

YOUR
EXCEPTIONAL
LIFE

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

MAKE THE REST OF YOUR LIFE
THE BEST OF YOUR LIFE

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 0.1: Examine your life

Socrates said “The unexamined life is not worth living.” This book is an invitation to examine your life in a way you never have before. Begin by taking a moment to look at the following assessment. Identify where you are in each area of life and give yourself a score out of 10 in each ingredient. You’ll end up with a maximum score of 80.

Look at the short descriptions and consequences of mediocre and exceptional to generate your score. This is only a snapshot, and by the time you’ve finished this book, the numbers are likely to change.

A word of caution here: some readers mark themselves more harshly than others. Personally, an 8/10 or above is exceptional for me. A score of seven and under feels average to me. Each reader will be different, and I ask you to assess your own life accordingly. Generally speaking, five or six out of 10 is considered to be mediocre. It doesn’t feel bad enough to change, yet is nowhere near the life that you want. It’s simply average.

Life Purpose – Do what you love and love what you do



I have a job
I don't love my work
I work to live
My work lacks purpose I can't wait
to finish

Risk of Mediocre: Regret

I'm on a mission
I love my work (most of the time)
I live to work
My work fills me with purpose
I could do this forever

Exceptional Payoff: Inspired

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Movement – To live longer, move more

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



I don't have time to exercise
Exercise is a lifestyle chore
I can't be bothered
I'm too tired to exercise

I make time to exercise
Movement is a lifestyle choice
I can't wait to move
Exercise gives me energy

Risk of Mediocre: Cognitive decline

Exceptional Payoff: Vitality

Social Life – You become who you hang around

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



I don't have time to socialise
I am disempowered by the people
I hang around
I don't love my local community

I make time to socialise
I am empowered by the people
I hang around
I love my local community

Risk of Mediocre: Depression

Exceptional Payoff: Connected

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Nutrition – To eat is a necessity. To eat intelligently is an art

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



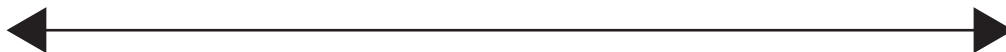
I eat too much processed food
I overeat
I eat fast
I often dine alone

I eat lots of seasonal, local, organic,
wholefood
I stop eating before I'm full
I eat slow
I often dine with others

Risk of Mediocre: Disease

Exceptional Payoff: Energised

Family – Love people for who they are, not what they do or believe



My family get in the way of my life
I have strained relationships
with multiple family members
I am focused on 'me'
We talk via email, text and DMs

My family are an integral part of
my life
I have warm relationships with
most of my family members
I am focused on 'we' We talk via
calls and in the flesh

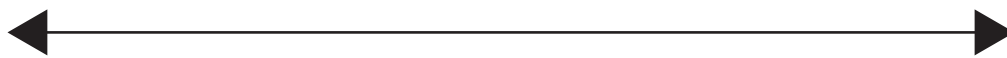
Risk of Mediocre: Bitter

Exceptional Payoff: Loved

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Growth – To know and not to do is not to know

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



I stopped learning after school
I get most of my info from TV,
radio, newspapers and social media
I have no hobbies or special
interests

Risk of Mediocre: Bored

I never stop learning (I am always
learning) I get most of my info
from podcasts, books, courses,
movies and documentaries
I have hobbies or special interests

Exceptional Payoff: Enthusiastic

Wealth – Spend less than you earn and invest the difference

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



I spend more than I earn
I have nothing to invest
I have no savings
I live pay cheque to pay cheque

Risk of Mediocre: Broke

I spend less than I earn
I invest the difference
I have savings
I have a vision for my wealth

Exceptional Payoff:
Independent

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Spirit – Everything happens for a reason and a purpose

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



I believe in good and bad, right
and wrong, love and hate
I am easily outraged
I can very easily become
narrow-minded
I struggle tapping into my intuition

Risk of Mediocre: Broken

I see the bad in the good, the right
in the wrong, the hate in the love
I can find calm in most situations
I can see the bigger picture most
of the time
I have a strong sense of intuition

Exceptional Payoff: Fulfilled

TOTAL SCORE

/80

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 1.1: Remove the poison that causes life purpose confusion

If you've ever been caught up in comparing yourself to someone on social media, here are three techniques I personally use to remove comparison from my own life.

