



# Value of Simple

## The Personal User Guide

Celebrate and Share What Makes *You* Tick

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The original article introducing this guide can be found [here](#)

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## What This Is, Why It Exists and How This Helps

**We give ourselves the great gift of awareness by giving others a window into what makes us tick. Helping others learn about you also helps you learn about yourself.**

### What This Is:

This is an organized instruction manual dedicated to *you*. Think of it as a framework for you to build what's important in your life.

Better yet, this template explains why the important things are important and how you go about getting them. Completing this will make it simple to communicate many things to others (and to yourself when you need a reminder) like:

- The belief systems you follow and the significance of certain relationships in your life
- How you want people to engage you and how you like to engage with others
- Your goals, areas of growth, and ways to generate certain feelings or actions

And once this is complete, you have a package of information to share with someone that would otherwise take *forever* for them to learn about you.

### Why This Exists:

This was created to help you make sense of your world and to help others get the best experience from interacting with you. Although this is intended for everyone, it's especially useful if you struggle with communication issues, misunderstandings, or having people "get you." It's the best resource around to take the mystery out of understanding what drives you.

For the full context, see [the article](#) at Value of Simple introducing The Personal User Guide.

### How This Helps:

Most user guides are hard to navigate and not very helpful. This one is different.

This one gives you irreplaceable insight by viewing yourself through the eyes of others and how you want to be perceived. You'll soon see how constructing the framework to logically document what is seemingly unexplainable has some really huge benefits.

And this guide goes way beyond explaining *what* you are. The real value comes from defining *why* you are who you are and *how* it came to be this way. When you can concisely share your personal blueprint, you and everyone else win. **Embrace this strongly and it will be an amazing resource.**

### Additional Guidance

As all sections of this user guide are optional, you may not feel comfortable completing certain parts or may not want to provide detail in certain areas. That's fine, but keep in mind the more you put into this, the more you and everyone else get out of it. It's advised to clear your calendar and remove all distractions like kids, Internet, TV or hobbies before tackling your guide. Don't feel the need to complete this in one sitting and come back to it as time allows.

### A Note About Formatting

This guide was not designed to be printed and hand written. All the tables and fill in the blank sections expand automatically based on the amount of information in them. If you need to print and hand write this guide then expand the sections where you need more room by navigating to it and pressing <enter> a number of times until it's large enough.



## Related Documents

If there are documents related to this guide like a personal FAQ or an important online profile, list them here.

Document Name	Author	Description	Purpose, Comments or Notes	Location of Document (e.g. Website Link)
Joel's FAQ	Joel Zaslofsky	An FAQ all about Joel Zaslofsky	To provide everyone from family to strangers a FAQ about what it's like to be Joel Zaslofsky	<a href="http://valueofsimple.com/faq">http://valueofsimple.com/faq</a>

## Version Details:

This guide is intended to be updated periodically. Keeping track of the versions will help you and others see how you evolve over a period of time.

Version #	Date	Version Notes (e.g. What Was Added, Modified, or Deleted from the Previous Version)	Location of Document (e.g. website link, filing cabinet in home office)
1.0	03/19/2012	Initial version	<a href="http://valueofsimple.com/joels-personal-user-guide-v1.pdf">http://valueofsimple.com/joels-personal-user-guide-v1.pdf</a>
1.1	07/01/2012	Minor updates for the Value of Simple launch	<a href="http://valueofsimple.com/joels-personal-user-guide-v1.1.pdf">http://valueofsimple.com/joels-personal-user-guide-v1.1.pdf</a>

## How I Interact with the World

We all interact with the world in unique and seemingly unpredictable ways. Describe your preferences, the environment you thrive best, and major “don't try this with me” items to build the framework for the rest of your user guide.

### Communication Methods

The why, how, and what of communication. What methods do you use to communicate, how do they change based on context or the person/group, and how often is each used? Example: “I always use the phone for any important interaction with my family but never with friends or co-workers.” Get specific about your strengths and challenges.

My preferred communication method for most situations is face-to-face even if it can't be in person (i.e. Skype). I do enjoy using social media – Facebook for personal use and Twitter for business use/random fun – but get overwhelmed by it easily. I respond quickest if you call me and to a lesser extent if you email me.

