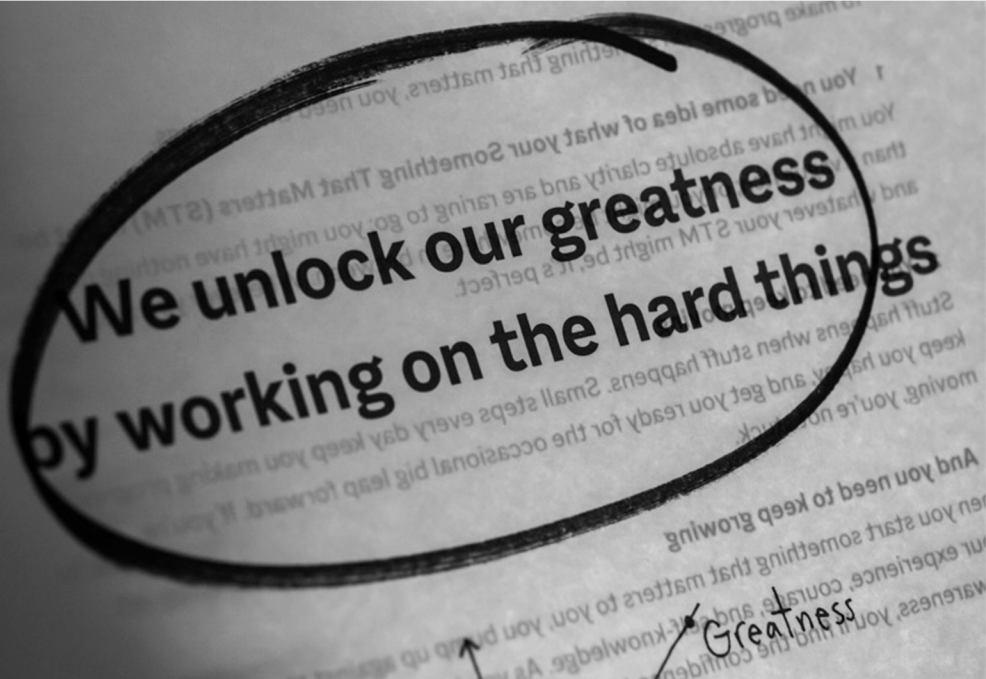


DO
SOMETHING
THAT
MATTERS
JOURNAL

MICHAEL BUNGAY STANIER



Hi there ~

Here are the opening pages of the journal explaining how it works, and the first week.

It's so you'll have something to start right away if you wish. The full journal has eighteen weeks, and different questions for every Weekly Focus/Go Deep, Mid-Week/Orient, and End the Week/Distil section.

They're some of the very best coaching questions, so I'm sure you'll find those delightfully provocative when the time comes.

Thanks for your encouragement and support. You're awesome and your doing great ~

MBS

Michael Bungay Stanier

**18 Weeks to Keep Moving,
Keep Growing & Make Real Progress**

MICHAEL BUNGAY STANIER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JESSICA HAGY

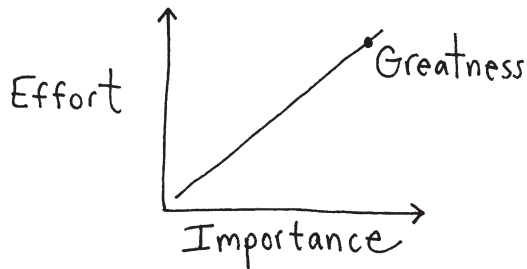
**DO
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JOURNAL



PAGE TWO

**We unlock our greatness
by working on the hard things**



How to Make Progress

To make progress on something that matters, you need three things.

1 You need some idea of what your Something That Matters (STM) might be

You might have absolute clarity and are raring to go; you might have nothing more than a vague itch; or you might be somewhere in between. Wherever you are, and whatever your STM might be, it's perfect.

2 You need to keep moving

Stuff happens when stuff happens. Small steps every day keep you making progress, keep you happy, and get you ready for the occasional big leap forward. If you're moving, you're not stuck.

3 And you need to keep growing

When you start something that matters to you, you bump up against the limits of your experience, courage, and self-knowledge. As you increase your capacity and self-awareness, you'll find the confidence to keep moving.

These three elements amplify each other. The commitment to your STM sparks movement and unlocks self-growth. Movement creates new opportunities for growth and helps you gain new insight into what's at the heart of your STM. Self-growth reveals new opportunities for movement and fosters a deeper commitment to your STM.

This journal is uniquely structured to help you keep moving *and* growing. It applies a proven system I've used with thousands of people (including myself) to help them make progress on their STM.

