Staying On Track Workbook
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How To Use Your *Staying On Track* Workbook

Your *Staying On Track* Workbook offers relevant exercises to stimulate responsible thinking plus journal pages so you can keep a record of your thinking and behavior that will help you *Stay on Track*.

How you use this workbook and whether you *STAY ON TRACK* is up to you--it's your choice. Your chances of success are much greater when you choose to open this workbook at least three times each week and complete one of the exercises or journal pages. You may want to set aside a regular time for working with your *Staying On Track* workbook. After all, a large part of *staying on track* means having a routine that you follow regularly.

Inside your workbook you will find enough exercises and journal pages for an entire year. You can do the exercises and fill-in your journal pages in any order and at your own pace. You could complete one exercise and two journal pages per week or you could complete two exercises and one journal page per week or any combination you like. The important thing is to stick with a weekly routine.

You might want to start by looking over the Table of Contents on the previous pages to see what topics interest you most. You can also check the Table of Contents when you are having difficulty and want to find an exercise that may help you sort things out and *Stay On Track*.

The main thing to remember is to USE your workbook! It will give you an extra edge to *STAYING ON TRACK*, especially when things get tough.

How To Keep Your *Staying On Track* Thinking Journal

Journaling is one of the most useful tools for *staying on track*. It keeps you aware of your thoughts and what direction your thinking is heading. Keeping your journal will give you a daily record of your progress. It will help you avoid winding up back where you started, scratching your head, asking yourself, “How did I end up in a situation like this again?” If you do go back to your old thinking, your journal will show how you made your choices, but even more important, it will help you get back on track. When you keep an honest journal regularly, chances are you won’t go back again. Instead you will continue moving forward and you will *Stay on Track*.

When using your journal, write honestly about your life. A key to success is never to go more than a few days without recording in your journal or completing one of the exercises. On the right hand pages of this book you'll find your journal which looks like figure (a) below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Thinking Journal</strong></th>
<th><strong>Date</strong></th>
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<tbody>
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Figure (a)
The next part of your journal is the thinking and behavior continuum that looks like figure (b). You will want to place a mark on this continuum that best represents the thinking and behavior that you have written about in your journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Irresponsible</th>
<th>Arrestable</th>
<th>Extremely Irresponsible</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Figure (b)

**IMPORTANT:** Remember to mark the continuum according to *how you are thinking*, not according to whether or not you acted out your thoughts. In other words, if you thought about doing something you should not do, you should NOT mark yourself responsible simply because you did not do it. However, if the thought only crossed your mind and you did not struggle over whether to do it, and in fact, you did not do it, then you may honestly mark yourself responsible.

At the bottom of the page for keeping your journal you will find two columns that look like figure (c) below. This is where you will keep an ongoing record of your thinking. In the first column you will check one category that best describes how you are thinking that day according to the mark you made on the continuum in figure (b) above. In the second column you will keep adding the total of all the categories from day to day. This means you will keep track of how many of each thinking category you experience over the entire course of your *Staying On Track Workbook*. By the time you complete the workbook your two columns on the last journaling page may look something like figure (c) below.

Today:
- [ ] Responsible thinking
- [ ] Irresponsible thinking
- [ ] Arrestable thinking
- [ ] Extreme (Arrestable) thinking

Total so far:
- [ ] Responsible thinking
- [ ] Irresponsible thinking
- [ ] Arrestable thinking
- [ ] Extreme (Arrestable) thinking

Figure (c)

You'll find exercises on other topics in this book that deal with key issues such as Fitting in and Friendship, How to Stay on Track At Home, Dealing with Anger, Employability, and chapters addressing each of the key areas of the *STAY ON TRACK* Process listed on the next page.
Stay on Track
Developing Responsible Endurance

Think of the Consequences Before You Act
• If anything can go wrong, it will
• Remember, doing this = trouble, prison, death

Remember Who Gets Hurt--Ripple Effect
• Remember how similar actions have hurt others and you
• Use the bad feelings as tools to change yourself

Act on Plans to Make a Responsible Choice
• Think ahead — “What gets me into trouble?”
  — “Where do I get into trouble?”
  — “With whom do I get into trouble?”
• When past memories excite you, consider it poison
• Surround yourself with responsible people and avoid irresponsible people

Check Your Thinking
• Think, not about the action, but whether it is right or wrong
• Examine your situation and conscience immediately when you think about irresponsible/criminal conduct

Keep Thinking Responsible Thoughts
• Let go of irresponsible thoughts fast
• Practice responsible thinking in advance
• Replace old thinking with responsible thinking
Think of the Consequences Before You Act

- If anything can go wrong, it will
- Remember, doing this = trouble, prison, death
Looking Back and Looking Ahead

1. How do decisions people make when they are young affect their lives later, when they are older?

2. How have the decisions you made when you were younger affected your life today?

3. How can decisions people make when they are older help change the reputation they earned when they were younger?

4. What decisions will you make today that will change and improve the reputation you earned when you were younger?
Next Time

Make a list of responsible ways you will think and feel next time you are in these situations. Put the responsible reasons for why you are choosing to think and feel these ways in the spaces starting with the word “because.” Keep the list with you so you can look at it next time you need ideas.

