

SOLIDMAN

strong · present · confident

Pillar Three

Group Exercise #15

Question #5: Where am I going?

Creating the Life You Want

15 WHERE AM I GOING?; CREATING THE LIFE YOU WANT

The pursuit of purity is not about the suppression of lust, but about the reorientation of one's life to a larger goal.—**Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

Adversity introduces a man to himself - **Anonymous**

Creating the Life You Want

The next two exercises lead you through answering Core Question #5, “Where am I going?”.

This final question helps you to discover your purpose in life and to begin to create the life you want. Now that you have discovered your True Source, identified your True Name, and understand more clearly what you Need and Want in life, it is time to take this on the road.

A man has been designed for expansiveness; to engage and penetrate the world with life, love and goodness. The way that we do this is unique to each man. The purpose of your life and design of your personal constitution is your own.

This ongoing journey is an exciting excursion into your soul to discover your passions about how you would like to influence your world.

Since up to this point our energy has been used up trying to please others or prove ourselves, we have never had the chance to look deeply at our purpose and how we would like our lives to go.

This is a beautiful opportunity to begin to develop your life into what you want it to be. You have the power and ability to follow those passions that have been deeply hidden in your internal places for way too long.

Core Practice #5 – Creating the Life You Want

The practice of creating involves becoming intentional in your life. You will no longer have the posture of a victim and you will break free from shame and penance. You will become a creator.

☞ You're not a victim, you're a creator.

You will take an active role in your life in creating the life you want and becoming the man you want to be. Creating is actively and intentionally creating an environment of adventure, safety, love and acceptance and creating connected, honest relationships, all while living a life in strong masculinity.

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Creating will give you the strength to develop your career and to become more intentional about your purpose and life goals. Creating the life you want allows you a wonderful opportunity to look deeply into your hopes and dreams.

You will be able to discover your purpose or calling in life. With a clear purpose you will be able to engage with more influence than you ever thought possible.

You will begin to build a life with men who are co-travelers on the path with you. Developing your Mt. Rushmore is a huge part of this work; at least four men who are on the journey with you.

Let's get started on answering these questions and making these shifts in your life.

Creating

When God created, it is said he created “Ex Nihilo”. In Latin that means “out of nothing”. There was nothing there, no resources to build from and no matter or energy to start things off. He made something out of nothing. He started with his imagination and made it so.

Great works of art and literature are created in the same fashion. Michelangelo envisioned David in the stone, and then made him appear. Tolkien created an entire world with culture, history and language when he imagined Middle Earth and then wrote it into existence.

This happens with family as well. The love my wife and I have came together to create our three great kids out nothing. They were not there and did not exist without our act of creation, a fun act at that!

Our ability to create out of nothing is our greatest challenge and one of humankind's most Godly endeavors. Every man has been called to be like God in creation, to create something out of nothing.

☞ **If we are not creating, we are not living.**

Creation Core Concepts

Creating requires desire, imagination, risk, ownership and intention. Creating also requires that we are able to overcome powerlessness, passivity and victimhood. We must claim an influential driving role in our own lives and make changes we want in order to have the life that we desire.

Solid Man® Integrity Group**Wanting and Desire**

In order to create you must be aware of the deep desires and wants that exist in your heart. Your emotional processes will guide you toward knowledge of what you want. Spend time in contemplation considering what you want in your life.

What do you desire? What do your longings tell you that you would love to have in your life?

Imagination and Vision

Your imagination is one of the most important parts of creating. You will need to visualize what you want and where you want to be in your life. This is sometimes called your dreams.

What do you dream of? What do you imagine would be the life you want?

If life was the best you could imagine, what would be going on?

Risk and Fearlessness

Often, the reason we fail to achieve our dreams and quit pursuing is fear. We become afraid of not getting what we dream of, so we give up in the face of resistance. To create we must fearlessly face the risk of failing. If we don't risk it and give it a good attempt, we'll never have a chance of achieving our dreams.

In what ways does fear paralyze you?

What risks do you wish you had taken?

Ownership and Responsibility

Boyish men defer responsibility to others and fail to take ownership of your own life. Ownership requires you to take the lead in your own life to make things happen.

Ownership calls you out to do things, to take action and never have any excuses. It is taking accountability for my actions, whether good or bad. Accountability is one of the muscles of creating.

Where have you deferred to others? How could you take more ownership in your life?

How have you kept yourself from accountability?

Intention and Action

Creating requires intention or the active movement toward a goal. You have to have a plan. You have to know what steps you will need to take in order to accomplish your goal. You will need to be active and undaunted in your movement. Creating takes drive.