My communication style is open, informal. and matter of fact. Meaningful communication to me occurs in a one-on-one setting or in small groups. I struggle with being concise but if given enough time, I can normally get my point across.

### Authority Figures

Explain your approach to dealing with authority and how it will be received depending on the person (e.g., mom, police, boss, etc).

I've rarely rebelled against authority figures for the sole purpose of feeling a rush. I respect and take direction well from the traditional authority figures in Western culture like law enforcement, the government, and my parents. However, people claiming to be experts in one topic or another are normally met with skepticism and sometimes intense questioning.

### Handling Stress

Stress can be subtle, brutal, motivating, incapacitating, and everything in between. Think about what the triggers of your main stress points are and how you manage them. How would you like to manage them in the future?

I feel I take criticism well and don't get stressed out by it. I normally expect people to do the same although the reality is different than I would like. The main triggers of my stress come from interacting with inanimate objects (like formatting blogs articles or trying to fix the kitchen sink) and not from interacting with people. I can have patience and anger simultaneously and unless someone helps me cool down, my stress can last for extended periods. My stress shows itself most often through a desire to eat sweet things, shutting down emotionally, or getting obsessive about a specific task until it's done.



### Honoring Traditions and Messing with the Status Quo

*Do your values come from honoring traditions or messing with the status quo? What are your values and important traditions (individual, family, business, cultural, religious, etc.) and how do you celebrate them?*

I respect people’s religious and cultural traditions but, for the most part, I don’t have much use for them myself. Conducting business with the status quo doesn’t interest me at all as I like to walk my own path and do things more informally than most people would like. I’m historically Jewish and this has shaped part of who I am now. However, formal religion has no current role in my life. My current and future values are ever changing and can shift rapidly from one month to another. The easiest way to think about this is that I respect traditions but often value change and new things more.

### Free Time

*Your general approach to free time (e.g. fast paced or slow, structured or unstructured).*

I used to value unstructured free time over just about everything else. Nothing was better than a chunk of time where I had no responsibilities so I could play video games, watch TV, hang out with friends, spend time with Melinda (my wife), etc. I’m still super comfortable with unstructured time and enjoy it, but it’s become less important to me. The focus of my free time is now spending time with Grant (my son) and Melinda, talking long walks with my dogs, or other predictable and routine uses. I’ve gotten more into scheduling reoccurring hangouts with friends, acquaintances, and family to ensure not too much time goes by between interactions.

### Preferred Learning Method(s)

*How do you prefer to learn (e.g. listening and reflecting, visually, experiencing and immediately doing, etc.)? For more context and examples you can read [here](#).*

I am extremely analytical and prefer to process new information over a period of time. I don’t have a preference for getting my learning through listening, watching, or doing as they all work well for me. I do my best learning self-directed but I do benefit from group learning (i.e. Toastmasters) as well.

## Belief Systems and Blueprints

*There are a variety of frameworks which govern how we see the world. Talk about whatever movements or labels are important to you.*

### Labels and Phrases That Define You

*If you could only use one word or a simple phrase to label yourself, what would they be? Multiple labels or phrases are encouraged (e.g. religious affiliation, how you analyze your thoughts, movements, or philosophies you believe in)*

Primal/Paleo, Minimalist, Simplicity Freak, Atheist, Philosopher, Obsessive Spreadsheet Creator, Analyzer, Uncertainty Seeker, Embracer of New Ideas and Concepts, Father, Hubby, Supportive Friend, Borderline Information Addict, Obsessed with Helping Other People Better Manage Their Lives.

### How I Express Myself

Physically	I like giving hugs and high fives but I’m not a particularly touchy-feely kind of guy. I get physically animated when I’m nervous (like watching a sporting event with one of my favorite teams), excited, and in a lot of other contexts. I’m quick to smile and laugh and slow to show anger or annoyance. I play up the importance of minimalism and simplicity in my life by intentionally keeping the way I dress informal and the number of articles of clothing I own low.
Emotionally	In general, I can be good at hiding my emotions, but like to express what I’m feeling in a transparent, real-time, and obvious way. I show positive emotions more strongly than negative emotions. This is both the way that I’m wired and also an intentional effort to highlight that most of life is wonderful and there are very few (legitimate) reasons for me to experience negative emotions. I often feel regret for expressing negative emotions like anger or frustration because they frequently don’t seem legitimate when I review why I experienced them.
Spiritually	Any spiritual bone left in my body is expressed through the philosophies that are important to me like minimalism, simplicity, Stoicism, etc. Yoga also has a small spiritual role in my life. For the most part, I lost the spiritual side of me when I gave up Judaism to become an Atheist. This is generally not something important to me or that you’ll see me express.
Intellectually	I like using big words. I enjoy few things more than an intellectual conversation about politics, the