Someone calls me something or says something bad about me.
I will think ____________________________________________________
because _____________________________________________________

I will feel _____________________________________________________
because _____________________________________________________

Other people do not include me in their plans. I feel left out.
I will think ____________________________________________________
because _____________________________________________________

I will feel _____________________________________________________
because _____________________________________________________

It's my birthday.
I will think ____________________________________________________
because _____________________________________________________

I will feel _____________________________________________________
because _____________________________________________________
In the first column check one category that best describes how you are thinking today according to the mark you made on the continuum above. In the second column add the total of all categories for each day so far.

Write your name or put a mark on the continuum that best shows where your thinking is today.

Today:

____ Responsible thinking

____ Irresponsible thinking

____ Arrestable thinking

____ Extreme (Arrestable) thinking

Total so far:

____ Responsible thinking

____ Irresponsible thinking

____ Arrestable thinking

____ Extreme (Arrestable) thinking
Keep Thinking Responsible Thoughts

- Dismiss irresponsible thoughts fast
- Practice responsible thinking in advance
- Replace old thinking with responsible thinking
Running the Responsibility Race

Think carefully about what it means to stay on track in the race of life. Circle the letter of the best answer to the following questions.

1. What do we mean when we say “stay on track?”
   a. A race track
   b. A reminder to make good choices
   c. Don’t mess up again
   d. Stay within the lines on the track

2. When you make good choices what will happen?
   a. I’ll make lots of money
   b. Positive consequences
   c. I’ll live in harmony with others and myself
   d. Both (b) and (c)

3. What will you gain from staying on track?
   a. A superior self image
   b. Fame and a gold medal
   c. Self-discipline and self respect
   d. Popularity

4. How does self-discipline help you to stay on track?
   a. It keeps me from running off the road
   b. It helps me earn enough to buy new running shoes
   c. It helps me work toward a positive future
   d. It helps me beat everyone else

5. What does it mean to pause and think about the consequences before you act?
   a. To act on your feelings
   b. Wait until the referee blows the whistle
   c. Stop and think before you make a decision
   d. Go with your gut reaction

6. What will it take for your thinking to stay on track?
   a. No effort at all
   b. Daily practice
   c. Don’t let anyone else get ahead of me in the race
   d. Give up when something goes wrong
Honest People I Admire

1. Name a truthful person that you know well and explain what you admire about this person.

2. How did this person develop the qualities you admire?

3. How would you like to be more like this person?

4. Is there anything about this person you would not want to be like?

5. What will you do to develop the qualities of this person that you admire and avoid those traits you do not admire?
Thinking Journal

Write your name or put a mark on the continuum that best shows where your thinking is today.

In the first column check one category that best describes how you are thinking today according to the mark you made on the continuum above. In the second column add the total of all categories for each day so far.

Today:

_____Responsible thinking

_____Irresponsible thinking

_____Arrestable thinking

_____Extreme (Arrestable) thinking

Total so far:

_____Responsible thinking

_____Irresponsible thinking

_____Arrestable thinking

_____Extreme (Arrestable) thinking
Why Am I So Tired?

Fatigue can slow us down and bring us down, but worst of all it can keep us from staying on track. There are many things that can bring on feelings of fatigue. Lack of consistent exercise always leads to fatigue, but so does not having a dream or a plan that you look forward to in life. And it may seem odd but more people experience fatigue from being bored than from keeping busy. Procrastination and indecision can make anyone feel tired, and so can negative emotions and guilt feelings. Fatigue can also be brought on by unforgiveness and bitter resentment toward others. If you have been struggling with fatigue ask yourself these questions. Then make a plan and do whatever it takes to get back on track.

- Am I bored?
- Do I have any hobbies?
- Am I getting regular sleep and enough sleep?
- Do I watch too much TV?
- Do I have enough to keep me busy?
- Do I have friends I can call?
- Am I getting enough regular exercise?
- Do I have plans and goals for my life?
- Do I have a plan for doing something new and different every week?
- Am I holding resentment toward anyone or any situation?
- Do I read books or magazines that interest me?
- Am I holding onto negative emotions?
- Do I feel guilty about something I need to get right?
- Am I eating right and regularly? (Cut the fast food, it leads to fast fatigue.)
- Am I using any substance that is harmful to me?
- Have I experienced a trauma or crisis in my life recently?
- Am I ignoring my Higher Power (God)?
Thinking Journal

Date

Write your name or put a mark on the continuum that best shows where your thinking is today.

