

B.COM (ENTREPRENEURSHIP)

Semester II

Foundation Course - II (Life Skills & Self Management)

– Unit 1

1.

Practice consciousness Engineering

1.1. Computational thinking meets personal growth:

Where We Learn How to Accelerate Our Growth by Consciously Choosing What to Accept or Reject from the Culturescape

Conscious engineering is like upgrading the software of your computer every so often. It is unlikely that you still use Windows 95 or the first iOS mobile operating system. Instead, we upgrade our computers and devices to make them run faster and more efficient. You need to do the same for your consciousness and your mind. Computational thinking trains you to look at problems from all angles—to break down problems into processes and parts (decomposition), spot patterns (pattern recognition), and solve them in a very logical, linear fashion (algorithms). The goal is to come up not only with a solution but also with one that is replicable, meaning that anyone—a man, woman, or child from India, Malaysia, or North America—could get the same results. Computational thinking makes you highly logical—and a very good problem solver. It is what gives programmers and hackers their edge.

To become extraordinary, we have to keep in mind that there are some rules, which are of no use in today's life. According to our own thinking, we have to filter some things in our mind whether to accept or reject. Imagine that you are in a room with many people. You are listening to their conversation like what is the best way to be successful, what should you wear or what type of people to keep distance from. Now if you do not know much, then you understand everything about them right because you also think like ordinary people. You are also a part of the crowd like the rest. If you really want to be an extraordinary, you have to wake yourself up. This is where

Conscious Engineering works. This is the process for making your own bubble. You are still in the same room. Of course, you still live in the same world but you can create your own world in it. Conscious Engineering means building your own way of thinking. This means breaking those rules, which are stopping you from moving forward.

If so, then it would be extraordinary in the true sense. Conscious engineering is such a thing that you will create the rules yourself to run your life according to your own. You will have a choice in your hand so that you can avoid being a victim of the judgmental nature of others. If you have conscious engineering then you can do whatever you want, you can wear whatever you like. You can

make friends with whomever you want. Your consciousness is like a computer that needs to upgrade its operating system. Years ago, there used to be Windows 95, today you will definitely have Windows 10.

Upgrading is very important so that this computer can run better and faster. In the same way, your consciousness also continues to evolve. Windows 95 is like an old thinking but you can upgrade yourself to Windows 10 if you want. Engineer such Beliefs in your life so that life becomes better. Because you know very well that Windows 95 is now outdated, it no longer works, so why are you still using it?

- **An operating System for human consciousness: (Your models of reality)-Hardware (Systems for living) Software**

We often like to think of the human brain as analogous to computer hardware, with the mind or consciousness as the software or operating system. Our brains are operating systems. When thinking of the physical organ as hardware with thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and preconceptions constituting the software that evokes our daily life experiences.

Since you were born, you have accumulated beliefs. These beliefs are what shape your personality and your perception of the world like religion, politics, marriage, and education. While these beliefs are significant in shaping who you are, they can be changed as you adopt new models that serve you better. These models of reality are essentially the hardware of your life, and with hardware comes software as well. So what is the software of your life? These are simply your systems for living, in other words, your habits. The way you eat, exercise, work, and deal with money are all a part of your software that determines how you utilize your hardware. For instance, say your hardware and model of reality states that killing animals is wrong, then your software and system of living would guide you to adopt a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle.

Using our computer analogy, think of your models of reality as your hardware. Want a faster machine or a better resolution monitor? Just swap the older model and replace it with the latest model. Need more space? Replace your 250 terabyte hard drive with a 500-terabyte drive. Beliefs are like that, too. When an old belief no longer serves you, you have every right to swap it out. Yet we don't.

Replacing outdated models of reality is essential. Our models of reality do more than just create our feelings around an event or life in general. To an astonishing extent, they seem to influence the reality of the world that we experience every single day.

What You Think Is What You Get. Our models of reality make us who we are. Our beliefs about life, love, work, parenting, our bodies, our self-worth—are often a result of our innate tendency to imitate the people and practices around us. What you think and believe about the world shapes who you are and your experience of the world around you. Change your accepted models of reality, and dramatic changes will happen in your world.