	amount our society consumes and how it's consumed, and other topics that fascinate me. I'm open with my intellectual side and always willing to show people how crucial learning and knowledge are to me. Analytical words or thoughts, detached from emotion, are probably the way I best express myself. I can be very matter of fact and often look at things objectively without letting other sides of me influence what I say or do.
Other (Specify)	N/A

### What I Care Passionately About

*The ideas and causes that energize and drive you. Really dig into why you're passionate about them.*

<p>I care passionately about personal finance, both my family's and that of other friends and family. I want money to have less significance in my life and I can do that (and help others) by having a strong grasp of personal finance. I enjoy few things more than talking to friends and family – for hours and over multiple sessions if necessary – about personal finance and helping out where I can.</p> <p>I also care deeply about what we as humans consume, how much we use, and why we consume the things we do. The Sustainability and Environmental movements by themselves don't resonate strongly with me but what attempt to do (not making the world a worse place for the next generation to live in) is something I've incorporated into my life. I'm happy to sacrifice in the short term to make the long-term picture better.</p> <p>Ancestral health – via the Paleo and Primal movements – is very important to me too. The optimum way to live my life is to honor the way humans have evolved and what my body and mind expect me to provide via the way I eat, exercise, interact with the world, and more.</p> <p>Bringing order to my life and that of others is a huge passion of mine too. Whether it's a physical environment (through minimalism and simplicity) or informational environment (through spreadsheets and electronic documents), I always seek to bring more order to it. The world and our lives can be a chaotic thing. Stress can be reduced and efficiency can be gained by seeking new ways to bring order to our environment or bring us into harmony with nature.</p>
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### The Role of My Relationships

*Some relationships are more important than others. What role does each relationship play and how significant is it?*

#### People

Relationship	Role
Significant Other	Melinda is the most significant person in my life. She's my memory (mine is terrible, which might explain all the spreadsheets), sounding board, lover, and many, many more things. The full significance can't be communicated concisely but all other relationships take a back seat to this one when push comes to shove.
Friends	I rely on friends the most to keep me grounded and bring awareness of ideas or events that I would appreciate. Much of my intellectual fulfillment comes from conversations with friends. I keep a relatively small group of close friends but always look to make new ones and grow my circle.
Parents	My mom and dad give me the blueprint to follow for many aspects of my life. The importance of personal finance was sparked from my mom and the importance of health and family was hammered home by my dad. I am very close to my parents and sometimes talk to my mom about an important issue in my life before anyone else. They show me how to be humble and teach me the value of many things that have become essential in life.
Grandparents	<p>My love of dogs comes from interacting with my maternal grandparents dogs when I was young. I don't feel like I had a strong personal connection with my maternal grandparents and can't explain how they've shaped who I am today.</p> <p>My paternal grandparents are both very special to me, especially my grandpa who is 99 and still engaging the world with vigor. My grandma showed me how to take care of people who are sick or otherwise facing challenges in their life. Her simple touch and talk is the reason I want to be "mothered" when I feel sick or have general discontent with life.</p> <p>"Big Irv," my paternal grandpa, is the most inspiring person I've personally known. I aspire to age with grace like he has, to put family and health always at the front of other priorities, and value</p>



