

# Gain Clarity on Your Story in 5 Simple *(but not easy)* Steps



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## **All journeys start somewhere.**

All great journeys have a beginning. A time and place which the traveler comes from. An environment that has shaped his life up to the present. A background that has molded her into the person ready to move forward into a new future.

Your journey is no different. You have a complex and beautiful mixture of motivations, actions, and events that have shaped you into the person that you are right now.

Here is a 5-step guide to help you begin to learn (and own) your story.



## Step 1

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# Create a Major Event History

The first thing to do is begin creating a Major Events Timeline.

This is a way to document the events in your life that had a formative effect on you. Whether it was emotionally, physically, spiritually, or mentally, list the moments throughout your life that made you who you are today.

### **A few tips:**

- Create columns -- 0-10 years old (childhood), 11-18 years old (early-mid adolescence), 19-25 years old (late adolescence), 26-35 years old (early adulthood), etc.
- List any and all events that you think were formative to who you are today. Deaths of family members, losing your dog, going to a new school, moving to a new city, parents get divorced.
- Be sure to include positive moments throughout your life. These are just as major & influential. Moments like the birth of a sibling, or getting a new dog, a memorable vacation.
- Include decisions you made or actions you took that proved to be pivotal in your life...either positively or negatively
- Include any firsts that seem important. Your first kiss, your first time having sex, your engagement & wedding, your first concert, your first speeding ticket, etc.



## Step 2

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# Identify Your Motivations

You have mapped out your past. You have a grasp on what events, actions, and choices had a formative effect on who you are as a person today. Now what?

**Pause, and consider why you are doing this work right now?**

- Is it to impress others? Is it to bolster your reputation as a good person? Is it in the hopes of finding an effective leadership strategy?
- Do you genuinely want to develop as a person? Do you want to radiate grace and peace in all things, not for any sort of recognition, but for the sheer joy and freedom that kind of life promises?
- Is it a mixture of the two...are your motivations both pure and self-serving at the same time?

**Before you go any further, honestly consider your motivations for doing this work.**

**Perhaps journal about what you discover.**



## Step 3

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# Recognize Patterns

Now that you can take a 30,000 ft. view of your life, what do you notice? Are there any patterns of behavior? Are there clear roadblocks that are hindering you from moving forward towards your goals?

### **Some possible things to notice:**

- A pattern of anxiety & stress around work, or perfectionism and procrastination.
- A codependent relationship to other people and their opinion of you.
- A penchant for a bit too much drinking after work
- A habit of pornography or promiscuity that you're constantly trying to hide or explain away
- An ongoing challenge with food, either eating too much or not enough.
- A history of having a short temper and a tendency to rage that is a growing concern to others and yourself.
- Perhaps you just read all of the above short-comings and immediately recognized them as problems within other people you know, yet your own shame & fear of failure keeps you from recognizing any deficiency within yourself.



## Step 4

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# Frame Your Narrative

The goal and purpose of examining your life history, considering your motivations, and recognizing patterns is not simply to produce a sequential list of life events, but to gain clarity on your life story.

Pick the highlights from the various columns from your Major Event History and start crafting your narrative. You don't have to write a memoir here, just see the general arc of your story from beginning to end.

### **A few helpful tips for you:**

- Look at your Major Events History. Choose 1-3 significant moments from each age bracket (column). There should be no more 10-15 selections. These events will function as the framework for your narrative; the plot points of your life story.
- Remember, this is not a piece of journalism, but a narrative. While recounting the formative events that you chose from your Major Event History, it may be helpful to allude to the internal motivations that you have examined and how they're related to the string of events in your story.



## Step 5

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# Share It

You no doubt gained a lot of clarity about yourself, but the real magic happens when you share your story with someone else.

The point is not to impress others with your writing and storytelling ability. It is not to shock people by regaling them with stories from your past. The point of crafting your narrative testimony well is so that others may hear their own stories within yours, and as a result find wisdom, healing, and growth for themselves.







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# Let's be honest, this isn't your typical quick & easy life hack.

This is the kind of work someone does because they want to live a powerfully meaningful life. This is the kind of work someone does because they want to maximize their God-given potential.

**And the impact is exponentially increased when this work is done with someone who has been there before. A knowledgeable guide is always going to be more helpful than a map alone.**

So if you're going to do this transformative work, do it right.

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