Your Systems for Living (Your Software)

Your habits, or systems for living, are how you put your models of reality into practice. If models of reality are the hardware of the human “machine,” systems for living are the software. They’re your activities and daily habits—for example, how you eat (based on your beliefs about nutrition), how you work (based on your beliefs about what kind of career and work behaviours are acceptable), and how you deal with money (based on your beliefs about the ease of acquiring money or the guilt or honour of having lots of it). There are many others, from how you raise your kids to how you make love, make friends, work out, solve problems, finish a project at work, make a difference in the world, and have fun.

Systems of living are easy to acquire. You can always learn new ones. The problem is that our Industrial Age school system hasn’t done a very good job of keeping us up to date with the best systems for functioning in the world. Nobody taught us optimal ways to exercise, love, parent, eat, or even to speed-read or improve longevity. I think of them like apps you can easily download and update, intended for specific purposes or to solve specific problems. Not working? Download the new version that fixes old bugs. Found a better one? DELETE. The trick is recognizing what systems you’re running and doing enough self-checks to quickly identify the ones you need to upgrade.

Conscious Engineering means building your own way of thinking. This means breaking those rules, which are stopping you from moving forward.

- What if you find your own way to success?
- What if you become a famous photographer or an actor?

If so, then it would be extraordinary in the true sense. Conscious engineering is such a thing that you will create the rules yourself to run your life according to your own. You will have a choice in your hand so that you can avoid being a victim of the judgmental nature of others. If you have conscious engineering then you can do whatever you want, you can wear whatever you like.

- **The limitations of Today's models of Reality and Systems for living**

Our current models and systems have three limitations:

1. *Our models of reality are programmed by the world we grew up in.*

It's essential to recognize that our beliefs and mindsets are not peripheral, but central to health and behaviour. Culture plays an important role in molding us into the people we are today. It creates an environment of a shared belief, way of thinking, and method interacting among that group of people. It is dynamic and constantly changing across time. The culture you are born into will shape your eating behaviour, such as what you eat, when you eat, and even how you eat. It will influence the clothes you choose to wear and the sports you play. Social norms set forth by your culture will determine how you interact with family members, friends, and strangers.

What we see as our culture is really nothing more than a quirk of history. It's not necessarily right or wrong. Our culture is the result of thousands of years of ideas emerging, clashing, and dissolving, battling for dominance. In many ways it took form merely by imitation and chance. Yet we cling to our culture, both the good and the bad, as if it's the only way of living.

2. *Our models of reality (good or bad) determine our systems for living. In short, bad beliefs create bad habits.*

Many of our systems for living evolved as our culture did—in response to certain beliefs of the time. But in modern times they evolve into habits because of, well, just habit. We've done them for so long we don't even know how we got started. We accept our current systems as “just the way things are,” but look deeper and you'll see that these systems stem from beliefs from the past that you may have absorbed through the culture you were raised in.

Irrational and unhealthy beliefs will prevent you from reaching your greatest potential.

Your healthy beliefs serve you well. But, the unrealistic, self-limiting beliefs you hold onto--and everyone has some unhealthy beliefs--can hold you back from reaching your greatest potential

It's important to acknowledge your core beliefs and examine which ones might be inaccurate and unproductive. Then, you can take steps to let go of the beliefs that are limiting your potential to grow and become successful.

3. *Our modern models and systems are lacking in conscious practices—we're only just beginning to realize the power of our minds.*

Many of our models and systems are rooted in the purely physical aspects of life —what we eat, how we take care of our bodies, beauty regimens, and so on. But until recently, there's been almost no innovation in the systems that improve the way our minds and spirits function.

Just how much of these spiritual experiences and abilities are we lacking in our modern world? Perhaps similar to the Himba tribespeople who have difficulty seeing the color blue, are we blind to certain spiritual experiences?

We're physical beings, and we evolve our physical systems very fast. Think of all the new diet and exercise routines you've heard or read about in just the past year or so. Yet our spiritual evolution is stuck in the past. Many of us are dissatisfied with the dogma of conventional religion; that's not new. But it's only been fairly recently that we've come to realize that the spiritual landscape is vast and varied and offers many options besides participating in your family's religion.

- **Leveling up your inner game**

Your inner game is your mindset.