Relationship	Role
	being informed about the world in large part due to him. He enraptures anyone with his stories and I want to be the kind of storyteller he is some day.
Siblings	I just have one sibling and that's my older brother Aaron. Being two years younger and one grade back growing up, I was always following in his footsteps with baseball, school (he's the reason I went to UW-Madison), and just about everything else. I value our relationship for many reasons, among them that he's the person I can get the most stupid, crazy, vulgar, or careless with and not have it negatively impact us. For the first 20+ years of my life I wanted what he wanted, dressed how he dressed, and let him lead the way for me. We're great friends and have more shared background than anyone else.
Co-workers	For more than a decade out of college, I had various co-workers at RBC Wealth Management. For the most part, they didn't have a large role in my life although many served as unofficial mentors. They were there mostly to help me learn and gain skills but I also tried my hardest to make them look good and help out. I made a few lasting friends that were former co-workers but they haven't had a big impact on me overall. Currently I have no co-workers as I'm self-employed.
Children	The run up to Grant arriving was the catalyst for my personal renaissance. Separate for what he's done for me – making me more patient, silly, engaging with nature, loving of other people's kids – I do anything I can to make his days more fun and his life as healthy as possible. His role is to be the sparkplug of every day and to not just make me <i>want</i> to be a better man and human being but actually <i>be</i> one.
Future Business Mentors	I don't have business mentors right now and would really like to have one or two in my life. I need help in many areas of business and self-employment and would like to be able to offer someone else my eagerness and skills to help them as well.

### Things

Relationship	Role
Money	I want money to have as small a role in my life as possible. I'm constantly changing my life to want and need less money and it only functions as a tool to provide for my family and maintain a middle class lifestyle. I would like to create passive income streams so I never have to think about actively making money again.
Freedom	This is hard to address because freedom takes so many forms. The freedom to change who I will be and express who I am is a big one. Besides the many freedoms allowed by law in the U.S., I prize the freedom of risk taking, the freedom to travel, and the freedom to break with social norms ahead of many others.
Personal Possessions	I am unsentimental when it comes to personal possessions. I don't care much for design (of clothes, cars, electronics, etc.) and if it doesn't have practical use then I probably don't have a need for it. I actively work to reduce the number of possessions in my house from the number of paper clips or the number of socks I own.
Where You Live	I've lived in the Twin Cities all my life except my four years in Madison for college. My parents are here, my brother and his family are here, and many of my good friends are here. I love the Twin Cities metro area for the climate (I'm happy when it's 10 degrees F), for the warmth of the people, for the beauty of the lakes/natural environment, and for the rich personal history that comes from such a wonderful life spent here. It would take something radical and unexpected for me to move permanently. This place grounds me in so many ways and provides much comfort.
Work	Work used to be somewhere I went, not something I did. Now work is all about fulfilling a mission and making my passion to help others manifest itself in useful ways. I pursue it primarily to make other people better even if it means I don't make money from it. Since I don't formally volunteer right now this is the main way I try to leave a legacy in the world.
Technology	I love change and what advancing technology allows humans to do. I have an appreciation for people who use technology to make their goals happen and try not to let it suck me into unproductive uses of time (e.g. random Internet activity). I am comfortable with new technologies and am always learning to adapt new (or old) technology to help myself and the people around me.
Nature	Nature is where I seek silence and to spark my creative thoughts. Being outside – especially outside the city – is increasingly important to me as I strive to spend more time idle, enjoying all the glory nature provides for all the senses. Enveloping myself in nature slows me down and fills me with a sense of calm I can't find anywhere else.
Other (Specify)	N/A



## The “Do”s and “Don’t”s of Communicating with Me

*Explain the strategies or tactics for communicating with you that produce the best outcomes. For example, should I engage you head on or tactfully? Should I be formal or make heavy use of words like “dude” and “hon”?*

### Good Strategies or Tactics

1. Make sure you have my full attention before talking. I have a poor memory and the chance I will remember or take action on what you just said is slim to none if I wasn't paying full attention.
2. Allow me time to analyze a decision and consider information from various sources.
3. Take verbal or written responsibility for your own actions and errors.
4. I don't require formal interaction, dress, or attitudes in any situations really. I like to keep it loose, informal, upbeat, and fun. If you come unshaven and disheveled I don't really care and won't dock points. If you approach me formally I'll become stiff and the interaction won't be as fruitful.
5. Be free to challenge me head on and in the moment. I don't get defensive easily and prefer immediate feedback.
6. Be open and honest, even brutally so. My feelings aren't hurt easily and I like it all laid out on the table.
7. Show me what you're feeling and thinking. I hate guessing. If you want to punch me in the face right now tell me you want to punch me in the face right now.
8. If you want something from me tell me what it is. If you need something from me, don't butter me up first. Just lay it on me.
9. Appeal to my need to be helpful and of service to others.
10. If you don't genuinely like interacting with me or are doing things purely out of obligation, stop. Use your time and energy with someone else but let me know that I'm not worth your time (subtly or straight up).