Jean Luc Picard, the captain of the Enterprise from Star Trek the Next Generation had a line. Once the plan was made, he would say, “Make it so.” His decisiveness and intention is a great model for us as we begin to create the life we want.

What has kept you from making it “So”?

What do you need in order to be intentional?

Some Creation Muscle Categories

Leading – In order to create you must be able to be the leader of your own life. You must take the steering wheel and drive the bus of your own life. Leading requires you to want. You can’t lead if you don’t want. You must gain the ability to discover your wants/desires and make them happen. Many men believe it is selfish to want. Maybe, but it is legitimate selfishness. If you consider others in the equation (creating environments of love, safety and caring) you’re good to go. You cannot lead by deferring to others.

In what ways are you driving the bus and/or how are you deferring leadership?

Penetration – This may seem like an odd category, but stay with me. A man has literally been designed to penetrate. Physically your body, especially your penis, is made for penetrating. Penetration is the process of moving into open space and creating life. Creating life is a profound privilege.

 **Penetrate the world and plant seeds of life!**

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Many men immaturely misuse this sacred aspect of masculinity by abusing others for pleasure or objectification, bringing pain and “death” instead of life. Solid masculinity is designed to enter the world and plant seeds of life and goodness.

How have you used this sacred privilege for abuse?

How will you use it for life?

Presence – Men have been designed to be present. Being present is to be in the moment, not regretting the past or worrying about the future. Presence requires physically and emotionally filling the space you are presently in.

Presence requires openness, strength and confidence. You know when a solid man enters the room and present. Everyone knows he is there. Our challenge is to observe internal and external realities in real time, right now. Eckhart Tolle says nothing else exists, but the present.

In what ways do you get caught up in your brain or with worry or regret?

Voice – Our ability to verbally speak is one of our most influential gifts. A man who speaks life into his world through his voice is rare and extraordinary.

Our voice has the ability to create life in beautiful and spectacular ways. Many men have been silenced by fear and shame, thus losing significant pathways to creating.

☞ **Your voice is the most powerful part of you.**

Our voice is the primary tool for blessing others, creating connection, setting boundaries, telling stories, and speaking truth. It is easily the most powerful part of any man.

How has your voice been silenced?

How can you begin to speak more clearly?

Integrity – In order to influentially create change in your world you must have integrity. Not just the ability to be honest, but to have the inner structure, wholeness and solid that is required to live a life of freedom, where you are owned by no one.

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When we forget who we really are and allow ourselves to be controlled or owned by someone or something, we absolutely lose our ability to create the life we desire. Our frame of integrity is the foundation of freedom to create.

In what ways have you lost integrity or allowed someone or something to own you?

Obstacles to Creating

Many of us have lost our ability to influence our world, to actually make changes. Here are some examples of various obstacles or pitfalls where we lose creative ability.

Powerlessness and Victimhood

In order to have influence in your life you will need to overcome powerlessness and victimhood in your life. If those still cling to you, you'll need to get that resolved before you can begin creating the life you want.

Powerlessness is a posture where you have limited influence over your own choices and direction of your life. It is taking a one-down posture where you neither recognize your abilities to influence nor your internal strength. Since every man has strength, powerlessness is a choice to roll over in submission.

How can you overcome powerlessness?

Victims believe they are being thwarted intentionally by the world or people. Victimhood is feeling like everyone is out to get me or they have already got me. The victim waits for the other shoe to drop with a posture of frozenness and pity molded with apathy and despair.

Victimhood is a posture of being “done to”, quite counter to most concepts of masculinity. Rather than doing life, life is done to them. The masculine does life. Victimhood does not look good on any man.

☞ **Victim is opposite of creator.**

Manhood is not the opposite of victimhood; a victimizer, but a strong protector of innocence and peace.

How have you had a victim posture/belief?

How can you defeat victimhood?

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This is actually one of the most devious obstacles to creating since it is a significant part of our culture in America. Americans are trained to be consumers. It is a significant part of our economic system.

Remember what we were told after 911? “Don’t let the terrorists win, keep on spending.” To beat this idea we must recognize it and intentionally be different to take the posture of a creator and not a consumer.

“Boys are consumers. When they’re young, their parents set up their experiences for them; their only job is to sit back and enjoy it. They live in their parents’ house, eat their parents’ food, and use their parents’ stuff. Their free time is used in amusement. They consume their parents’ resources and are passive and taken care of. They make little to no impact on the world and have little ownership of their lives. They are dependent. The problem is that men aren’t outgrowing this passive role. Instead of creating, they go on consuming. They may not depend on Mom and Dad anymore (although sadly, they often do), but they’re still dependent on *stuff* for their happiness. Consuming clothes, movies, video games, cars, parties, fast food, and even travel to make them happy. They live only for their own pleasures and amusements.” – Brett McKay, *The Art of Manliness*

A consumer is a user. He is an objectifier. He uses others only for his own pleasure. He absorbs the energy and life from others for his own use. He takes.