Responsible Irresponsible Arrestable Extremely

In the first column check one category that best describes how you are thinking today according to the mark you made on the continuum above. In the second column add the total of all categories for each day so far.

Today:

_____ Responsible thinking

_____ Irresponsible thinking

_____ Arrestable thinking

_____ Extreme (Arrestable) thinking

Total so far:

_____ Responsible thinking

_____ Irresponsible thinking

_____ Arrestable thinking

_____ Extreme (Arrestable) thinking

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Dealing with Anger
Get Right, Get Real, Stay Calm

Facts of life:
- Not everyone will like you.
- Not everyone will agree with you.
- Not everyone will give you what you want.

1. List three times when you always insist on having your way. List how you insist on your way and put the name of the person who must give into your way next to each item.
   1.
   2.
   3.

2. Describe what it means to treat others with respect.

3. Review your answer to number 1, then write three ways you will show respect to the people you listed when the situations come up next time.
   1.
   2.
   3.
What Bugs Me about THEM?

Each day can bring frustration in some form or another. The things that bug us are usually things we have no control over. All of these irritants fall into one of four categories. Use these four categories to discover what’s bugging you and what you can do about it. (*What Bugs Me* exercises are adapted from Winkey Pratney’s *Youth Aflame, Those “Nerve-Graters,”* p. 275, Bethany House, 1983.)

**THEM!** — People we come in contact with can really bug us at times. They do little things that get on our nerves or bother us in some way. They are late, they forget, they sometimes just don’t do what they’re supposed to do. People can really bug us! Complete the following statements.

Some things that bug me about THEM are

When I am bugged a little about THEM I usually

When I am bugged a lot about THEM I usually

When I am boiling mad I usually

Something different I can do about what bugs me. Fill in the blanks below with ideas like this example.

When they are loud __________________________
instead of yelling at them __________________________
I will calmly explain that I would like them to be more quiet.

When they ____________________________________________
instead of ____________________________________________
I will __________________________________________________________________

Sample

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Thinking Journal

Write your name or put a mark on the continuum that best shows where your thinking is today.

In the first column check one category that best describes how you are thinking today according to the mark you made on the continuum above. In the second column add the total of all categories for each day so far.

Today:
- _____ Responsible thinking
- _____ Irresponsible thinking
- _____ Arrestable thinking
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Total so far:
- _____ Responsible thinking
- _____ Irresponsible thinking
- _____ Arrestable thinking
- _____ Extreme (Arrestable) thinking

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Sticking To It at Home
At Home Again

It can be frightening to return home when we have been away for a while, especially if we have made a lot of changes. A major change in any family member’s life effects each person in the family. When we are at home again other family members may not adjust so quickly to the changes we’ve made in ourselves because everyone in the family is used to things the way they used to be--they are used to the family structure and this can make it hard to adjust to changes you’ve made, even when the changes are for the better. Everyone is uncomfortable because in many ways no one knows for sure what to expect from each other--the structure has changed.

Your personal progress and ability to STAY ON TRACK is your own responsibility, no matter how your family responds. You can help yourself by anticipating uncomfortable situations. Here are some situations you might encounter. Check the ones that apply to you:

- Everything may seem like it has changed and not always in comfortable ways.
- You and your family may feel like you are learning who each of you are all over again.
- You may want to talk to other family members about the past and they may not want to talk about it. You may want to tell them how you have changed and they may not want to hear it. You may want to tell them how they can help and they may not want to know.
- You may have thought you would fit in better with your family and friends, and you are disappointed to find that you still feel far away from them even though you’ve changed.
- You may start to think you will never live up to THEIR expectations.

You can relax a little knowing that if you are experiencing any of the above, you are not alone, you are not going crazy, and you are still on track. This is a very common experience for many people who have made positive changes in their lives. Keep living responsibly and things will improve. Don’t give up; everyone needs time to adjust to change and that means your family will need time too.
This Time It’s for Real… But...

This time you know it’s for real. You are totally committed for the first time in your life. Your family has been through a lot trying to help you and they are behind you one hundred percent. They believe this truly could be the start of a new life together. But, some of your family members (your spouse or brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, kids, etc.) who think they are “okay and don’t have a problem” continue to party and be involved with irresponsible or illegal activities. Recently, they did some of these activities right in front of you. You’re upset about this and you feel guilty, angry, and scared about the way you feel. You aren’t sure how to handle the situation so you’ve been trying not to think about it. But you already know from past experience that “not thinking” about something is probably the worst thing you can do.