### Bad Strategies or Tactics

1. If you expect me to be concise all the time you'll be disappointed and frustrated. Allow me to be long-winded from time to time.
2. I'd rather you not talk about personal interest stories of your own or others that could be a waste of both of our time. I generally don't care what you think about popular culture or that personal interest story you heard about in the news today.
3. Do not read into my words or actions. The vast majority of the time I meant what I communicated even if it came across as callous, dishonest, or incomplete.
4. Don't try clever ways or experiments to find out what makes me tick. Ask me to explain my words or justify my actions and I'll give you the context you need to understand better (time allowing).

## My Schedule

*Whether it's a weekday or weekend, a national holiday, or some other meaningful time, tell us when you interact with the world. Also describe typical activities or routines you have on a given day or at a given time.*

Time Zone	CST
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	Typical Weekdays	Typical Saturdays	Typical Sundays
Best Time(s) to Reach Me	Early afternoon and between 8:00 – 10:00 pm.	Early afternoon and between 8:00 – 10:00 pm.	From 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm or 8:00 – 10:00 pm.
Wake Up	Around 6:00 am.	Around 6:00 am.	Around 6:00 am.
Morning	Quiet time until 7:30 am where my world is calm and noise is at a minimum. From 8:00 – 11:30 am is peak productivity time where distractions are limited. Other important tasks of the day are normally done in the morning.	Grocery shopping followed by food preparation for the coming week. Sometimes hitting the dog park or walking the dogs.	Walking back and forth from and doing yoga. Playing with Grant.
Afternoon	Reserved for running errands, walking the dogs, interaction with various people and other non-	Varies from one week to the next. College football watching related activity from Sept – Mid	Varies from one week to the next. Pro football watching related activity from Sept – Early



	Typical Weekdays	Typical Saturdays	Typical Sundays
	core tasks of the day.	Nov.	Feb.
Evening	Dinner is between 5:30 pm and 7:30 pm with Grant in bed by 8:00 pm. Free time happens between 8:00 – 10:00 pm.	Varies from one week to the next.	Varies from one week to the next. Ideal time to catch up on the phone or Skype with family and friends.
Bed Time	Around 10:00 pm.	Around 10:00 pm.	Around 10:00 pm.

### Special Times of the Week/Month/Year

*What are the rituals, traditions, and habits that regularly occur at certain times of the week, month, or year?*

Week	Month	Year
Friday afternoon and Sunday morning yoga	Intermittent fasting periodically during the month.	The last weekend of February is reserved for the Deerfield Public Library Trivia Contest. I'm not a trivia geek but this is an annual ritual for high school friends, college friends and associated family/friends of the original core trivia team members.
Toastmasters	Personal finance assessment	Thanksgiving day and extended weekend with family. This is my most important and favorite holiday by far.
Annual goals review and planning to accomplish them.	Extended walk/hike session for multiple hours and getting out into nature.	

### How to Make Me Feel or Act...

*List the common, uncommon, and unexpected ways to generate an emotion from you or cause an action by you.*

Emotion or Action	How to Make Me Feel or Act This Way
Happy	1) Take me out to a good ethnic restaurant where the dishes are cheap. I get very uncomfortable spending decent amounts of money at restaurants. 2) Share good tips, tricks and strategies for making life better or easier.
Sad	1) Show me a news article about one of the many terrible events or stories going on in the world right now.
Excited	1) Invite me to your wedding. I love weddings. 2) Tell me about this awesome book, blog, video, seminar, etc. that transformed your life and why. 3) Offer me an opportunity to help you in some way.
Motivated	1) Start with why I/we should do something. Then tell me how we're going to achieve it and then discuss what needs to be done to get there. 2) Challenge my sense of problem solving. 3) Explain how this will benefit more than just me but those around me. 4) Show me, in detail, what actions I could take to move down the path you want me to go.
Angry	1) Make me try to build or fix something physical. 2) Use more than one paper towel to dry your hands. 3) Excessive water use (based on my concept of what's excessive, not yours), primarily from faucets and sprinklers.
Loved	1) Say the words "I love you" with warmth or a smile. 2) Give me a big hug. I mean, a good one that lasts more than a split second with a tight squeeze. 3) Let me know you're thinking of me on a day that's not expected (e.g. birthday, anniversary)
Disrespected	1) Apply your standards or judgments to how I conduct my life. 2) Communicate that because I don't try to make decent money that I don't think of the impact money has on my family. 3) Take a moral or ethical high ground because you have religion in your life and I don't.
Appreciated	1) Simply say a genuine "thank you," even for routine tasks. 2) Explain how something I created (a birthday card, blog post, etc.) was meaningful to you.