1.

Go on a social and mass media diet.

Ripping the bandaid off and going on a seven (or even 30) day diet that removes all media will yield clarity you never knew existed. Unplug your TV, delete your social apps and replace mass media with personalised media. Choose from inspiring movies, podcasts you want to listen to, and books that make you think and bring out the best in you.

2.

Be genuinely happy for the person in whatever it is they've achieved.

One comment is better than 10 likes. If someone you know has achieved something worthy of your congratulations, comment sincerely rather than liking the post and moving on. Tell them how happy you are for them. Better yet, if you know them personally give them a call, send them a message or change the experience from digital to real life.

3.

Get your fix through online groups.

The most social way to engage in social media is by connecting with like-minded people and actually commenting. Facebook groups, the modern day 'online forum' or club are the most empowering way to use social media because written conversation actually takes place with like-minded people.

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 1.2: Identify the seeds of your life purpose

1. Identify the seeds. Review the eight seeds of your exceptional life purpose and write down specific examples from your own life. Have you had a health crisis, a financial crisis or parents resisting your magnificent obsession? Did you or the people around you quash a childhood passion because you could never see a career in it? Does your gift to the world lie somewhere in the greatest challenges you have gone through?

2. Join the seeds. What do these life experiences mean for you? How do they impact your beliefs and subsequent decisions and actions?

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7.	<hr/> <hr/>
8.	<hr/> <hr/>

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 1.3: Your next seven years

Research in the 1990s by K. Anders Ericsson and associates at Berlin's Academy of Music demonstrated that the more we practise the closer we get to achieving mastery in a chosen field.

From elite athletes to musicians, teachers to artists, plumbers and professionals you've never heard of, the magic number of hours popularised by Malcolm Gladwell in *Outliers* is 10,000. For some that might be 40 hours per week over five years, for others it might be 20 hours per week for 10 years. Whilst not an exact science by any means, if you're looking for a shortcut on the seven-year-apprenticeship, it seems knocking over 10,000 hours as quickly as possible is the answer.

What are you prepared to dedicate seven years or 10,000 hours to? Are you prepared to dedicate 10,000 hours to raising your children, learning aerodynamics, fashion, medicine, history, the piano, archaeology, social justice, international politics or the arts? My first 10,000 hours (1999–2006) were dedicated to journalism in the sports media. My next 10,000 hours were dedicated to the wellness industry (2007–2014) and I'm currently dedicated to helping humanity create exceptional lives. Given that your average life spans more than 700,000 hours, you can master multiple fields in just one lifetime.

What are you prepared to dedicate seven years or 10,000 hours to?

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 1.4: What is your life dedicated to?

Let this question nag at you constantly until you can answer it. Giving yourself the time to answer this question is one of your most important tasks in life.

What is your life dedicated to? Not knowing, or perhaps worse – knowing and not dedicating your life to it – will not only suck the life out of you, you’ll become bitter and twisted, scourged with resentment, anger, and even hatred. A sad and disconcerting sight is seeing someone with potential who knows they are gifted in something and refuses to acknowledge their exceptional nature. “Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate,” wrote Marianne Williamson in *A Return To Love*. “Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.”¹⁸ What is your light that frightens the living daylights out of you? You know, or have a hunch, that you are or could be crazy good at something – parenting, turning and fitting, cutting grass, reading contracts, editing, mathematics, astrophysics, negotiating, cooking, running, swimming, gardening, speaking, dancing, singing, designing – yet you shut it off, turn it down and refuse to let it shine.

Denying yourself the greatness and the exceptional life that you deserve benefits no one. In fact, it robs society of a gift.

