THE CONSIDERED LIFE

A SEVEN-DAY GUIDE

The Considered *Reset*

Seven days to reclaim your attention and live with intention.

WRITTEN BY

Charlie Fatoma

LESS NOISE. MORE LIFE.

A NOTE BEFORE WE BEGIN

Dear reader,



CHARLIE FATOMA

I'm Charlie. I'm twenty-eight, a father of two young boys, a partner, a musician and a creative entrepreneur.

I'm ambitious by nature. I have a lot of energy and I'm interested in almost everything. Those qualities are strengths, but they can also leave my attention scattered across more ideas and possibilities than I can sensibly hold at once.

More and more, I'm recognising that I don't want to spend my life pursuing a future that stops me enjoying the present. I want to stay ambitious without being consumed by ambition, to be strong without training becoming another pressure, and to build financial freedom without trading away my presence as a father and partner. Most of all, I want to make decisions consciously, rather than reacting to whatever demands my attention.

One of the most useful things I've found is simply writing my days down. Without a record, weeks can pass without my really noticing where my time and energy have gone. When I look back over a month of movement, nourishment, stillness, training and daily energy scores, patterns start to appear. Sometimes my more consistent stretches coincide with feeling more energised and grounded. Other times I can see how demanding work, family responsibilities or disrupted routines have affected me. I can't prove what causes what, but I can use what I notice to make more considered decisions about the month ahead. It has helped me approach my own life with more curiosity and less judgement.

The Considered Life is where I'm working all of this out, around the things I care about most: fatherhood, my Christian faith, family, creativity, nature, my health and freedom over my time. I'm not writing as someone who has mastered life. These are practices I'm still developing, including the simple tracker at the heart of this guide. Your circumstances may look nothing like mine, so take what's useful, adapt it, and leave the rest.

My life is the practice, not the proof.

Charlie

WHO THIS IS FOR

The capable but *scattered* man

This guide is written for a particular kind of man. He's capable and intelligent. He has ideas, energy and more potential than he always knows what to do with. He might be a father, he might run his own business, or he might be building a career inside someone else's. He isn't lost, and he doesn't need fixing.

What he sometimes struggles with is direction. His attention is pulled several ways before the day has properly started. He has bursts of intense productivity that end in exhaustion, and routines that hold for a fortnight before quietly dissolving. He finds it hard to switch off, and when he finally stops, the rest doesn't always feel like rest.

Somewhere along the way, his time started to belong to everything except himself.

If some of that sounds familiar, you're in the right place. I recognise it because, in many ways, I'm the man this was written for. An earlier, less grounded version of me would have found it useful.

YOU MAY RECOGNISE

Mental clutter and overstimulation

Too many competing ambitions

Routines that never quite hold

Difficulty switching off

Intense output, then exhaustion

Priorities that feel just out of reach

WHAT YOU WON'T FIND HERE

No punishing wake-up times. No elaborate morning routine. No challenge to complete or streak to protect. No promises to rewire your brain.

This isn't another programme to perform. It's an invitation to pay closer attention to the life you're already living, and to make better-informed decisions about it.

WHAT HE ACTUALLY WANTS

Clarity · Strength · Self-trust · Presence · Freedom



THE CENTRAL IDEA

Less noise. *More life.*

Most of us don’t lack information or ambition. What we lack is the quiet needed to decide what to do with them. Messages, opinions, opportunities and obligations arrive faster than we can weigh them, and the default response is to react. Over time, reacting becomes the shape of a life.

Self-direction is the alternative. It doesn’t mean doing more, and it certainly doesn’t mean doing everything perfectly. It means choosing, deliberately and repeatedly, where your time, energy and attention go, and then looking honestly at what happened.

That’s the whole of this guide in two sentences. The seven days that follow help you begin. The monthly tracker and review help you continue.

From scattered to self-directed.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

One page a day for seven days. Each day has a short reflection, one exercise, a few questions and one small action. Fifteen to twenty minutes is plenty. Write in a notebook or print the pages. If you miss a day, simply pick up where you left off. Nothing breaks.

THE FRAMEWORK

Three pillars

Everything in this guide rests on three connected principles. Each one comes with a single question worth returning to.

I

RITUALS

How do I want to enter this day?

