Slices of Life
Review your many roles and responsibilities and see how they integrate into five major areas of your life: Emotional, Intellectual, Spiritual, Social and Physical.

Set a goal you’d like to achieve, or simply focus on enriching your life.

Many of us are exhausted by the daily stress of work, caretaking for our families and overwhelmed by all we do. We noticed a common denominator: often when we juggle so many responsibilities we put our own needs on the bottom of the priority list.

Our philosophy is that your best chance for success in achieving any goal comes from first building a strong foundation for yourself. This session will help you assess your current situation. There are two activities that will provide you with a snapshot of your many roles and responsibilities, and an overall sense of what’s working in your life and where you may seek improvement or change. You’ll use these assessments as a jumping off point to help you build the foundation you’ll need to reach your goals.
Before getting started, it's helpful to take an inventory to find out what’s going on in your life right now. The questions in these first two activities will act as a foundation for the rest of the journal.

You should plan to spend about 15 minutes to complete the first two activities.

Role Clarification Activity

Step One: What competing roles vie for attention in my life?
Take a moment to review the list below and circle all the roles that you play. Fill in any additional roles not included in the circle.

As you move through the journal, keep in mind that you can always come back at a later date to re-do any of the activities and find out what’s shifted in your life.
Step Two: Where am I focusing my time right now?
Taking a look at the roles you circled, please list 3-5 roles that are a top priority in your life today.

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 
Step Three: What do I do in these roles?
Now choose a couple of roles that you feel are most important to you right now and jot down as many activities and tasks you can think of that you perform in those roles.

Role: __________________________
Tasks: ____________________________________________________________

Role: __________________________
Tasks: ____________________________________________________________

Tip: It doesn't have to be an exhaustive list, just a rapid-fire, train-of-thought list of the things related to each role that pops into your head.
Role Clarification Activity
Questions That Inform

1. Was the “Caretaker of Self” role one of your priorities? What does “Caretaker of Self” mean to you?

2. Often we focus on what’s wrong and how to fix it. Take a moment to think about what you’re doing right and jot it down below. How often do you congratulate yourself on the successes you have in your roles?

3. Think about a few of the roles that are most important to you. How would you define success in those roles?
Slice of Life Activity

The purpose of this second activity is to help us begin to think about ourselves as whole people. Many of us become so focused on the roles we play every day (e.g., mother, father, wife, partner, friend, student etc.) that we can forget that we, ourselves, have a range of needs and desires. Sometimes these get met through the activities and interactions in our daily lives, and sometimes they don’t. To help us determine whether we are spending our time doing the things that are most meaningful to us, we’ve identified five major areas of potential fulfillment in a person’s life—Emotional, Intellectual, Spiritual, Social, and Physical.

Take a few moments to think about these areas in your own life and review the questions below that pertain to each area. As you complete each section, think about how well you are taking care of your needs.

1. **Emotional**
   - What or who are my greatest current sources of emotional support or strength? *E.g., when I am sad or overwhelmed, who do I talk to?*
   - What or who drains my emotional energy? (Remember, there is no judgment attached to this, we all have these feelings).

2. **Intellectual**
   - What are my most satisfying sources of intellectual stimulation? *E.g., What do I like to do to feed my mind?*
   - What are the things that bore me?
3. **Spiritual**
   - How do I nurture my spiritual side?
   - What are the things that make me feel pessimistic, isolated, and disconnected from the world around me?

4. **Social**
   - What do I do to feel connected to the important people in my life?
   - What keeps me from spending time with the people who are important to me?

5. **Physical**
   - What do I do to promote my own physical well-being?
   - How/when do I neglect my physical needs?
Slice of Life Activity
Putting It All Together

Take a moment to review the answers you gave in the last exercise and mark down a rating from 1 to 10 on how well you feel you are taking care of your needs in each of the five areas (1 means that area could use a lot of attention, 10 means that area is perfectly fulfilled).

Tip:
Remember, your rating should be based on your own personal definition of how well you are replenishing yourself in each area, not necessarily what other people think. Also remember that this rating should be based on how fulfilled you feel in each area, not how much time you are spending on that area.
Slice of Life Activity
Questions That Inform

1. How did your Slice of Life results either surprise you or reinforce what you already know?

2. What slices (emotional, intellectual, spiritual, social and physical) of your life are working best for you?

3. Which slices/areas (emotional, intellectual, spiritual, social and physical) did you determine need the most attention?

Charting Your Course — Your Compass Point
From what you’ve just explored in the Role Clarification and Slice of Life Activities, do you have a goal or life situation you’d like to change or improve? This can be a large or small goal such as losing weight or reducing stress or leading a healthier lifestyle. Whatever you choose, this can be your “Compass Point” to give you direction and help you get the most out of this program.

My Compass Point Is:
Core Concept #1
Influence of Self-Esteem

Introduction
Many things come into play as we think about how well we are nourishing the different areas of our lives, specifically the five slices of life we just discussed (emotional, intellectual, spiritual, social and physical):

- *Which of these areas are most important to me right now?* Life circumstances cause our priorities to change. For example, if I saw my doctor and she told me that my cholesterol is dangerously high, I would be focused on my physical self — specifically diet and exercise.

- *Which of these areas do I tend to avoid?* It’s human nature to avoid things that are unpleasant to us. For example, it may be more difficult for me to address areas where I feel uncomfortable — like if I just went through a divorce it might be hard for me to re-enter my old social circles or find new ones.