Emotion or Action	How to Make Me Feel or Act This Way
Annoyed	1) Use acronyms that most people don't understand. 2) Try to convince me to watch a TV show or explain why I'm "missing out" if I don't. Except sporting events, I actively try to watch as little TV as possible.
Respect You	1) Do things for free, from the goodness of your heart, or without expectation you'll get something back. 2) Be a member in a movement that's important to me. 3) Actively work to make your community or the world a better place. 4) Be humble. 5) Have a passion for learning and increasing knowledge.
Be Responsive	1) Give me all the information I need up front even if it means you can't do it concisely. 2) Call me. 3) Let me know your deadlines and what happens if I don't take action to help you make one. 4) Approach me casually and openly. 5) Read my <a href="#">FAQ</a> first so you know some background and preferences I have.
Other (Specify)	N/A

## Goals and Areas of Growth

By defining your goals – personal, professional, relational or other – and detailing areas of growth, you'll better know what's important to you. Remember: readers of this might be happy to help you achieve your goals or assist in your growth areas if they know what they are.

### Goals

Goal Type (Personal, Professional, Etc)	Goal Length (Short, Medium or Long Term)	Details
Professional	Long	Strategic connecting with other bloggers and small business owners.
Professional	Medium	Creation of a paid product or service to generate a passive income stream.
Professional	Long	Outsourcing as many non-core tasks in my business as possible.
Personal	Long	Helping others in as many ways as possible and with the biggest impact possible.
Personal	Medium	Be a great papa while supporting Melinda when she's pregnant with kid number two.
Personal	Long	More time spent outside with the dogs and just enjoying nature.
Personal	Long	Maintain a healthy number of hours of sleep (7+) over all periods of time. All other habits will suffer tremendously and all work streams will be less productive if I don't nail this one.
Personal	Short	Starting twice-weekly yoga practice and multiple times a week body weight training.
Personal	Long	Make sure my parents can spend enough time with Grant.
Personal	Long	Overcome my addiction to sweet things.
Personal	Short	Get in the float tank at the Minneapolis Wellness Center

### Areas of Growth

Area	How Do You Want to Grow
Productivity	Getting big chunks of things done over many small periods of time (15 minutes or less).
Competency	Double reading speed. Go from 273 WPM to 550+. I spend a ridiculous amount of time reading. <b>Not</b> reading faster is a waste of my time.

## Things I Like to Do and Why

What are the activities you like to do with other people or for other people? Why? What are the hobbies or actions that energize you? Are there things you love doing so much you would do them for free just for the enjoyment of it?

1. Personal finance is fun for me and letting me help you with it is probably more enjoyable for me than for you.
2. Yoga. The physical and mental benefits are amazing. The breathing techniques also help me in my day-to-day life and it



- provides the only semi-spiritual experience I have.
3. Going to the dog park. Getting the exercise from walking is nice but being outside and seeing some of my favorite breeds of dogs is the primary reason I go.
  4. Watch sporting events. It's always more enjoyable when there is someone else to discuss the game with as it's going on or to give a high five to.
  5. Read blogs, books, opinion writers, or watch TED talks about a variety of topics. This is my main source of new concepts and ideas I can experiment with in my own life.

## When Trouble Occurs

### Messages and Their Meaning

*When you don't like the way people are interacting with you, you'll often give off signals. List the common warnings – and their meaning – that people might cause from taking the wrong approach.*

Message	Meaning
That might work for you but that doesn't work for me	Assuming that applying judgments or beliefs that are important to you are also important to me is a bad idea.