Return to yourself. Stillness, prayer, contemplation, gratitude, reflection, time in nature and conscious attention. Rituals create a moment in which you choose, rather than react. My own faith shapes how I practise this, but the exercises here are open to readers of any belief or none.

II

ROUTINE

What actions support the man I want to become?

Build self-trust. Daily commitments, movement, training, nourishment, sleep and consistent action. Not a rigid timetable and not a productivity system. Routine is simply the practice of keeping small promises to yourself until you start to believe you will.

III

REJUVENATION

What restores my capacity to live well?

Restore capacity. Rest, recovery, mobility, walking, time outdoors, relationships, meaningful enjoyment and less unnecessary stimulation. Rest isn't a reward you earn through productivity. It's part of what makes a good life, and a good day's work, possible.

The three are connected. Rituals give you a moment to choose. Routine turns those choices into evidence that you can be trusted. Rejuvenation makes sure there's something left of you to bring to either.

WORTH KNOWING

A large survey of almost 20,000 people in England found that those who spent at least two hours a week in natural settings were more likely to report good health and wellbeing. It shows an association rather than proof of cause, but it's a useful nudge outdoors (White et al., 2019).

01

DAY 1 · RITUALS

Notice the *Noise*

You can't direct attention you haven't noticed. So before changing anything, spend one ordinary day simply observing where your attention goes. The aim isn't to judge it, only to see it clearly.

Most noise isn't dramatic. It's the reflexive glance at a phone in a queue, the news opened between tasks, the tab left open on a project you aren't working on, the half-formed plan that keeps resurfacing at night. Each one is small. Together they decide a surprising amount of your day, and they rarely ask permission first.

THE EXERCISE

The attention audit

Three times today, at roughly morning, midday and evening, note what has held your attention over the past few hours, what pulled it there, and whether you chose it. Tonight, sort what you've written into three columns.

NECESSARY	CHOSEN	NOISE

REFLECT

01 What took my attention today that I didn't choose?

02 Which demands felt urgent but weren't really important?

03 When did I feel most present?

ONE ACTION

Turn off one category of non-essential notifications today. Just one, and notice whether you miss it.

02

DAY 2 · RITUALS

Decide What *Matters*

Ambitious people rarely suffer from too few priorities. The difficulty is having so many that none of them gets your best. When everything matters equally, the loudest thing tends to win by default.

Today, name three priorities. Not goals, which have finish lines, but the things you want this season of your life to be organised around. For me, fatherhood, faith, health, creative work and freedom over my time keep returning. Yours will be your own. Then comes the honest part: looking at an ordinary week and asking whether your calendar would agree.

THE EXERCISE

Three priorities

Write down everything that feels important right now, without editing. Then circle the three you would most regret neglecting over the next year. For each, write a sentence about why it matters to you.

First priority _____

Second priority _____

Third priority _____

REFLECT

01 Where did my time go last week, and which priority did it serve?

02 What am I giving energy to that isn't on my list?

03 What would change if I took these three seriously?

ONE ACTION

Write your three priorities somewhere you'll see them daily: a whiteboard, a notebook cover or your lock screen.

03

DAY 3 · RITUALS

Create *Space*

Stillness isn't the absence of activity. It's a deliberate pause in which nothing is asking anything of you, and you can notice what's actually there.

For me, stillness often means prayer. My Christian faith is part of how I return to myself, and it would be dishonest to leave it out. But stillness doesn't belong to one tradition. You might pray, sit quietly with a coffee, step outside and watch the weather, or simply breathe without a screen in your hand. The form matters less than the intention. You don't need an hour, only a few protected minutes. The NHS lists paying attention to the present moment among its five steps to mental wellbeing.

THE EXERCISE

Five quiet minutes

Choose a time today that you can genuinely protect: early, a lunch break, after the children are in bed. Put your phone in another room. Sit, stand outside or walk slowly for five minutes. If it helps, hold a single question: *How do I want to enter this day?* In the evening, try *How did I meet today?* Notice what surfaces, and resist the urge to fix it.

REFLECT

01 What did I notice when the noise stopped?

02 What made it difficult to be still?

03 What would I like to carry into tomorrow?

ONE ACTION

Attach a few minutes of stillness to something you already do, such as your first coffee or sitting in the car before you walk in the door.