The inner game that takes place within the mind of a human and is played against such obstacles as fear, self-doubt, lapses in focus, and limiting concepts or assumptions. It's closely related to your confidence and self-esteem. Habits – Are the corner stone of inner game. They make our lives so much easier. There are thousands of habits that we poses and we don't even notice them. They are running on autopilot. You brush your teeth every day, but you don't even consider that an accomplishment, while it is in a sense.

It is impossible to achieve mastery or satisfaction in any endeavor without first developing some degree of mastery of the relatively neglected skills of the inner

game. This is the number one reason, why inner game is so important. Becoming a master of productivity means that all other goals such as: elimination of procrastination, saving time, changing your life, reducing stress and increasing wealth will follow.

Remember.... There is no productivity if you are not feeling good about yourself.

Consciousness engineering isn't just about being happy—though happiness is a wonderful by-product. It's about getting to human 101 and beyond and striving to be at the highest level of human development we can be, so we can fulfill our highest potential and, as the saying goes, leave this world a little better for our having been in it.

The inner game runs the outer game.

Changing a model of reality is a form of growth that often comes from epiphany or insight. It's a sudden awakening or revelation that shifts a belief. Once you adopt a new model of reality that is superior to an older model, you can't go back. It's what happened to me when I moved from seeing work as a job to seeing my work as my calling. Or when someone moves from following a religion to discovering spirituality. Changing a system for living, on the other hand, is a process change. It's a step-by-step upgrade of a given process—as when you learn to go from riding a bicycle to driving a car as a means for mobility. Once you understand the consciousness engineering approach, you can view yourself as a highly tuned operating system ready to install new hardware (models of reality) or new apps (systems for living) when needed. You never get attached to the ones you have because you know newer, better ones are always being discovered. In short, you view yourself as always ready for change and growth.

GIVE UP THE LIMITING MINDSET

It is possible to live a truly abundant life and absolutely have it all if we agree to give up a limiting mindset. We all have self-doubt and feelings of inadequacy and failure...none of us are ever immune to this...the trick is....mastering your inner game. Entrepreneurs are constantly wanting to achieve new levels, not only financially, but emotionally. They seek more and more, but the journey to that is firstly via your internal mindset.

That's before the products and services and the launch strategy.....get the vision first and be super, super clear on what it is you want and what shape it is going to take.

- **How to speed up your Learning rate**

Consciousness engineering primes you to learn and grow much faster than before because it creates a mental map in your brain.

Elon Musk was once asked in a Reddit.com Q&A: “How do you learn so fast?” He replied: “It is important to view knowledge as sort of a semantic tree—make sure you understand the fundamental principles, i.e. the trunk and big branches, before you get into the leaves/details or there is nothing for them to hang on to.”

As you think of your personal growth, think of consciousness engineering as that trunk. The two big branches are models of reality and systems for living. Everything you study in personal growth will either be a model (a new belief about money, for example) or a system (say, a new exercise or diet routine). These things cling to the two big branches.

Once people internalize consciousness engineering, every time they pick up a book to read on personal growth or health, or an autobiography of a great leader, you start to look for model upgrades that you can swap in and new systems you can adopt.

- **The twelve areas of balance**

There are so many talented, creative, smart, and capable people that never quite reach their potential.

We all know someone who grew old, having never achieved fulfillment in an area of their life that fundamentally mattered the most to them. According to recent studies, one of the biggest regrets of those who find themselves at the end of their lives is that they didn't follow their dreams or were scared to follow them.

And that makes sense because most of us will never take the time to figure out what they actually are.

Many of us are so scared to take a step forward into our ideal life because of the inherent fear of failing. So we stay in our comfort zones and allow life to live *us*. We stay the same and avoid transformation. We become pieces of driftwood in the ocean, constantly knocked around by the tide, hoping for the best.

Ready to start your adventure in consciousness engineering? Here goes: When you think of your life and where you want to grow, think holistically. Too many people live lives lacking in balance. They may have great wealth but lousy relationships with their family. Or they may be incredibly fit and healthy but struggle with debt. Or they may have a career filled with achievements but feel heartbroken and lonely. An extraordinary life is balanced on all levels. Thinking holistically will help you make sure you don't end up winning in one area but losing in another.

