

THE REVIVED LIFE

FAITH · GROWTH · TRANSFORMATION

A FREE GUIDE

The Subtraction List

Cross out one thing for seven days. No program, no plan that starts Monday, nothing to buy.

You can kill it or you can build it, but you only get one.

I was at a furniture store and they had Top Gun Maverick playing on the screens. Got me thinking about Tom Cruise, who is not a young man and looks like he is in better shape than me. And I am less than half his age. Then I am at the gym the next morning and there are always those people in there, completely yoked, and my honest first thought is, where do you find the time.

Wrong question.

Here is what the world sells you. More. Another program. Another routine. Another plan that starts Monday. Picture somebody handing you a glass jar, stuffing it full of everything they can find, then handing you one more thing and telling you to fit it in.

If you have young kids you already know how that ends. I have three under six. There is no room. That is not a discipline problem, that is a physics problem.

Instead of adding, let's look at subtracting.

There is a line that has not left me since. The desert teaches through subtraction, when we are programmed to only learn through addition. Everything you remove leaves room for you and God.

What I actually took out

Alcohol. I have not had a drink since the first week of January. The health side alone was enough. It wrecked my sleep, which wrecked the morning, which wrecked the workout, which wrecked the day.

The gas station energy drink. Full confession, I still love these. Every time I fill up, my brain says go inside and get one. There is no swap for that one. It just has to go.

The extra hour of television. Not all of it. I still sit down with my wife and watch one episode. What went was everything after that episode, and it bought back a half hour and an earlier alarm.

I am not pretending I have this figured out. I still eat cake at the holidays like a non normal human. But those three did more than any program I ever started.

Your list

Pick one line. Cross it out for seven days. Write down what replaced it, or write down that nothing did. Do not do all four.

1. Remove one drink day.

If it is every day, make it six. Not zero. Six. Replaced with: _____

2. Remove one bought thing.

The energy drink, the snack aisle stop, the daily takeout. Replaced with: _____

3. Remove one half hour of screen.

Off the back end of the night, not the front. Replaced with: _____

4. Remove one excuse.

Usually it is I have no time. You have twenty minutes to walk. Replaced with: _____

IF YOU MAKE ME PICK ONE

Walk twenty minutes a day. Drink water instead of soda. I guarantee you will not regret either one. Neither is a program and neither costs anything.

Why this matters

If you are not intentional about this, fine turns into not fine, faster than you think. You wake up one day with no energy, running on a body you have been quietly sabotaging, and wonder why you have nothing left for the people who need you.

That was me the first couple years of having kids. I was living like I did not have kids. And it was not the kids that wore me out. It was everything I refused to put down.

Next week, pick the second one. That is the whole method. There is nothing else to buy.

If this helped, there is a free companion guide that goes chapter by chapter with reflection questions and action steps. No catch.

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