You'll find ways to tighten your focus on your STM and deepen your understanding of who you are and how you show up in the world.

I'm delighted that you're on this journey. I'm cheering you on.

You're awesome and you're doing great.

The image shows a handwritten signature in black ink. The letters 'MBS' are written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a horizontal line that starts under the 'M', goes under the 'B', and ends under the 'S'. There is a small mark on the line under the 'B'.

Michael Bungay Stanier

P.S. But before we start, we need to talk about what might be holding you back ... just what *is* your Something That Matters?

What Is Your Something That Matters?

You don't need to know *exactly* what your STM is to find this journal invaluable.

You do need to have *some* sense of where you might put your time and attention. If you're worrying about that, then what follows is going to help you.

To narrow it down, here's what can count as your STM.

- It can be about work or life outside of work.
- It can be short term or long term: a six-week sprint or a 10-year master plan.
- It can be self-focused or about others.
- It can be local or global: about your family, neighbourhood, community, or the planet.
- It might be a project: something that needs to be started, created, dismantled, or launched.
- It might be about a relationship: the start or the end of something, or the desire to show up in a different way.
- It might be deeply personal work: shifting some ingrained pattern, letting go of the past and stepping into a new and different future.

In other words, you've got a lot of options. What these options all have in common is that your STM is a goal worthy of your time, focus, courage, and commitment.

I know people who've worked on STMs such as writing a book, launching a business, going back to school, reducing their carbon footprint, healing a relationship, developing a podcast, retiring gracefully from a job, planning an adventure, founding a charity, changing how they parent, creating and teaching a course, reinventing health care, joining a board, mentoring someone young, starting a neighbourhood group ... the list goes on.

If you believe, as it says at the opening of this journal, that we unlock our greatness by working on the hard things, then this might be your next "hard thing," something as unique to you as your fingerprint, and as vital to you as your heartbeat.

But What If You're Still Not Sure?

If you're still not sure what your STM is, you're in good company (and there's no need to worry). You don't need absolute certainty to begin. In fact, for almost everyone, the experience of working through this journal clarifies or refines their STM.

For now, take your best guess. You can write it down here, in pencil if that feels better. You have full permission for it to be a crappy first draft, which means it doesn't have to be perfect or even "mostly right." It just needs to be a start. There's something bold and fantastic about writing it down. It's a powerful first step.

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Keep Drafting: Additional Resources

Your best guess is a great start, and what I've learned is that it's often helpful to keep refining your focus. The second draft gets you closer; the third draft gets you closer still. And when you have the most powerful expression of your STM, you'll have intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to keep going should things get difficult.

To help you refine your STM, you'll find a short excerpt from *How to Begin*, my book on how to find your purpose, at the end of this journal. It takes you through a process of strengthening and fine-tuning your draft by testing your Worthy Goal. You can use the same method on the STM you've written above.

How This Journal Works

This 18-week journal works on three different cycles.

The weekly cycle of questions creates space for reflection and self-awareness, and acts as a bridge to your STM and your daily work. The weekly questions keep you learning and growing.

The daily cycle of questions keeps you moving in increments toward your STM. As Annie Dillard put it, "How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives."

Finally, every six weeks, you will have the chance to stop, reset and reorient, and prepare to start again. This six-week cycle builds in endings and beginnings, a proven design strategy that will help you maintain your momentum and not become becalmed or distracted.

4 Weekly Questions for Growth (and Also Progress)

You start each week by naming a single **Weekly Focus**. It's the one thing you intend to do to best move your STM forward. In a world of chronic overcommitment and distraction, your Weekly Focus creates context for the week's progress and reminds you of what's important. Because you're naming only one thing, you must think strategically and decisively about what needs to be done. There will always be a thousand things you could do; this gives you the courage to name the most important thing.

You then answer a **Go Deep** question. It's an opportunity to wrestle with an existential question about who you are, what you need to let go of, what you need to discover, and what really matters to you. This is all about growth.

Mid-week, there's an **Orient** question. With this, you pull back from the day-to-day to see what's going on and notice if anything needs to change. The insights are always about progress, and often about growth as well. You start noticing patterns in how you get distracted, discouraged, or lost.

You finish the week answering a **Distil** question. It turns out that we don't get smarter just by doing stuff. We get smarter by taking a moment to step back and actively discover and distil the lessons that are there to be learned. This end-of-week question serves up variants on "what was most useful?" so you make certain you don't only get older but also grow wiser.

4 Daily Questions for Progress (and Also Growth)

Each workday is framed by four questions that are designed to be answered in brief and should take less than a couple of minutes, in total, to complete.