You can begin the sentence with “my life is dedicated to...” or “the purpose of my life is to...” and then follow it with a verb and an outcome. For me, the purpose of my life is to help humanity rise to exceptional in each area of life and not just one. In my personal life I achieve this through the example I set as a man, husband, father, friend, son, brother, cousin and uncle. In my professional life I do this as a speaker, podcaster, author and mentor.

What is your life dedicated to?

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 3.1: Be the exceptional friend

Who is struggling, grieving or unwell in your world right now? Just go and do something for them without asking. Make them a meal, pick their kids up from school, take their children for a day, run errands for them, mow their lawns or book a cleaner for their house. Anything! No permission needed. Just do it.

Exceptional Exercise 4.1: Who or what keeps you accountable?

Do you have a cause or reason strong enough for you to improve what you eat, how you eat and who you eat with? If your reason for eating intelligently is only about you, exceptional nutrition is unlikely to be sustainable. So what is the reason or who is the person or people who keeps you accountable to hold high standards? To help you clarify your answer, I'll share with you my accountabilities around food. Each day, in order for me to do what I love and maintain high standards in all eight areas of life, eating energising and high quality food is essential. Eating well keeps my mind sharp and my motivation high during my working hours. It allows me to be present with family and friends and simply helps me to be the best version of myself.

Secondly, in my current phase of life, I know my children are watching me and observing almost every morsel of food that passes my lips! If I eat something they are not familiar with or that they know is not healthy, I better have a good reason! I don't want to teach them one thing, and do another. I believe the most disempowering message a parent or leader could ever teach a child is 'do as I say, not as I do'. I make almost every decision in my personal and professional life as if my children are watching. They don't have to understand it in the moment (they may be too young), but as long as I can congruently explain my actions to them, I am at peace.

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 4.2: Count your chews

For such a small, simple, and free practice, chewing can have an incredible impact on you socially, physically, mentally and emotionally. Give it a go by counting your chews at your next meal and increasing by at least one with each mouthful. As my dentist says, “chew like you mean it”, and enjoy the positive consequences.

Exceptional Exercise 4.3: The art of deep breathing

The simple ritual of taking some deep breaths before eating will do wonders for your body, mind and soul. Many forms of deep breathing have become popular, almost to the point of overwhelm. The key to deep breathing is to work on the breath coming from the diaphragm or stomach rather than the chest and shoulders. This can be a work in progress, depending on your stress levels. I like to take 10 deep breaths before meals in a ratio of 1:1:1, where the numbers represent breathing in, holding, and breathing out. For example, I will regularly take 10 deep breaths: breathing in for seven seconds, holding for seven, and exhaling for seven.

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 5.1: Who's on your forgiveness list?

Where does pessimism, hate or chronic anger exist within you? And whom is it directed towards? Parents, siblings, relatives, friends, your partner (past or present), colleagues, teachers, politicians, war figures, religious figures, sportspeople, and other public figures can all create the toxic, corrosive fluid of pessimism and hate. Start with one, and choose one of the five methods listed in this chapter.

The most important person to forgive in life is yourself. This is the Everest of personal growth for most people. I recommend forgiving yourself once you've worked extensively on forgiving others. Using the analogy from earlier in this chapter, forgiving others will grow your forgiveness muscle enough to then turn attention to yourself.

- 1. Forgiveness in writing**
- 2. Forgiveness in person**
- 3. Forgiveness over the phone**
- 4. Forgiveness through prayer or meditation**
- 5. Forgiveness through changed perspective**

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 5.2: Interview your living relatives

I learnt a great deal about life by interviewing my Nana. If you are fortunate enough to have elderly parents or grandparents, let them share with you their life experiences, their rituals, beliefs, victories and failures. They are living examples of what an exceptional life looks like. Even if they have compromised in some areas of their life, what have you learnt from that? Wisdom abounds in our elders, and it's up to us to glean and incorporate as much of it as we can. A list of questions to ask can be found at marcuspearce.com.au/youreexceptionallife

Exceptional Exercise 5.3: Compare your upbringings

Pull out a piece of paper and write down the elements of your upbringing and that of your partner (if you are currently single use a former partner for the exercise). Consider your school, home environment and location, your parents marital status, employment status, financial habits, dietary habits, siblings, major events or crises, holidays, spiritual or religious beliefs impressed upon you and more.

