

## **Chapter 3**

### **STRATEGY**

**Have a plan(s) for realizing your goals**

**Athena teaches us Leadership and Strategy**



## **This Chapter is about Getting the Best Tools/Map/Strategy/Coaching for Results.**

Once you've defined your target, you need an effective and efficient game plan to hit it. In order to close the 'gap' between where you are and where you want to be, you need a proven map (flow-chart), an effective mentor, and *training your drive to action*.

There is a natural cycle of seasons for everything, including nature, human beings and history, that is predictable.

“To everything there is a season”. – Bible

Understanding the four seasons, and recognizing their patterns helps you to further anticipate the road ahead, and take advantage of the season.

By understanding the seasons, you will be able to:

- Understand where the world is today, and anticipate where it is going.
- Understand where you are in your life today, and where you are going in the future.
- Learn how to take advantage of any season.

But remember this: you must do the right thing at the right time. If you do the right thing at the wrong time, you will not be rewarded. If you plant seeds in winter, you are not going to reap the benefits even if you worked hard. You have to be able to recognize and understand the effect of seasons so that you can do the right thing at the right time to reap the benefits.

## The Four Seasons of Life

Spring (21-41 years) You are born and begin to grow. The world is giving you knowledge, experience and opportunities.

Summer (21-41 years) You test, challenge and apply all that you have learned. You find what you believe, and develop your own relationships.

Autumn (42-62 years) You mature and come into your prime. This is the time to reap all that you have sown.

Winter (63-83) This is the final stage of life. It is in winter that people connect deeply, because they need each other to survive.

As you understand more about the interplay of the seasons, it is vital to remember that: The season doesn't determine your experience, it is how you react to the season that determines your fulfillment and success.

As you gain a deeper understanding of the seasons of life, you will begin to notice patterns developing. And with that much more awareness, now you can begin living with less fear.



## **Brainstorming**

The Dictionary describes Brain storming as:

“...a technique used to gather a large quantity of ideas. The ideas generated are geared towards solving a specific problem.... Brainstorming is a commonly used tool amidst academic, researchers and business teams, in which each participant simply states ideas that come to their heads, without passing it through the filters of logic and reasoning, allowing for creativity & originality to express itself”.

You need three items before you're ready to start brainstorming: a pad of paper, a couple of pencils - and a problem.

Credentials, experience, and money are among the most common obstacles in our paths towards realizing our dreams, although there are plenty of examples to prove the opposite.

But now that you have gotten the negativity out and expressed it in your **Hard Times Journal**, you're ready to look at each of those obstacles in a more positive light: as a challenge to your ingenuity. And that change in attitude is as simple as a change in grammar.

“I can't because I don't have X” is a dead end. Your brain can't work with it. To turn it into a form your brain just loves to work with, take that one flat statement and turn it into a pair of leading questions:

1. How can I get it without X?
2. How can I get X?

Either of those questions can be the takeoff point for brainstorming. But it's almost always a good idea to start with question No. 1. Because the point isn't just to get to your goal by any means at all. It's to get you there by the quickest, most direct, most personalized route - one that will get some of the rewards of your goal into your life right away. This is the operative principle to keep in mind throughout your planning. Never take the long road if you can find a shorter one that will get you to the same place.

In the language of goals, this means that the only time to go straight into brainstorming with question No. 2 - "How can I get X?" - is: one, if you're 150 percent sure that X is the only way to your goal (there's really no alternative to medical school if you want to become a doctor); or two, if X itself is something you love for its own sake, like wealth or scholarship or professional standing. Then it's not really an obstacle at all - it's one of your touchstones! With those two exceptions, never assume that conventional "wisdom" is correct until you've tried question No. 1.

You think of all the staid, sensible, obvious ideas first, like scholarships and loans. Then come the "rescue fantasies": someone is going to come riding along in a white HUMMER and carry you away, or appear mysteriously on your doorstep with a check for a million dollars. Being free to give those fantasies a legitimate place on your list brings liberating laughter - and only then do the really audacious, original ideas begin to flow.