For each category below, rate your life on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "very weak" and 10 being "extraordinary." Don't think about each item for too long. Often the first impulse—your gut check—is the most accurate.

1. **YOUR LOVE RELATIONSHIP.** This is the measure of how happy you are in your current state of relationship—whether you're single and loving it, in a relationship, or desiring one.
2. **YOUR FRIENDSHIPS.** This is the measure of how strong a support network you have. Do you have at least five people who you know have your back and whom you love being around?
3. **YOUR ADVENTURES.** How much time do you get to travel, experience the world, and do things that open you to new experiences and excitement?
4. **YOUR ENVIRONMENT.** This is the quality of your home, your car, your work, and in general the spaces where you spend your time—even when traveling.
5. **YOUR HEALTH AND FITNESS.** How would you rate your health, given your age, and any physical conditions?
6. **YOUR INTELLECTUAL LIFE.** How much and how fast are you growing and learning? How many books do you read? How many seminars or courses do you take yearly? Education should not stop after you graduate from college.
7. **YOUR SKILLS.** How fast are you improving the skills you have that make you unique and help you build a successful career? Are you growing toward mastery or are you stagnating?
8. **YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE.** How much time do you devote to spiritual, meditative, or contemplative practices that keep you feeling connected, balanced, and peaceful?

9. YOUR CAREER. Are you growing, climbing the ladder, and excelling? Or do you feel you're stuck in a rut? If you have a business, is it thriving or stagnating?
10. YOUR CREATIVE LIFE. Do you paint, write, play musical instruments, or engage in any other activity that helps you channel your creativity? Or are you more of a consumer than a creator?
11. YOUR FAMILY LIFE. Do you love coming home to your family after a hard day's work? If you're not married or a parent, define your family as your parents and siblings.
12. YOUR COMMUNITY LIFE. Are you giving, contributing, and playing a definite role in your community?

Reality Trends

- **Rewrite your Models of Reality**

Where We Learn to Choose and Upgrade Our Beliefs. Our beliefs are like unquestioned commands, telling us how things are, what's possible and impossible and what we can and cannot do. They shape every action, every thought, and every feeling that we experience. As a result, changing our belief systems is central to making any real and lasting change in our lives.

Our models of reality lie below the surface. Often we do not realize we have them until some intervention or contemplative practice makes us aware.

Our models of reality are often unknown to us. Some models we know we have. For example, I know I believe in the importance of having a calling, in the power of gratitude, and in being kind to the people I work with. But we also have models of reality embedded deep within that we're mostly unaware of. What you know you believe is much smaller than what you don't know you believe.

Much of growing wiser and moving toward the extraordinary is really about becoming aware of the models of reality that you carry with you without realizing it.

"So many of us are leading limited lives not because we have to but because we think we have to."

Where does this belief of "I am not enough" and other limiting models of reality come from? For most of us, they come from our childhood.

- **Why are we having low –self esteem**

Self-esteem refers to a person's evaluation of his/her worth. The best-known form is global self-esteem: general, dispositional, and consciously accessible self-evaluation. Psychologists have argued that self-esteem is important because it signals how well accepted or culturally valued one is. Accordingly, people are motivated to seek and maintain high self-esteem using diverse strategies. Most people have relatively high self-esteem, although levels vary across the life span and depend on experiences of interpersonal acceptance.

We all have an innate sense of who we are: our self. Not only do we possess a highly elaborated cognitive self-concept, but we also hold a highly accessible affective sense of how skilled, lovable, and worthy we are as a person. This global evaluation of one's worth is known as self-esteem. Self-esteem is typically viewed as a continuous dimension ranging from high to low: people with high self-esteem feel very positive about themselves, whereas those with low self-esteem feel ambivalent or uncertain about themselves. Truly negative self-evaluations or self-hatred is unusual and typically found only in clinical populations.

Self-esteem exists because of human beings' fundamental need to belong. In evolutionary history, acceptance by one's social group was essential for survival, and so self-esteem developed as a gauge to index one's level of social acceptance.

Self-Image is how you see yourself. This may be how you see yourself physically or your opinion of who and what you are which is normally called self-concept. It is important as it affects your self-esteem and confidence.

