizational and group-member relationships (clubs, support groups, and professional organizations)

p) Your handling of major losses, changes or setbacks (death, illness, unemployment, moving, separation or divorce)

q) Your important personal relationships (communication, commitment, division of control, openness/honesty, acceptance/forgiveness, intimacy, and your personal contribution.) On a separate page, list their names and consider them individually.

B. Can you think of other areas not mentioned? How are they going?

Section III. Your Personal Mission, Your "Center"

"...if you want to identify me, ask me not where I live, or what I like to eat, or how I comb my hair, but ask me what I am living for, in detail, and ask me what I think is keeping me from living fully for the thing I want to live for." —Thomas Merton

Many of the above areas of your life can be going well, but you could still be very unhappy if whatever you're living for is not going well. From the above list, or any other you can think of, put down the things you're living for—the "ends" in your life, the center of your life. For instance, one person might be living for his wife and children, so that the other parts of his life (career, learning, maintenance) just become means for taking care of them. Another person might be living for their creative works and family; a third might be focused on personal enjoyment and a

fourth on their spiritual path and God. If there are more than one center, list them in order of importance from greatest to least.

Please write your response to three of the following questions: What are you living for? What makes you feel most alive? What kind of play did you enjoy as a child (before the adults praised you for what they liked to see you do.) What is your special gift or talent? What's your greatest dream? Of all the accomplishments in your life, which makes you feel the happiest and most satisfied? For what do you want to be remembered after you are gone? What's the most important thing in life?

How does your performance in the recent past connect with your sense of personal mission? In other words, is what you're doing right now the best, most loving use of your time? How much congruence is there between what you're doing and who you are, or who you feel you are meant to be?

Section IV. Focus, New Perspective and New Direction

A. Focus. What are the biggest challenges in your life right now?

Of these, which is the most critical area for you to explore? In other words, which of your roles or situations is the most urgent or promising? Which situation has the most leverage, either positively or negatively?

B. New perspective

Digging deeper, what are the causes for this inner challenge, this need to change? What's really going on here? What combination of factors are involved? What are different ways of looking at the situation you're in? (This question can address the whole time period in question, or just a particular key area.)

C. New Direction

What do you feel needs to happen in this situation? What would you like to see happen?

Section V. Closing.

Ask your Lifestyle Review partner the following:

1. How did you feel about this session?
2. Can you give me some feedback on my listening? Is there anything that I can improve?
3. When should our next session be? (Date and time.)

Note: You can use the [Dream and Goal Sheet](#) to turn any of the insights from the Lifestyle Review into goals. Look back, especially at your responses in sections III and IV, to determine if any insights you've gained point toward worthwhile goals.

© 2004, World Peace One and Tim Cimino. **Warning and Use Policy:** This material can do some good on its own, but if used with the other parts of a superprogram, such as FellowshipoftheDream.Org or All-Around.Org, you can get ten or a hundred times more benefits for yourself and others. That's because you can get *ongoing* support, feedback and the other ingredients necessary to learning and change. Any material that increases a person's power may do them, their loved ones, or others harm if there is not enough sensitivity, knowledge and concern to use it wisely. That's why use as part of a superprogram is vigorously recommended.

You may make copies of this material for your personal use and may *personally* give copies to others, as long as you always include this warning and use policy.

This material or any derivatives are not to be formally incorporated into any program that is not a superprogram since that would weaken our emphasis on the power of personal action, and the balanced power of superprograms. Please visit Superprograms.Com to learn more.