04

DAY 4 · ROUTINE

Build One *Anchor*

Self-trust is built like any other trust: by keeping promises. The trouble is that ambitious men tend to make large promises to themselves. Six new habits, a training plan and an earlier alarm, all at once. When one slips the whole structure feels broken, and the lesson we take is that we can't rely on ourselves.

An anchor is the opposite. It's one small daily commitment, chosen because it's realistic on your worst day rather than your best. Its job isn't to transform your life, only to give you daily evidence that you do what you say. Research on habit formation suggests that repeating a behaviour in a consistent context helps it become more automatic over time, and that missing an occasional day doesn't meaningfully undo that process. Perfection isn't required. Returning is.

THE EXERCISE

Choose your anchor

My anchor is _____

After I... I will... _____

On a hard day, the minimum is _____

REFLECT

01 Which promises to myself have I broken most often, and were they realistic?

02 What usually derails my routines?

03 How will I respond, kindly, when I miss a day?

ONE ACTION

Do your anchor today, however small. Then decide in advance what the minimum looks like when everything falls apart.

05

DAY 5 · ROUTINE & REJUVENATION

Return to the *Body*

For many driven men the body becomes either a project or an afterthought. Training turns into another arena for performance, or it disappears entirely when work gets busy. Today is about something simpler: coming back to your body as the place you actually live.

The UK Chief Medical Officers are clear that any physical activity is better than none. Their guidelines suggest adults build towards at least 150 minutes of moderate activity a week, such as brisk walking or cycling, with muscle-strengthening on at least two days, and that long periods of sitting are worth breaking up. In my own tracker I separate **Move**, everyday movement, from **Training**, dedicated exercise. Both count.

THE EXERCISE

A considered walk

Take a fifteen to twenty-minute walk today, without headphones if you can, at a pace that feels comfortable but purposeful. For the first few minutes, notice your breathing and the ground under your feet. After that, simply look around. If walking isn't right for you today, choose any gentle movement that is: stretching, mobility work or time in the garden.

REFLECT

01 How does my body feel at the end of an ordinary day?

02 Where does movement already fit naturally into my life?

03 What would make training feel supportive rather than pressured?

ONE ACTION

Find one place to break up long periods of sitting: a walk after lunch, standing for calls, or taking the longer route.

06

DAY 6 · REJUVENATION

Reclaim Your *Attention*

On Day 1 you noticed the noise. Today you do something about one part of it. Not all of it. Trying to overhaul your entire relationship with technology in a day tends to produce a weekend of virtue followed by a return to old patterns.

Choose one source of unnecessary stimulation, then build a boundary around it. A good boundary is specific, physical where possible, and easy to keep. “I’ll use my phone less” is a wish. “My phone charges in the kitchen overnight” is a boundary. The point isn’t austerity. It’s room. Attention reclaimed from the noise is attention you can give to your family, your work, your faith or simply the evening in front of you.

THE EXERCISE

Draw a line

The source _____

My boundary _____

What I’ll do with the space _____

Who could help me keep it _____

REFLECT

01 Honestly, what does this source of stimulation give me?

02 What does it cost me?

03 Who or what deserves the attention I reclaim?

ONE ACTION

Put the boundary in place today, physically if you can: move the charger, delete the app, set the limit or tell someone.

07

DAY 7 · ALL THREE PILLARS

Design Your *Practice*

A week isn't long enough to change a life. It is long enough to notice what helps. Today, look back over the past six days and choose a few things worth carrying forward.

The temptation will be to keep everything. Resist it. Three manageable commitments that you actually sustain will teach you far more than ten you abandon by the end of the month. Choose things that fit around real work, family and unpredictable days, and that still feel possible on your worst one. These commitments become the starting point for the monthly tracker that follows.

THE EXERCISE

Three commitments

Look back at Days 1 to 6 and note one thing you learned from each. Then choose up to three practices to continue for the next month, each with a realistic minimum.

I will continue _____

I will continue _____

I will continue _____

REFLECT

01 Which day's practice felt most natural?

02 Which was hardest, and why?

03 What did I learn about where my energy comes from?

ONE ACTION

Write your three commitments on a whiteboard, in your calendar or at the top of your first monthly tracker.

Why I *track*

I use a very simple habit tracker. Five columns and one row for each day of the month. It takes less than a minute a day.