“The only thing that's keeping you from getting what you want is the story you keep telling yourself.”

- **The burden of disempowering models of reality that we inherited:**

We inherit all kinds of things from our parents, grandparents, great grandparents...

We inherit their skin color, eye color, and physical traits. We inherit their propensities for certain health conditions. We often inherit their physical belongings: photos, heirlooms, and keepsakes. And, whether we are conscious of it or not, we can also inherit their beliefs.

With much of the stuff that gets passed down to us through our families, we don't have a say in what we are given. We don't get to choose the color of the hair we're born with, or our whether or not we'll have our grandmother's nose. Similarly, we also inherit personality traits and beliefs from our ancestors that shape parts of who we are.

Sometimes we inherit positive qualities and beliefs from our ancestors – for example we were gifted with our great-grandfather's sense of humor, resilience, or strong work ethic. These are heirlooms; we can nurture these qualities in ourselves to bring richness and value into our lives.

It is probably safe to assume that we all have parts of us that carry Legacy Burdens. We all have ancestors who went through difficult experiences and – through hardship – took on some difficult beliefs such as: *“Resources are scarce – I won't have enough.”* *“Other people will hurt me.”* *“It's not safe to be who I am.”* Those beliefs are the burdens. When they get passed down the family line from one generation to the next, we call them Legacy Burdens.

If a part of us has inherited such a belief, we might experience irrational fears or strong emotions that don't make sense based on our own lived experience. Or we might have a recurring thought in our head that reminds us of something a grandparent used to say but doesn't match with our personal beliefs.

Many of us are constantly striving to grow professionally and personally in our lives. What you tell yourself is what you believe. This can play a big role in how you see the world and how you feel.

Open your mind and you will discover a belief that's preventing you from being successful. This is also known as limiting beliefs.

Identify, Reframe, And Move Forward

We all have limiting beliefs that stop us from achieving our dreams or even our everyday goals. In order to identify and change those beliefs, you need to work on your self-awareness muscle. The secret is to be accountable and take responsibility for the beliefs you created for yourself.

To discover your limiting beliefs, think about the things you would like to achieve but aren't currently working towards. Then look for the justification you find for not doing said thing. This justification is usually in the "why" of the sentence. It's easier said than done, trying to unpick such limiting beliefs. Speaking to trusted friends, family or mentors can be a really valuable approach here.

- **The meaning making machine in the head**

Most of us have our own versions of disempowering beliefs. Beliefs about the way we look, about our relationship with money, about our self-worth. These beliefs can come from unexpected sources: a bullying teacher, overhearing a conversation between parents or other authority figures, or the attention (or lack thereof) from people we're attracted to.

As we believe these things to be true, they become true. All of us view the world through our own lens, colored by the experiences, meanings, and beliefs we've accumulated over the years. It's as if we have a meaning-making machine in our minds that kicks in and creates Brules about every experience we have. So, the kids tease me and call me names.

This means I must be ugly. Never mind the fact that a more likely explanation is that those kids were simply being kids, and children sometimes make fun of others.

The meaning-making machine never sleeps. It runs during childhood and in adulthood, too: while on a date, dealing with your mate and your kids, interacting with your boss, trying to close a business deal, getting a raise (or not), and much more.

We add meanings to every situation we see and then carry these meanings around as simplistic and often distorted and dangerous models of reality about our world. We then act as if these models are laws.

While the bad news is that our models of reality can cause stress, sadness, loneliness, and worry, the good news is that we can upgrade them. When we swap in optimized models that work better, we dramatically improve our lives.

HOW OUR BELIEFS AFFECT OUR LOOKS AND OUR HEALTH

Plain and simple: your beliefs affect the functioning of the trillions of cells in your body. Your thoughts trigger chemical messengers in your brain, which in turn trigger your cells to take action.

A stressful thought, a belief, creates a chemical cascade in your brain that then triggers the release of hormones in your body, causing your body and its cells to experience fear—to think it's under attack—and it has to either flee the situation or fight back immediately. Your body hears everything your brain says, and it reacts accordingly. And if your brain is full of a lot of stressful and negative beliefs, your body is in a constant state of fight or flight and is merely trying to survive another attack.