Have you wondered in depth about what it would have been like for the child version of your partner to grow up the way they did? What did they learn from their upbringing? How has it shaped them? How has it impacted their values, their personality, their beliefs about families and the world at large?

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 5.4: How To Determine Your Values

The above example helped me see that my highest value is my work, and Sarah's is the family. Now that may sound mechanical, however once you've worked through this section it will make more sense.

There are many ways to determine your values, and the method I have found most powerful is Dr John Demartini's Values Determination Process.

There are 13 questions that uncover your hierarchy of values. From how you spend your time, energy and money, to what you think about and talk about the most, every human being has a different set of answers. Once completed, you will have somewhere between three and nine responses that appear multiple times. In order of what appears most often to least often are your highest values.

You can complete this exercise at drdemartini.com

Your list of values doesn't always represent what you necessarily want in life. You might want more wealth in your life but your values suggest that you have a higher priority on spending more than saving. You might want more love in your life, yet you find yourself sitting in front of the television more than you do in front of someone else.

Your hierarchy of values demonstrate what you value the most and what you value the least. Your highest value dominates your mind and your actions. It takes a large chunk of your time and your energy. For me it's my work; for Sarah it's the family.

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 6.1: What do you want to learn?

Here's your opportunity to create a plan for your own exceptional growth.

What exceptional growth do you want to experience?

What will bring out your enthusiasm and curiosity like nothing else? Is it travelling, learning a language or an instrument, or building something?

Remember, passive learning is necessary to the process. Learning the fundamentals of any topic often begins in a passive form. If you want to travel to France, you'll want to passively learn about the language basics, currency, culture, time zones, modes of transport, accommodation and food. You'll prepare yourself for all of these things. Then, on an active level, you start to learn the basic words and phrases.

The best part of course, is 'doing the real thing', landing in Paris and if you're lucky, heading out to the villages and experiencing true France (clearly I'm biased).

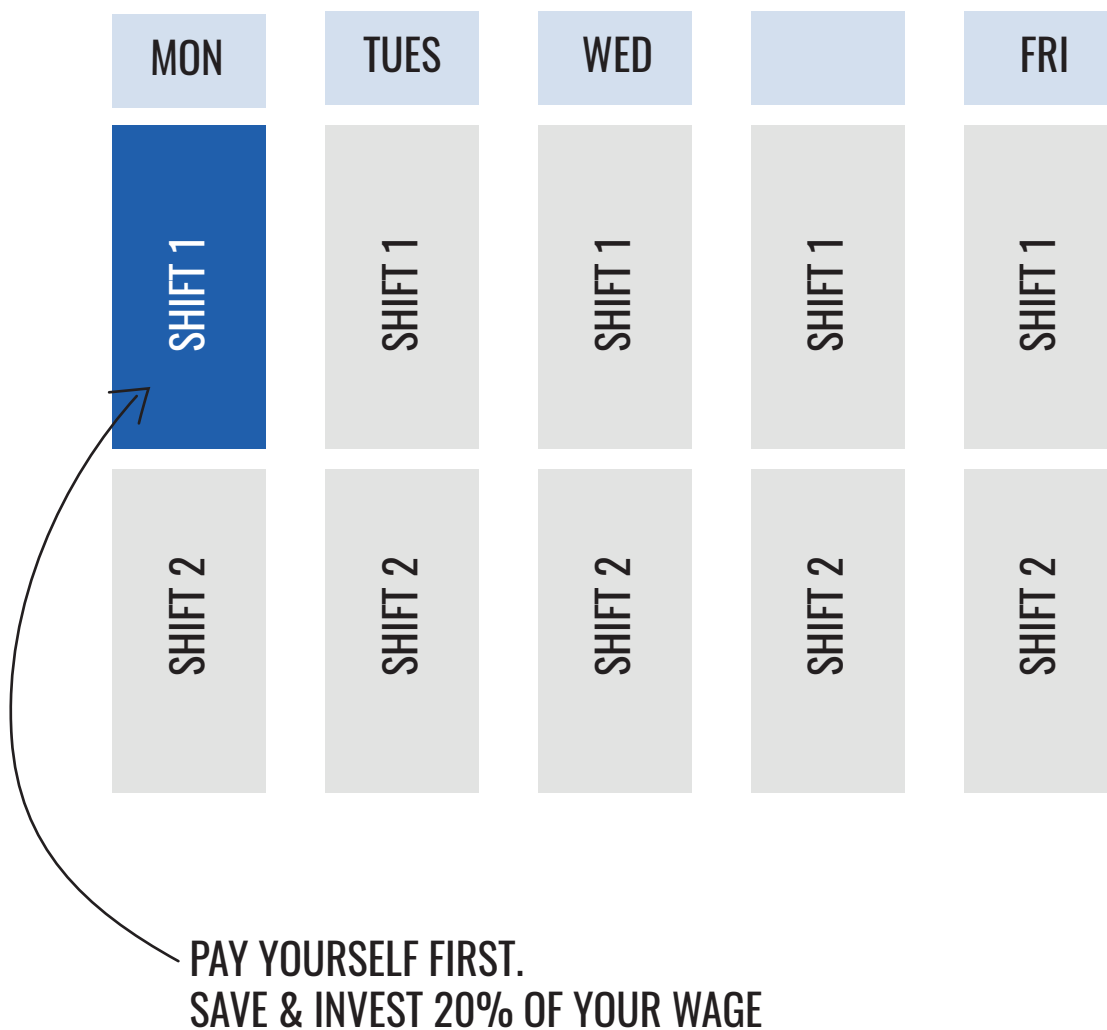
What exceptional growth do you want to experience