OK. You've got a list of ideas for "How to get my goal without X" (or "How to get X"). You wrote down every idea that came along, so some of them are strictly whimsical. Some of them are workable ways of getting to your goal, but not things you think you'd particularly like to do.

The first rule of transition brainstorming, either alone or in a group is: Never throw out any idea until you have asked three questions about it:

1. What is the useful element (or elements) in this idea? (You must find something of value in each one.)
2. How can I (we) get around the impractical elements of this idea? (In other words, instead of being reasons to delete the idea, any snags would become a mini problems list.)
3. What further ideas does this idea suggest?

In final stage of Brainstorming, then there will be a few ideas that look promising. I don't mean the most "possible" ones, I mean the ones that make your heart beat faster. They may still look pretty impossible. Your next job is to pick the one or two best ideas and then start bringing them down to earth. brainstorming brings even the most unreachable goal within reach by breaking big achievements down into human-sized tasks.

There is no goal - I don't care if it's becoming President of the United States in twenty years - that doesn't break down to something as simple as going to the library or the newsstand or picking up the phone.

Almost all goals begin with information-gathering, an act which requires no preparation and very little courage, yet sweeps you right up in the excitement and reality of your goal. Creative goals, like writing a novel or learning to paint, begin with a very modest qualitative and quantitative demand: "Write one bad page" or "Make 5 silly drawings of the cat." Just because these first steps are so tiny, you'll do them.

They'll get you up off your chair and out on your path where the prospect of a huge goal or sub-goal would leave you sitting paralyzed.

## **Flow Charts/ Maps**

Flow charts are easy-to-understand diagrams showing how steps in a process fit together in order to achieve a certain goal from start to finish. Furthermore, the act of mapping a process out in flow chart format helps you clarify your understanding of the process, and helps you think about where the process can be improved.

A flow chart can therefore be used to build a step-by-step picture of the process for analysis, discussion, or communication. Also, by conveying the information or processes in a step-by-step flow, you can then concentrate more intently on each individual step, without feeling overwhelmed by the bigger picture. It is a great tool for helping you realize your goals.

Most flow charts are made up of three main types of symbol:

- Elongated circles, which signify the start or end of a process;
- Rectangles, which show instructions or actions; and
- Diamonds, which show decisions that must be made,

Symbols are connected one to the other by arrows, showing the flow of the process. (*see **General Appendix** for a Sample Flow Chart*)

**Make Your Own “Working Flow Chart” Here:**



**START: You are Here Now.**



## **END: YOU HAVE ACHIEVED THE RESULTS**

You can make several Flow Charts-One for each of your Goals. Your flow chart isn't finished, until all its major branches are broken down to the first steps.

So our next task is to map your flow chart onto time.

That will mean, first of all, setting a target date: an actual day, like January 1, 1981, by which you'd like to have your goal and think you might be able to get it.

Then you will mark a wall calendar with target dates for each major phase or step in your plan, corresponding to each circle on your flow chart, so you have a rough schedule to measure your progress against.

And finally, you'll start assigning the small specific actions that really make it all happen to specific days in your pocket calendar, so that they actually get done, one by one.

### **Scheduling Your First Steps**

Right now you've got your list of first steps to launch you on all the branches of your plan: places to go, people to see, numbers to call, information to look up. Your goal calendar makes it clear to you which of these first steps must take immediate priority and which can wait. What you're going to do now is tack up a list of those immediate priority steps on your (Year) Planning Wall - and then start scheduling them, one by one, into the days of this week, next week, and the week after that.

Choose a night - usually Sunday, on which you meet with yourself and prepare for the entire week ahead. It may take as much as an hour, or even more, but it's vitally important. No sensible business would proceed without planning meetings, and you've got to learn to treat getting what you want as top priority business.