Your body, and its trillions of cells, hears everything your brain says. This is both concerning and empowering. Science shows us that negative and worrisome beliefs predispose your body to illness; positive and hopeful beliefs are healing and curative. Medical research on beliefs shows us that your beliefs can be self-fulfilling prophecies.

Beliefs are basically the guiding principles in life that provide direction and meaning in life. Beliefs are the preset, organized filters to our perceptions of the world (external and internal). Beliefs are like ‘Internal commands’ to the brain as to how to represent what is happening, when we congruently believe something to be true. In the absence of beliefs or inability to tap into them, people feel disempowered.

Beliefs originate from what we hear - and keep on hearing from others, ever since we were children (and even before that!). The sources of beliefs include environment, events, knowledge, past experiences, visualization etc. One of the biggest misconceptions people often harbor is that belief is a static, intellectual concept. Nothing can be farther from truth! Beliefs are a choice. We have the power to choose our beliefs. Our beliefs become our reality.

Beliefs are not just cold mental premises, but are ‘hot stuff’ intertwined with emotions (conscious or unconscious). Perhaps, that is why we feel threatened or react with sometimes uncalled for aggression, when we believe our beliefs are being challenged! When we choose to change our thoughts (bursts of neurochemicals!), we become open and receptive to other pieces of sensory information which was until now blocked by our beliefs! When we change our thinking, we change our beliefs. When we change our beliefs, we change our behaviour.

- **How our beliefs influence others**

Your beliefs can shape your reality not only by influencing your own behavior, but also by influencing other people’s behavior, from close relationship partners to complete strangers. If our beliefs can influence our bodies to such a dramatic degree, what else can they do? Can our beliefs influence the people around us?

Extraordinary minds have models of reality that empower them to feel good about themselves and powerful in shifting the world to match the visions in their minds.

- **Healthier models for ourselves and around us**

Each disempowering model of reality we have is really nothing more than a Brule we've set up for ourselves—and, like any Brule, it should be questioned.

There's an old allegory about a baby elephant that is tied to a fence post. As the baby elephant tugs and pulls, it fails to break the fence or break the rope. Eventually, it gives up and makes peace with its fate. The baby elephant is stuck. But eventually, the elephant grows up and becomes a big, adult elephant with gargantuan legs and a huge tusk and swirly trunk and it could *easily* walk away from the fence if it wanted to. But believing the fence to be some immovable thing, the adult elephant remains tied to it, falsely believing it can never get away.

Limiting beliefs are false beliefs that prevent us from pursuing our goals and desires. Limiting beliefs can keep you from doing important things, like applying for your dream job or finding the relationship you want (or leaving the one you don't want). They can also keep you from doing unimportant things, like trying out that weird Scotch berry ice cream flavour that looks like baby vomit in a cone.

Our beliefs put boundaries and limitations on what we perceive to be reasonable behaviour. Our belief that stealing is wrong limits me from simply stealing the next car that rolls by, Grand Theft Auto-style. This limiting belief is probably a good one to have. Therefore, we can say that not all limiting beliefs are negative. In fact, we need some limiting beliefs in order to, you know, limit us from doing stupid things.

Deep within all of us — in our unconscious beliefs — lies a “Meaning-Making Machine.”

It's a part of our identity that is constantly trying to keep us “safe” by creating meaning around the events and experiences we encounter as we go through life.

The Meaning-Making Machine is particularly active when we're young. As children we create unconscious beliefs and meaning about the world by trying to interpret what we're experiencing with our fresh young minds.

The problem is, much of the meaning we create about the world is based on wrong conclusions. I mean, how wise were we as six-year-olds?

But we then carry these “conclusions” into adulthood not realizing just how much they can cloud our experiences of life. Have you ever wondered where you got your beliefs about money? Or love? Or your health? Or your self-identity?

- **External Models of Reality**

The ability to change the process by which we experience reality is often more valuable than changing the content of our experience of reality.

Bad things happen. That’s the content of reality sometimes. We can’t change that content and not accepting it can be harmful to us. However, do have some control. We *can* change how we react to it. We *can* change what we learn from it.