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 7.1: Pay yourself first

Decide that you will commit to investing the difference – a set amount of your income – no matter how difficult you may find it. Why is saving for your future important to you? Visualise an impoverished future, filled with regret that you spent your years and income on consumables and the demands of today without making tomorrow a priority.

Think of it this way. Break your working week up into 10 half days. The money you earn during your first 'shift' on Monday morning is dedicated to you and your future. You are the most important person in your world and your exceptional life demands that you honour this truth immediately.



EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 7.2: Know your cashflow position

Draw a four-column table or write in the spaces below your sources of income and amounts and your total expenses. If you followed principle 3 you ideally already know your annual expenses.

Income Source	Amount (gross)	Expenses	Amount (gross)

My cashflow position as of today (total income minus expenses) =

\$

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 7.3: Know your financial net worth

To discover your financial net worth you'll need an inventory of your assets and your liabilities. Assets may include cash on hand, home contents, superannuation, stocks, real estate, motor vehicles and more. Liabilities most

Assets	\$	Liabilities	\$
Equity in home (The value of your home minus the mortgage you owe)	\$	Home loan (The amount you owe the lender)	\$
Contents	\$	Credit Cards	\$
Cash	\$	Education Loans	\$
Stocks	\$	Car Loan	\$
Superannuation	\$	Personal Loan	\$
Equity in investment properties	\$	Investment property loans	\$
Total	\$	Total	\$

My net worth as of today (assets total minus liabilities total) =

\$

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 7.4: Know your financial independence number

The following exercise was first taught to me in 2011 by Dr John Demartini at his Prophecy I seven-day workshop in Sydney. If you're anything like me, when you complete this exercise for the first time, the numbers may frighten you. This fear is perhaps why most people never create exceptional wealth. For me – and hopefully you – this exercise was the catalyst to seriously commit to improving my financial health.

Step 1: Get yourself a piece of paper and in the middle at the top of the page write down what it costs you to live each year. For ease of numbers in this example I'm going to say \$50,000

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Step 2: Below this number write what your dream lifestyle would cost each year. Let's say it's \$150,000.

Step 3: Dr Demartini taught me the wisdom of striking a balance between the optimist and the pessimist (I'm a raging optimist as you may have gathered), so now add these two figures together and divide by two. In my example $\$50,000 + \$150,000$ divided by two brings an average cost of living to \$100,000.