The posture of a creator is 180° different than a consumer. The Creator gives life. He creates life. He provides for and protects others. He creates and holds spaces of safety, conversation and sacred moments. He makes beauty out of nothing.

In what ways has consumerism had a hold on your life?

How can you keep consumerism from defining you?

Passivity

Simply stated passivity is the opposite of presence and penetration. Passivity waits for everyone else to make the move or do the right thing. A passive man has taken a passive posture in his world and in his life. A creator has taken an active, engaging role in his world.

How can you be active not passive?

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This is very similar to passivity, but not in our actions, but how we use our voice. As I said earlier our voice is strong. Silence is when we do not use our voice to do what it has been designed for.

The vast majority of us have experienced fathers who were too silent, not telling us about who we truly are and capable of. Fathering has suffered significantly because of silence.

Some have also said that the silence of Adam is the main element of the Fall of Mankind in Genesis. Adam was right there with Eve when she was tempted and choosing, and he said nothing. He could have said, “Wait a minute, is that true?” or “Hold on, that’s not what God said!” Anything would have worked, even just simply, “No.”

Adam’s silence is a profound metaphor for all men since then as well. The more we are silent, the more unhealthy behavior goes on in the world. The more we are silent, the less truth is known and more lies are believed.

Earlier I talked some about how powerful our voice is. It is then true how devastating our silence is. Both silence and passivity have been referenced as the key principle that allowed the Nazi Holocaust to transpire. Millions of good Germans remained silent and passive during Hitler’s rise to power. Not all were silent, but too many were. Their tongues were owned by fear.

In what ways can you beat silence in your life?

How would your voice be a powerful part of creating the life you want?

Shame

The secrecy that comes from feeling like a mistake, that you feel unworthy, is profound. Shame shuts every part of your creativity down. It keeps you silent, frozen and pathetic. It disintegrates you. To be a creator you must defeat Shame in your life. Still have questions about shame?, go back to Chapter 3 and take some more time on that.

How have you begun to kill Shame in your life?

Resistance

There is something else that shuts us down. It comes out in many various forms. It is Resistance. Anything that keeps us from moving is Resistance. You must find your unique sources of Resistance and destroy them.

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Sometimes Resistance comes in the form of obstacles. Your obstacles often are what makes you strong and confident. Don't work too much to destroy them, but work to develop the strength to overcome them.

Resistance is similar to the void so treat it the same way; push through, embrace it, acknowledge it and keep going.

What are your manifestations of Resistance?

What obstacles have you had that seemed like life was thwarting you, but only made you stronger?

Group Presentation; Making your Creation Plan

Creating the life you want requires you to consider what you want in core parts of your life; Personally, Relationally, Physically, Vocationally and Spiritually. Take the time you need to consider, dream and plan. Don't rush through this. Actually this will something you modify and remodify for the rest of your life.

Personally

Personal areas of life have to do with your identity, power, maturity, purpose, character, integrity and growth. Consider who you are, what you want to be, what your calling is and how you want to move through life. In what ways do you want to live, influence and be?

What do I want for myself personally?

What will I do to make it happen?

Relationally

Relational categories have to do with your marriage, your children, family of origin, friends, co-workers, faith community and community at large. How will you build your Mt. Rushmore? What would you love to see as you interact and influence your world?

What do I want relationally and what will I do to make it happen?

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These areas of life have to do with health, sleep, nutrition, check-ups, exercise; generally anything that has to do with self-care. This would include sexual health, aging categories, fashion, cosmetic concerns, etc.

What do I want physically?

What will I do to make physical components happen?

Vocationally

This is about your work and career. Include categories like retirement, finances and travel/leisure.

What do I want for my career?

What will I do to make it happen?

Spiritually

This is about what do you want with your faith and spiritual growth.

What do I want Spiritually?

What will I do to make it happen?

Obstacles

What are my main obstacles and resistance I will face as I begin to create the life I want?

What will I do to break through or overcome those obstacles?

Solid Man® Integrity Group**Creating Action Plan**

What are the first three things I will begin to implement to start creating the life I want?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What are the next three things I will begin to consider as I continue to create the life I want?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What are three dreams I have that I would love to have in my life as I create the life I want?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Books and Resources

The War of Art by Steven Pressfield. This is the book about facing Resistance as you develop your abilities of creating.

*The Power of TED**, by David Emerald. This short book brilliantly outlines how the different mindset of victim and creator makes completely differing worldviews.