- *What are my learned priorities?* For example, if I grew up in a religious home or community, I might be focused on my spiritual side and less concerned with my physical needs. Conversely, if I grew up in a family where weight issues were a constant topic of discussion, I might be more apt to focus on my physical self.

Each of the five areas we’re exploring—Emotional, Intellectual, Spiritual, Social, and Physical—combine to paint the picture of how each of us sees ourselves as a whole person. Ultimately, our self-esteem can have a great influence on how successful we feel in each of these areas as well as how satisfied we are as we move through our lives. The opposite is also true; our successes in life can directly influence our self-esteem.

Every experience we have in our lives has an impact on how we see ourselves.

As children, our experiences at school, with family, friends, and teams help to shape our perception of who we are. Later, our experiences and relationships, both social and professional, continue to affect and be affected by our self-concept. As our roles and priorities change, our self-concept and self-
esteem continue to act as the lens through which we see ourselves and the world around us.

Action is a key ingredient to building self-esteem. On the other hand, if we let ourselves down by not “acting” on something we want, our self-esteem may suffer. Starting with small steps to initiate momentum towards a larger goal is prudent. With each step, notice how it affects your self-esteem and your ability to take on more risks. Sometimes fear gets in the way. When we identify and acknowledge the fear we are more apt to step out of our comfort zone and act on our intentions. The reward of taking action can be a boost to our self-esteem.

So how do you improve your self-esteem? Throughout these materials, we’ll explore tools and practice skills we can apply in our daily life.

**Take Action**

Take a look at the list below and check any options that you feel can help your self-esteem when you are not feeling at your best.

- **Acceptance** - Identify and accept your strengths and weaknesses.
- **Encouragement** - Give yourself encouragement along the way. Be as supportive of yourself as you would a dear friend.
- **Positive Attitude** - Take a “can do” attitude.
- **Taking Time for You** – Spend time “resetting” or “energizing” yourself. You’ll find you’re even refueled for the other people in your life. *(Reference: Building your Slices of Life Toolbox Activity)*
- **Trust** – Pay attention to your thoughts/feelings. Do what feels fulfilling.
- **Respect** – Be proud of who you are, explore and appreciate your talents.
- **Positive Influencers** – Spend time with those who have a positive effect on you.
- **Action** – Take action to create momentum; small steps are as important as large ones.
Influence of Self-Esteem
Questions That Inform

1. Describe a situation where you or someone close to you stepped out of his/her “comfort zone,” succeeded and benefited from the experience. (For example, Dan is afraid to fly but really wanted to see his daughter’s cheerleading competition which was a two-hour plane ride away. He decided to go and was surprised and energized when he enjoyed the flight and got to see his daughter’s team win the championship.)

Tip: Give yourself permission to not be perfect, to make a mistake, to smile about it, and see what it feels like...after the fact.

2. What are some small steps you can take to bolster your self-esteem each day? (Tip: Think about activities and people who bring out the best in you.)
It’s All About Me
Your Action Plan

1. Five Areas Review
Based on the results of the *Slice of Life Activity*, jot down how you think you are successful in each area and what you think you can do to improve your experience in each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ways I am successful at feeding this area of my life</th>
<th>Ways I could improve my experience in this area of my life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
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<td>Social</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. Self-Esteem Booster
Who or what makes you feel good about yourself? Jot down a few names or activities that revitalize you. Over the next week, try to do some of the activities or spend time with the people below. (Remember to give yourself credit for the things you do even if the ultimate goal is not yet reached.)

3. Building on Your Strength
Think about the times you have used positive thoughts to successfully do something you were afraid to try. List some things you would really like to do but are afraid to try and jot down a positive, supportive “script” for your mind to help you accomplish your goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I’d really like to…</th>
<th>What I’m afraid of…</th>
<th>Positive, supportive “script” for my thoughts…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feel better about my body</td>
<td>I’ll try and fail… once again</td>
<td>“I’m an intelligent, accomplished person who has a lot of life experiences under my belt. I need to be patient with myself, as I would with a close friend. If I put my mind to it, I can do it”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What are some final thoughts or key words you’d like to remember from this chapter? Jot them down here in the margin.
Case Study — Alana

I met Alana at a large corporation where I was facilitating our program. She was a middle manager who had many responsibilities both at work and in her home. Her husband recently became ill and was bound to a wheelchair. She was raising four children while working full time. She had started a Masters program, but when her husband became disabled, decided to hold off on finishing. Alana felt exhausted, she had stopped exercising and was not eating well. She joined the Clarity Compass program at work to tackle her new weight gain.

Alana was rather quiet during our group discussions and I wasn't sure if she was engaged in the process. She did ask powerful questions and listened intently to the answers. Since she rarely spoke, I didn't know all that was on her plate until the end of the series. That's when I learned an important lesson myself. People process in different ways and each person will take from the experience what they need, in the manner that's best for them. What Alana learned after participating in the Clarity Compass program was that in order for her to effectively care for everyone else in her life, she had to take care of herself first. For her this meant finishing her degree, eating right and exercising and not feeling guilty about the time she invested in herself. Once she deployed her Clarity Compass tools, got a sense of what she needed and the choices she had, she was able to accomplish everything she wanted and more. She sent me an email the day she received her Master's degree, and also let me know she had gotten a promotion at work and was enjoying a new lifestyle shift. Her family was proud of her and she knew she was a great role model for her children.