Step 4: Now here's where it gets interesting and real. Depending on your age and financial health right now, this average cost of living could be closer or further away from your reality than you think.

Write down your age as of today (my example is 40) and make an indent across the page in 15-year increments until you reach 100. Don't assume you'll die before you blow out 100 candles on the cake. Again, conservatism and the long view is wiser than reckless 'get-rich-quick' abandon when it comes to creating exceptional wealth.

Under today's age, write down your averaged cost of living. In my example, \$100,000. At each 15-year increment double the amount. My example would look like this.

40	55	70	85	100
\$100,000	\$200,000	\$400,000	\$800,000	1,600,000

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 7.4: Know your financial independence number

Dr Demartini shared with me that the reason he uses 15-year increments is due to the average rate of inflation over the last 100 years (which is 4.8%). Using the financial principle known as the Rule of 72, when you divide 72 by 4.8% you get a doubling rate of 15.16. In other words, the cost of living is likely to double every 15 years. From ice cream to real estate, this number stacks up against almost anything.

Looking at your numbers, you may find your heart begin to flutter somewhat when you look at the income you'll need at age 85 or 100 just to live the same way you do today. A quick glance at history will show you that these numbers aren't at all fanciful. More importantly, you and I are unlikely to be exchanging our time for money when we're 85 or 100 – so where is the money going to come from? As previously mentioned, you don't want to be relying on government welfare to sustain your lifestyle, and you don't want to be dependent on children and friends to give you money to live.

Step 5: Exceptional wealth means that you have other sources of income outside of a job to fund your lifestyle. To find out exactly what this amount is, Dr Demartini taught me the average interest on savings and investments averages 8% per year, approximately one twelfth of the asset. To “know your number”, multiply your cost of living by 12 and that is the amount of assets you need to own outright to live the lifestyle you want. In my example of having a \$100,000 lifestyle at age 40, I would need to own outright assets to the value of \$1.2 million. When I blow 100 candles out on the cake, I'll need to have \$19.2 million in assets, generating an 8% return, providing for my lifestyle which will cost \$1.6 million each year.

Step 6: Looking at your own numbers now, ask yourself if you're on track or not? Don't beat yourself up if you're wildly off track. I can tell you that most people who end up on the pension were so far off track without knowing it because they never knew their number. You now know your number. The question is, what are you going to do with it? Maybe you're on track and it's a matter of staying the course. If you're off track, are you going to give up before you even start? Or, are you now going to adjust your entire belief system about saving, spending and investing the money you work so hard to bring in to your

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 8.1: The Who, What, Why and How of Hate

Who or what do you hate?	How do you hate?	Why do you hate?
Traffic	Anger	Makes me late to work, I have better things to do
My brother	Avoidance and excluding him from family events	He coerced Mum and Dad to have the will made in his favour
Political leader of my country	Talk and think about them with disdain or venom	Where do I start? Bigoted, corrupt, sociopath

Once you have completed this exercise, consider ways in which you could love or appreciate the thing or person you hate. What empowering meaning could you put on the events that have taken place in your life? What potential opportunity is your hatred presenting you with? If this is triggering you, use the methods outlined in the forgiveness section of family to help forgive and accept.

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 8.2: 180 Days To Live

Once you have completed this exercise, consider ways in which you could love or appreciate the thing or person you hate. What empowering meaning could you put on the events that have taken place in your life? What potential opportunity is your hatred presenting you with? If this is triggering you, use the methods outlined in the forgiveness section of family to help forgive and accept.

Exceptional Exercise 8.3: How grateful are you?

If you want to do your own research study, take a test to find out how grateful you are now and then take the same test one week, then one month, and then three months later. There are many tests that help you define your state of gratitude at present. Three of the most referenced are the GQ6 test, the GRAT assessment and Appreciation Scale. They are all quick and easy to complete. Links to each one are available at marcuspearce.com.au/youreexceptionallife

EXCEPTIONAL EXERCISES

Exceptional Exercise 8.1: The Who, What, Why and How of Hate

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