- **Two tools to Rewire your models of Reality:**

Question 1: Is my model of reality absolute or relative truth? While some things in the world are absolute truths (they hold true for all human beings across every culture—such as the idea that parents must take care of their children when children can’t take care of themselves, or that we all need to eat in order to survive), many things are only relative truth: They’re done differently by different cultures, such as particular ways of parenting, eating, spiritual expression, handling a love relationship, and much more.

Is your model of reality absolute truth or relative truth? If you have a model that isn’t scientifically validated, feel free to challenge it. This is certainly true of religious beliefs. One reason why as a kid I questioned my culture’s rules on eating beef was that I noticed that millions of people all around the world could enjoy eating beef. Why couldn’t I?

- **Upgraded Systems for an upgraded life**

Good software is constantly being updated. It would be ridiculous to still be running Windows 95 when you could be running the latest version. Yet when it comes to our systems for living—our internal software—we run systems that are highly suboptimal. But what if you start viewing your systems for living in much the same way you view the apps you download on your smartphone? When you swap outdated models of reality for empowering ones and pair them

with new systems for applying your new models day to day, your life will improve exponentially—and fast

- **Extraordinary people discover Extraordinarily effective systems**

Extraordinary people don't just have extraordinary models of reality. They strive to ensure that their systems for living—that is, DOING what they do in the world—are well defined, structured, and continuously optimized. We try to upgrade at least one of my systems for living every week, not because I feel like things are always broken but because we know how energizing it is to try something new. It's exciting to think that we can just swap in a new system like downloading a new app.

There's a three-step method for effectively upgrading your systems for living:

1. **THE DISCOVERY PROCESS.** Many people discover new systems from books, conferences, or online courses. Maybe you read about the benefits of a particular approach to weight training. You do some research and decide to incorporate it into your workouts. In a month or two, you assess the results. Or you hear about a new management strategy at a conference and decide to try it with your team and track how it's working. I make it a habit to read nonfiction books on a wide variety of topics that matter to me, such as parenting, work, and exercise, and to continually discover new systems. Think of it like browsing the App Store. It can be fun and enlightening when you find something that seems to work for others and might also work for you.
2. **YOUR REFRESH RATE.** Your refresh rate is how often you upgrade your systems for living. For example, I try to experiment with a new exercise system every year. In 2013, for example, I spent thirty days straight on Les Mills's BODYPUMP. The next year I experimented with Minimum Effective Dose exercises such as Christine Bullock's Total Transformation program. This year I'm trying kettlebells. None of these was randomly chosen. I discovered them after reading books, having conversations with friends who were passionate about fitness, and knowing what my needs were (love handles begone!). I made these changes not necessarily because my previous exercise system was broken but because I simply realized I'm more likely to work out if I switch things up regularly so I don't get bored. It also ensures that I'm working different muscle groups and keeping my whole body fit and healthy.
3. **SET POINTS AND MEASUREMENT.** How effective are your systems for living? Is your new system for living really better than a previous one? We'll

look at ways to measure and maintain the effectiveness of your systems for living as you discover and refresh them. This is the important bit that people often forget—are you measuring the effectiveness of your system? A set point is a level of performance that you do not allow yourself to slip below. For example, I have a waist measurement set point that has kept me at the same waist size for ten years. I measure it by seeing which hole is used when buckling my favorite belt. If I ever go even slightly beyond that set point, I make it a discipline to diet or exercise to get back to my set point. I'm not allowed to buy a new belt. Here's how all three stages come together to allow you to create effective systems for governing your life.

- **The positive psychology of set points**

There's a powerful reason why set points work. It's a natural human tendency to feel that we've failed when we slip from our goals. But with set points, a failure is turned into a challenge. If you can't attain your fifty push-ups, you enact a new goal. Get to fifty-one. You replace the feeling of failure with the positive feeling of striving for a goal. The key is to make the new goal easily achievable. Notice that my set-point correction procedure for push-ups was to turn up the heat from fifty to fifty-one, not to fifty-five or sixty. Setting the bar too high is just punishing; it's unrealistic that you'll make all of that progress in one giant leap. Turning up the heat just a little bit allows you to regain some momentum without setting yourself up to fail. When you correct your set points by aiming slightly higher than before, you can put yourself on a path to constant improvement in every aspect of life.