### Problems and Possible Solutions

*List the number of ways that your typical problems may be fixed. They can be as minor as fixing a sweet tooth to as major as reoccurring crises.*

Problem	Possible Solution
I'm running low on energy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Offer me some good tea, preferably chai</li> <li>2) Say something surprising</li> </ol>
My emotional, mental or physical rhythm is off	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ask me what's wrong and be prepared to be a good listener</li> <li>2) Get me some dark chocolate</li> <li>3) Get my butt out of the house and take me for a walk</li> <li>4) Ask me if I remembered to put on deodorant this morning (I almost always do but almost always think I forget I did)</li> </ol>

## Special Notes

*If there are special notes or something in particular you want to call attention to, do it here.*

Category	Notes
Eating	I eat Primal 95% of the time, which means if it's not meat, fruit, vegetable, seafood, nuts, or dairy, I'm probably not eating it. Don't be offended when you offer me something you made or something delicious and I turn it down because it doesn't fit in the Primal framework. I do it to everyone (even my own mom).
Exercise	This is important to me but I struggle creating a routine around yoga and body weight exercises. If you think you can help me or join me for either of these things I'm open to it.
Sleep	I'm an enormous fan of sleep and few things are prioritized higher.
Personal Care	I've shaved my head with a clippers once every couple of weeks for the past decade. I've been bald since about age 19 so I like easy personal maintenance and saving the money that comes with it.
Most Meaningful Quotes and Why	<p>There are <b>far</b> too many meaningful quotes I've come across so I'll only list the ones relevant to this guide.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "You either got more friends and more enemies, when you show the world your true identity." – Aceyalone from the song Junkman. This resonates with me because I try to be transparent and show everyone I interact with my true identity so I don't have to have different personas for different contexts.</li> <li>2. "Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value." - Albert Einstein. This gets to the core of why money should not be important but the focus of life</li> </ol>



Category	Notes
	<p>should be on creating value in other people's lives.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="370 170 1495 289">3. "...If we're not careful, we'll spend our whole lives blowing on sparks and trying to turn them into embers, when all along they were sparks that should never have been ignited." - Anne LaMott in her book Operating Instructions. In order to leave a legacy I need to focus on a handful of productive pursuits and not merely be good at many things.</li> <li data-bbox="370 317 1276 350">4. "Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated." – Confucius</li> <li data-bbox="370 378 1474 497">5. "They force you to make a choice but you don't have to choose. Social norms engrave the way but you can bend the rules." – Criteria from the song Prevent the World. This reminds me that the options people give me for choices they want me to make can be modified or rewritten.</li> <li data-bbox="370 525 1500 709">6. "Mother Nature's running a trial-and-error business, so sometimes our programming doesn't make a lot of sense. We come out of the box tuned for self-preservation and conformity. Not self-expression, not self-actualization, not happiness. But that's what we want. Our genes want rock-solid, redundant systems for survival, nothing more. We want to have fun and feel good about our lives. Not the same thing!" - David Cain. This helps me battle human nature to get what I want out of life and not what my brain expects me to get out of life.</li> <li data-bbox="370 737 1507 921">7. "Attachment is based on fear and insecurity...The source of wealth, of abundance, or of anything in the physical world is the Self; it is the consciousness that knows how to fulfill every need. Everything else is a symbol: cars, houses, bank notes, clothes, airplanes. Symbols are transitory; they come and go. Chasing symbols is like settling for the map instead of the territory. It creates anxiety; it ends up making you feel hollow inside." - Deepak Chopra</li> <li data-bbox="370 949 1484 1003">8. "I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day." - E.B. White</li> <li data-bbox="370 1031 1479 1150">9. "The prizes of our society are reserved for outer, not inner, achievements. Scant are the trophies given for reconciling all the forces that compete to direct our development." - Gail Sheehy. Achievements that can't be seen or touched are more important to me than those that can.</li> <li data-bbox="370 1178 1487 1297">10. "If we don't change we don't grow. If we don't grow we're not really living. Growth demands a temporary surrender of security. It may mean a giving up of familiar but limiting patterns, safe but unrewarding work, values no longer believed in, relationships that have lost their meaning." - Gail Sheehy</li> <li data-bbox="370 1325 1484 1415">11. For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple...and wrong. - H.L. Menken. I often remind people of this when it comes to politics but it applies to other things too.</li> <li data-bbox="370 1442 1455 1497">12. "The choice isn't between success and failure; it's between choosing risk and striving for greatness, or risking nothing and being certain of mediocrity." - Keith Ferrazzi</li> <li data-bbox="370 1524 1500 1623">13. "It's easier to resist at the beginning than at the end" - Leonardo da Vinci. This tells me I should always challenge the value of bringing something new into my life. Once it's there it's hard to make it go away.</li> <li data-bbox="370 1650 1495 1740">14. "Consumption is part of creation. You can't produce amazing stuff unless you're consuming amazing stuff." - Mark McGuinness. I'm reminded I can't create valuable stuff to help people if I'm unaware of all the value other people are providing me.</li> <li data-bbox="370 1768 1507 1946">15. "The recipe and the ingredients we need to maximize our health and well-being are right in front of us, but modern humans seem to disrespect and disregard the profound legacy of our ancestors...With a few minor exceptions, we are indeed identical to our ancestors in how we metabolize food, respond to exercise, cycle through sleep phases each night, absorb sunlight, and deal with various other environmental influences." – Mark Sisson. This is the core of the Primal lifestyle to me. When in doubt, honor how we've evolved to interact with</li> </ol>