I've picked Sunday night because it fits in with most people's work week.

What you have to do in this world you cannot do alone. Every successful human enterprise is collaboration - a drawing-together of diverse resources and energies to achieve a single end. And you can and should do just that for your goal. So when you've gone as far as you can on your own, it's time for team building.

## **84-day (3 month) Success Journal for an immediately realizable goal.**

*“Keeping a journal will absolutely change your life in ways that you never imagined”. –Oprah Winfrey*

This journal is a super-tool; a way of keeping track of progress and keeping on track, with a *specific goal* such a losing weight, quitting smoking, increasing your sales etc...If you have never kept a journal before, prepare to be amazed with the results. This success will increase your faith that you can achieve any intelligent goal that you set for yourself.

Choose ONE goal that you wish to realize within 84 days:

My Goal:

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Start Date:

End Date:

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**Tick off  each day as it is ‘completed’ here:**

Day 1 , Day 2 , Day 3 , Day 4 , Day 5 , Day 6 ,

Day 7 , Day 8 , Day 9 , Day 10 , Day 11 , Day 12 ,

Day 13 , Day 14 , Day 15 , Day 16 , Day 17 , Day 18 ,

Day 19 , Day 20 , Day 21 , Day 22 , Day 23 , Day 24 ,

Day 25 , Day 26 , Day 27 , Day 28 , Day 29 , Day 30 ,

Day 31 , Day 32 , Day 33 , Day 34 , Day 35 , Day 36 ,

Day 37 , Day 38 , Day 39 , Day 40 , Day 41 , Day 42 ,

Day 43 , Day 44 , Day 45 , Day 46 , Day 47 , Day 48 ,

Day 49 , Day 50 , Day 51 , Day 52 , Day 53 , Day 54 ,

Day 55 , Day 56 , Day 57 , Day 58 , Day 59 , Day 60 ,

Day 61 , Day 62 , Day 63 , Day 64 , Day 65 , Day 66 ,

Day 67 , Day 68 , Day 69 , Day 70 , Day 71 , Day 72 ,

Day 73 , Day 74 , Day 75 , Day 76 , Day 77 , Day 78 ,

Day 79 , Day 80 , Day 81 , Day 82 , Day 83 , Day 84

Every seven days there is a “Review & Renew”, where you will reflect on: The best things that happened, the most challenging things that happened, any new behaviors, what you learned during this week, and what your top priorities for the week ahead will be.

(Photocopy this page 84 times)

**DAY**

(fill in the day 1-84)

**Daily Checklist:**

(These are my suggestions, but you can add your own).

- I did some exercise for 10 minutes (minimum)
- I did diaphragm breathing at least once today
- I meditated on my 'vision-board' today
- I did something nice for someone else today
- I....
- I....
- I....
- I....
- I....
- 
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One positive thing that I noticed today...

What I'm looking forward to tomorrow is...



## Personal Planning System

There are many different approaches to developing and keeping a personal planning system. The key thing is that the method should work to keep you focused on your greatest priorities. A powerful planning and organizing tool contains the following criteria: it is integrated into your life/lifestyle, it is mobile, to always be accessible and personalized, so it exactly suits your needs.

There is a simple process for evaluating whether or not those things upon which you are focused are clearly aligned with what matters most to you.

- 1) Identify your mission and governing values (see chapter
- 2) Identify your most important roles (e.g. Family member, church/community volunteer, friend, mother/father, team leader), and set goals for the week that are aligned with those values and associated with the roles that you have identified.
- 3) Weekly planning.
- 4) Daily planning

NOTE: You may download a free 30-day trial version of the premier productivity software PlanPlus for Microsoft Outlook or PlanPlus for WINDOWS.

## **Coaching on a one-to-one basis**

*Ideally, you really invest in yourself and in your dream by hiring a coach with whom you can 'check-in' with to give an 'account' of what you did this week i.e. every week. [www.alkistis.net](http://www.alkistis.net)*