Extraordinary minds consistently spend time discovering, upgrading, and measuring new systems for living applied to life, work, heart, and soul. They are in a perpetual state of growth and self-innovation.

- **The systems of the future**

Today we do all kinds of things in the morning to clean and prepare our bodies for the day. We brush, shower, spray on cologne, and dress well, all to keep our physical bodies fresh and clean. Yet billions of us wake up each morning feeling worry, stress, anxiety, and fear and don't do anything about it. We assume this is normal, but it's not. Just as we can wash our bodies, so we can have systems to completely "wash" our minds of these debilitating feelings.

We've created a society where it's considered normal to wake up with feelings of stress, anxiety, fear, and worry. But it isn't. These feelings aren't meant to be constant states. They're alarm systems, evolved to alert us to things we need to deal with, not just live with. You're not supposed to hate your work or dread your day. "Happy hour" shouldn't be the drinks you have on Friday to celebrate getting through another week. Instead of taking pills or engaging in unhealthy habits to suppress our feelings, we can install systems to be free of them. What's inspiring is how popular these new systems are proving to be—and how fast and powerful the transformations are. I call these systems transcendent practices. They include exercises on gratitude, meditation, compassion, bliss, and other practices that take you beyond or above the range of normal or merely physical human experiences.

- **How to rule your mind**

Arianna's shift happened on April 6, 2007. She was two years into building the Huffington Post, having incredible success but working herself to the bone. And that's when it hit her that money and power were not the only two metrics for success—there was a third that was not getting nearly enough airtime. She explained to me: When building a start-up, it's easy to buy into the delusion that we have to work around the clock trying to make everything happen. And then, of course, we have lives outside of work as well.

As we were building the Huffington Post, I was taking my older daughter around to check out colleges to see where she wanted to apply. I came back from the college tour and collapsed from burnout, exhaustion, and sleep deprivation. I hit my head on my desk, broke my cheekbone, and needed four stitches on my right eye. As I was going from doctor to doctor to see if there was anything medically wrong with me, I was asking myself all of these questions that we often stop asking when we leave college: "What is a good life? What is success?" And I came to the conclusion that the way we define success, centered only on the two metrics of money and power, is just a very inadequate way to define life. It's like trying to sit on a two-legged stool—sooner or later, we topple over. And that's when I came up with this idea of the third metric of success, which consists of four pillars: well-being, wisdom, wonder, and giving.

Arianna went on to describe her daily systems for living. She spoke about meditation: I don't want just to be effective or productive. I want to be joyful. After eight hours of sleep, I also meditate every morning for at least

twenty minutes. On the weekend, I try to do an hour or an hour-and-a-half. I love it. Then we discussed gratitude: I used to wake up and the first thing I would do was check my smartphone. Now I don't do that. And just taking this time—sometimes it can be literally a minute to just look ahead at my day and fill myself with gratitude for the blessings in my life, and set my intention for the day—it immediately takes away this false urgency that we bring into our lives that creates such unnecessary stress. I love Arianna's message. Her systems for living involve meditation, movement, gratitude, and setting an intention for the day. And that's how one of the most powerful women in the world starts her day. I once polled one of my audiences to learn their biggest challenges with meditation.

Turns out one of the biggest challenges people have with meditation is that they simply can't find the time. I call this the busyness paradox. It's a paradox because meditation actually adds time to your day by optimizing your thinking and creative process to make you more functional. Arianna is busy. She's been named to Time magazine's list of the world's one hundred most influential people and the Forbes ranking of the one hundred most powerful women in the world. Yet she told me: It doesn't take a lot of time. But then I can bring that quality into my day. Things happen in the course of my day, your day, I'm sure everybody's day that are challenging, that require us to deal with problems. So when that happens, as it inevitably does, I am in a place where I can address them without being overreactive, prioritizing what I need to handle right away, and without stressing about bad things happening.

She suggested that you can start with as little as five minutes a day: Eventually you can build it up to twenty minutes, thirty minutes, or more. But even just a few minutes opens the door to creating a new habit and all the many proven benefits it brings, and I have fifty-five pages of scientific endnotes in the book about it. I could probably have written an entire book from the wisdom I learned from Arianna. She is truly an amazing woman who shared many more of the systems she formed as daily habits that make her truly extraordinary.