The most valuable part isn't ticking the boxes. It's what happens when I look back. At the end of each month I can see roughly thirty days of my actual lived experience on a single page: which practices I maintained, which became inconsistent, and how my energy changed.

Sometimes I notice that my most energised stretches coincide with more consistent movement, nourishment, stillness or training. Other times I can see how disrupted sleep, illness, demanding work or family responsibilities may have shaped the month. The tracker helps me recognise patterns I'd otherwise overlook.

Then I take those observations back to my physical whiteboard. I reconsider my priorities and adjust my habits, commitments and arrangements for the month ahead.

I'm not simply trying to complete habits. I'm gathering information about my own life, so I can make increasingly considered decisions about it.

THE CONSIDERED CYCLE

PRACTICE → **OBSERVE** → **REFLECT** → **ADJUST** → **REPEAT**

The point isn't a perfect month. It's an honest one.

WHY ONLY FIVE COLUMNS?

Simplicity is the point. Every extra column is one more thing to maintain and one more reason to stop. Five is enough to begin seeing patterns, and few enough to keep going on a difficult week.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

A meta-analysis of 138 experimental studies found that prompting people to monitor their progress helped them reach their goals, and that the effect was larger when progress was physically recorded (Harkin et al., 2016). Writing it down appears to matter.

Understanding the *monthly tracker*

The tracker is deliberately simple. Days of the month run down the left. Five headings run across the top. Each evening, tick what you did and give your energy a score. That's all.

MOVE	General everyday movement. Walking, stretching, being physically active, or simply avoiding long periods of inactivity.
NOURISHMENT	Being intentional about what you eat and drink. Supporting yourself with nutritious food and hydration.
STILLNESS	Time to pause, pray, reflect or simply sit without unnecessary stimulation.
TRAINING	Dedicated physical exercise: strength training, running or another purposeful workout. Separate from everyday movement.
ENERGY /10	Your subjective daily energy rating. A single number between 1 and 10.

HOW TO FILL IT IN

Decide what counts. At the start of the month, decide what earns a tick in each column, and keep it modest. Ten minutes of walking might count as Move. Five quiet minutes might count as Stillness.

Record at a similar time each day. The evening works for most people. Try not to reconstruct more than a day or two from memory.

Score energy quickly. Your first instinct is fine. It's an impression, not a measurement.

Treat blanks as information. An empty box isn't a failure. It's part of the picture you'll review at the end of the month.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

DAY	MV	NR	ST	TR	EN
1	✓	✓		✓	7
2	✓		✓		5
3		✓	✓	✓	6
4	✓	✓	✓		8

Invented entries, shown only to illustrate the format.

Monthly Habit Tracker

MONTH _____

DAY	MOVE	NOURISHMENT	STILLNESS	TRAINING	ENERGY /10
1	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
2	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
3	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
4	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
5	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
6	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
7	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
8	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
9	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
10	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
11	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
12	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
13	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
14	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
15	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
16	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
17	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
18	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
19	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
20	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
21	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
22	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
23	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
24	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
25	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
26	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
27	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
28	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
29	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
30	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10
31	☐	☐	☐	☐	/10

PRACTICE → OBSERVE → REFLECT → ADJUST → REPEAT

REVIEW AT MONTH END

Reading your *patterns*

Thirty days of ticks and numbers is information. Here's how to read it honestly.

1

Look at the whole page first

Before reading any single day, step back. Which columns are full? Which are sparse? Where are the gaps clustered?

2

Find your highs and lows

Circle your three or four highest energy days and your three or four lowest. These are the days worth looking at more closely.

3

Read across the rows

What was ticked around those days, and what wasn't? Then add what the grid can't show: sleep, illness, deadlines, travel, family life.

4

Write questions, not conclusions

"I had more energy when I trained" becomes "Does training lift my energy, or do I train on days I already feel good?"

A NOTE ON CAUSE AND EFFECT

Your tracker shows associations, not proof. If high-energy days line up with training days, training may be helping. Or you may train when you already feel good. Or a third factor, such as a decent night's sleep, may be driving both.

Energy scores are subjective impressions, not medical measurements. They're shaped by mood, weather and the kind of day you've had. That doesn't make them useless. It makes them a starting point.

RUN A SMALL EXPERIMENT

If you suspect a pattern, test it gently next month. Keep most things steady, change one, and see what the tracker shows. Over several months, a picture begins to form that's genuinely yours, built from your own life rather than someone else's advice.