1. Think of a situation like the one above that you are having or could have sometime. Describe it here.

2. Plan A: Choose one of these options to handle the situation. Then do it.
   - Talk to those who are involved in the negative activities and tell them how it affects you.
   - Remove yourself from those involved with these activities (move out)
   - Report those involved with the activities to the proper authorities.
   - Tell your counselor or someone who can offer you sound advice.
   - I want to try my own idea which is to:
     _____________________________________________________________

3. If plan A does not solve the problem choose a Plan B. What is your Plan B? Write it here.

4. If Plan A and B do not solve the problem what will be your Plan C?
Thinking Journal

[Blank lines]

In the first column check one category that best describes how you are thinking today according to the mark you made on the continuum above. In the second column add the total of all categories for each day so far.

Write your name or put a mark on the continuum that best shows where your thinking is today.

Today:

--- Responsible thinking

--- Irresponsible thinking

--- Arrestable thinking

--- Extreme (Arrestable) thinking

Total so far:

--- Responsible thinking

--- Irresponsible thinking

--- Arrestable thinking

--- Extreme (Arrestable) thinking
Friendship and Fitting In
Dealing with Loneliness and Fitting In

You've left your old ways and the old crowd behind you, and now you are bored and LONELY. You've made some new friends, but nobody really close. You wish you had someone close, maybe even someone to spend the rest of your life with. You feel desperate and helpless. When you meet someone who might be right--it seems like you always get put off. You can't figure out what's wrong. You think maybe you are being too honest, or maybe you seem too uptight, or too eager. You feel dumb sometimes, like you don't know what to talk about in order to fit in. The more you hang around with new friends, the more they seem to be phony with each other even though they have lots of good times together. You feel hurt and maybe a little angry about it all. It's so frustrating, like having to wear clothes that are too tight, you feel like you can't breathe or be yourself.

Fitting in with others and making friends takes time. It helps to know what kind of friendships you want to have and with who. Then it helps to know what it takes to make those friendships happen.

There are three levels of friendships.

Acquaintance Level -- Someone you know because you have met them, and you take time to speak to them, but you are not close to them.

Buddy Level-- Someone you know a lot better than an acquaintance. You know something about their personality and who they are based on your experiences while getting to know them.

Close Level -- Someone you know on a deep level. Someone you are committed to and share with deeply about yourself and the details in your life and they share the same things with you.

Make a list of responsible healthy people you know who you would like to have as friends or who are already your friends. Put an “A” next to those who are “Acquaintances,” a “B” next to those who are your “Buddies,” and a “C” next to those who are “Close friends.”
The Influence of Friends

Whether we choose to admit it or not, our friends and the people we associate with on a daily basis affect almost every decision we make. Let’s say, for example, that you are walking down the street with some of your friends and you begin to pass a bar where you used to hang out. You already realize that alcohol has become a major problem in your life and you have made a decision to quit the habit of drinking, but one of the “friends” says they have some money and they will buy everyone a drink — just one, it won’t hurt anything, and you can see some of your old “friends” inside!—You know the story. You have to make a decision now, and your decision will reflect the amount of influence your friends have on you.

1. List your current friends that you must be careful of:

2. List some places that you can begin to look for some better friends:

3. List some positive things that you and your friends can do together:
Thinking Journal

In the first column check one category that best describes how you are thinking today according to the mark you made on the continuum above. In the second column add the total of all categories for each day so far.

Write your name or put a mark on the continuum that best shows where your thinking is today.

Today:

- Responsible thinking
- Irresponsible thinking
- Arrestable thinking
- Extreme (Arrestable) thinking

Total so far:

- Responsible thinking
- Irresponsible thinking
- Arrestable thinking
- Extreme (Arrestable) thinking
Employability

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Control on the Job

1. List everything you think you have control over at work and the reason you think it is yours to control. (If you are unemployed, list what you think you should have control over if you were employed in the job of your choice.)
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.
   6.
   7.

2. Explain what you would do if someone (like your boss) took away your control over any of those things and gave that control to someone else. What would you think? How would you feel? What would you do? Answer these questions for each area you listed above in number 1.
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you think?</th>
<th>What do you feel?</th>
<th>What do you do?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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Responding to Criticism on the Job

1. A coworker criticizes you in a sarcastic, unfair way and other coworkers laugh.

   What do you think ________________________________________________
   What do you feel ________________________________________________
   What do you do __________________________________________________

2. Your boss makes unfair demands of you and accuses you of not working hard enough.

   What do you think ________________________________________________
   What do you feel ________________________________________________
   What do you do __________________________________________________

3. Your friends make fun of your new job saying they can make a better living stealing and selling illegal drugs.

   What do you think ________________________________________________
   What do you feel ________________________________________________
   What do you do __________________________________________________