Category	Notes
	<p>the world instead of going against it.</p> <p>16. "Civilization is a limitless multiplication of unnecessary necessities" - Mark Twain</p> <p>17. "Action makes stuff happen. Action is the fire, not the firewood. Action is the growth of a tree and the budding of a flower, not the soil or the nutrients. Action is the wind, not the high and low-pressure systems that create it. Action is the crashing of a wave, not the water that makes it. Action is the marathoner breaking a sweat, not the marathon being run. Action is the writing of history, not the memory of history itself." - Raam Dev. Raam drills into me that consuming without producing is meaningless.</p> <p>18. "I by no means have all the answers but a firefighter does not need to know the ins and outs of thermodynamics to save a family in a burning house." - Robb Wolf. I can help people and give them the right tools even if I'm not an expert at what I'm teaching.</p> <p>19. "There is nothing harsh about having to do without things for which you have ceased to have any craving." – Seneca</p> <p>20. "If you could kick the person in the pants responsible for most of your trouble, you wouldn't sit for a month." - Theodore Roosevelt</p> <p>21. "If you believe that playing by your own rules is a good philosophy for your life, then it's important to believe the same applies to others" - Tyler Tervooren. I play more and more by my own rules and need to remember to let other people do the same.</p> <p>22. "Anything can happen in life, especially nothing." – Unknown. Left to our own devices many people will do nothing special with their lives. I don't want to be one of those people.</p>
Other (Specify)	N/A

## Create Your Own Section

*This template would look very different if you created it from scratch. This section is intended as a supplement for you to add as much as you see fit. Examples of section names could be "Random but important information," "How I handle gossip", "High level visual of how I operate" or "Warnings." Get creative.*

Section Name	Content
Random But Important Information About Me	<p>1) I outright refuse to go fishing for the rest of my life. There was an incident when I was nine with my cousins, uncle and a severely bloody lake fish that wouldn't come off the hook no matter how hard I tried.</p> <p>2) Yes, I know I'm 6'6" but I don't want to be on your volleyball team. I don't enjoy it.</p>

## What Now?

Your prize for finishing this guide is a fountain of knowledge and the ability to concisely share it. I hope you feel good about packaging up the essence of you and explaining it in a way that would normally take people years to learn.

Now that you've invested the time to create this special resource, its value will be multiplied by the number of people who use it. And if you have the time, different versions for different groups of people could be useful. Be somewhat careful who receives this but you may want to distribute it by:

- Emailing to friends, family, co-workers, or that cute guy/girl you've been trying to impress
- Uploading it to your blog. You can then share it freely or control who gets access to it.
- Publishing the location of it on social media like Facebook, Twitter, Google+, or LinkedIn

Reflecting on the new things you learned about yourself can also be extremely rewarding. Give it a try!



If you have questions about this resource you can [contact me](#) whenever you like. Even if you have just a few seconds to provide feedback on [Value of Simple](#) or one of my outposts like [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), **your input will help make future free resources even better!**

## Did You Find Value In This?

I hope you enjoyed completing this as much as I enjoyed creating it for you! I always try to give away my best tools and resources for free and this is just one of many. I would sincerely appreciate you sharing this in whatever way you see fit if you found value in The Personal User Guide.

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