Curiosity first.
Conclusions later.

The Monthly Considered Review

MONTH _____

A conversation with yourself, not a performance appraisal. Have your tracker beside you, take twenty minutes, and answer honestly.

CONSISTENCY I

Which practices did I maintain? Which were difficult to sustain?

ENERGY II

When did I feel most energised? When did I feel depleted?

CONTEXT III

What was happening in my life during those periods?

PATTERNS IV

What associations or recurring patterns are worth exploring?

ADJUSTMENT V

What should I continue, simplify or change?

ALIGNMENT VI

Did my daily actions reflect the person I want to become?

THREE THINGS I LEARNED THIS MONTH

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

THREE INTENTIONS FOR NEXT MONTH

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

NOW MOVE YOUR INTENTIONS INTO YOUR CALENDAR, WHITEBOARD OR PLANNING SYSTEM

Turning reflection into *action*

A review only matters if it changes something. This is the step where observation becomes a decision.

CONTINUE

Protect what's working. If something has quietly held all month, don't tinker with it for the sake of novelty.

SIMPLIFY

If a practice kept slipping, make it smaller before you abandon it. Lower the bar for what earns a tick.

CHANGE

Adjust one or two things at a time, not everything. Otherwise next month's tracker can't tell you what made the difference.

Move intentions out of your head. An intention that lives only in a notebook is easy to forget. Transfer your three intentions somewhere you'll meet them: as appointments in your calendar, on a whiteboard you pass every day, or in whatever planning system you already trust. I use a physical whiteboard, because it's visible and easy to rewrite.

Keep the structure, adjust the definitions. Start each month with the same five columns. What you change is what counts as a tick, when you aim to do it, and what support you arrange around it.

Plan for unpredictable days. Children get ill, work runs late, sleep goes sideways. Decide in advance what the minimum looks like, so a hard week bends your practice rather than breaking it.

Then begin again. Print a fresh tracker. Write your intentions at the top. The cycle continues: practice, observe, reflect, adjust, repeat.

NEXT MONTH, IN ONE SENTENCE

Next month, a considered life looks like…

A CLOSING LETTER

You don’t need to become *someone else.*

If you’ve reached this page, you’ve already done something many of us rarely do: you’ve paid close attention to your own life for a week.

I want to leave you with the idea that sits underneath everything here. You don’t need to become an entirely different person to live well. You can begin by paying closer attention to the life you’re already living.

Through small practices, honest observation and regular reflection, you can make better-informed decisions about how you spend your time, your energy and your attention. Not every month will look the way you hoped. Some will be shaped by things you didn’t choose. That’s fine. The tracker isn’t there to judge you. It’s there to show you what’s true, so that your next decision is a little more considered than your last.

The goal isn’t to optimise every moment. It’s to create more space for meaningful living: for the people you love, the work you care about, your health, your faith if you have one, and the quiet that lets you notice all of it.

I’m still learning this myself, one month at a time, and I share that journey on Instagram at **@charliefatoma**. I’d genuinely like to hear how this goes for you. If you feel like it, send me a message there. Tell me which of the seven practices stayed with you, whether you’ve started using the monthly tracker, what you noticed after your first month, or what you’d like me to explore next. Your experience will help me understand whether these practices are genuinely useful in everyday life.

My life is the practice, not the proof.

Charlie Fatoma

THE CONSIDERED LIFE · LESS NOISE. MORE LIFE.



Sources and *important notes*

Important notes

Educational only. This guide shares personal practices and general, evidence-informed wellbeing information. It isn't medical, psychological or professional advice, and it isn't a substitute for it.

Not a treatment. Nothing here is intended to diagnose, treat or manage ADHD, anxiety, depression, burnout, hormonal conditions or any other medical issue.

Movement. If you have a health condition, are recovering from injury or haven't been active for a while, speak to your GP or a qualified professional before significantly changing your activity.

Your tracker. Patterns in a personal tracker are associations, not proof of cause. Energy scores are subjective observations, not medical measurements.

If you're struggling. Please talk to someone. In the UK you can contact your GP, call NHS 111, or call Samaritans free on 116 123, day or night. In an emergency, call 999.

Personal experience. Where I describe my own practice, it's simply what I do, not evidence that it will work the same way for you.

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Colophon

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