You begin with three check-in questions to set up the day in the best possible way. They will help you to **Be Present**, **Be Clear**, and **Be Focused**. The day ends with a single wrap-up question that should be answered at a later time than the first three. It's a question to finish strong, appreciate and celebrate what's good, and **Be Open-Hearted**.

These questions are biased toward progress, but they also inevitably help with self-growth. In the next pages, I'll share those questions and some background about why they're so powerful and helpful.

Be Present

What do you notice? *Be present. Stop being distracted.*

This is a question to settle you down. It is a bulwark against the forces of disintegration and distraction that bombard you. It lets you pause, just for a moment, and notice what you're noticing. It invites a practice of presence, with all the known benefits of increased self-esteem and empathy, flow and exuberance.

There are four ways you might notice what you're noticing.

- 1 Direct your attention to your thoughts. Friends recently told me they've renamed the "What's on your mind?" question from *The Coaching Habit* as the OMM question: "What's on my mind?" I love that!
- 2 Direct your attention toward your emotional state. What are you feeling? What are you worried about, excited about? I start with a simple "feelings palette" of mad, sad, glad, ashamed, and afraid, but you can use different variations if you wish.
- 3 Direct attention toward your physical state. How are you sitting? Where are you twitchy? Where do you notice aches or pains or tension? What are you tasting? How's your breathing? What's your level of energy right now?
- 4 Direct your focus outward. What do you see in this moment? What's in front of you? What do you hear right now? What's outside your physical self?

Be Clear

What do you want? *Tap into what matters most. Stop denying yourself.*

In *The Coaching Habit*, "What do you want?" is called The Foundation Question because it is such a powerful question for understanding the self and generating action. It's a big, juicy question.

Your answer clarifies, refines, and often elevates your STM. When you know what you want—when you *really* know—you're more likely to find the courage and commitment to seek it out, ask for it, and even demand it.

When you keep asking and answering this question, when you tap your intrinsic motivation, it becomes increasingly clear what needs to happen, who you need to be, and what you need to do.

Be Focused

What's the one thing? *Claim the most important thing. Stop trying to do it all.*

Too many times I've ticked off 57 of my 58 "to-dos" in a day, but I have cunningly avoided the most important thing that would make a difference. I've substituted random busyness for focus.

The Progress Principle, by researchers Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer, provides deep research confirming that a sense of meaning, purpose, and (a corporate word, but still helpful) engagement comes from regular "small wins" on stuff that matters.

Naming the one thing you want to get done today helps you progress on what matters to you, reduces the burden of your to-do list, and builds up the "small wins" that will make you happier.

Be Open-Hearted

What's the best thing that happened? *Celebrate the day. Stop and savour the good.*

This question values progress. But it also assumes progress is not the only thing. Remember to give yourself some time to percolate before jumping in to answer this one.

The joy of life doesn't come from just getting stuff done. It comes from moments of appreciating, experiencing, noticing, being. An ever-increasing body of research shows that small, specific acts of gratitude make you measurably and sustainably happier.

Make your answer as specific as possible. Name the person, the experience, the realization you are thankful for. When you start to notice the best things from your day, you can curate your days to get more of what brings you contentment and less of the other stuff.



Watch me expand on what's best about all the questions at DoSomethingJournal.com or by using the QR code.

3 Six-Week Cycles

Every six weeks marks a place for you to regather, regroup, reorient, pivot if needed, and get ready to start again.

I use this six-week structure in *The Conspiracy*, a membership group I created where people find the community and courage to work on their STM. The Conspirators and I have learned that six weeks is the "Goldilocks" amount of time to give something real attention. On the one hand, you can get a *lot* done in six weeks.

On the other, if you don't make a lot of progress because you found yourself stalled or lost or working hard on the wrong thing, it's only six weeks, just 10 percent of a year. You have a chance to shake it off and go again.

In this journal, the Go Deep questions that start each week have a different focus every six weeks. The first cycle asks about what you need to know more deeply in preparation for the journey ahead. The second cycle challenges you about what it's time to let go of, or sacrifice. Mid-journey, it's often time to lighten the load. The final cycle encourages reflection on what you might invite into your life that's new—preparation for the cycles to start again.

Bonus: Want Help Finding Your Something That Matters?

Still searching for *your* Something That Matters?

Check out my How to Begin course at HowToBegin.com/course. Journal owners get a special discount with the code JOURNALSURPRISE. In this self-paced video course, I coach you step-by-step through a process to find, commit to, and get ready to start *your* Something That Matters.



"I loved the process in the How to Begin course and did each component. The more I moved through the course, the more excited I got about the clarity that came to me." JULIE

"The How to Begin course was like a test kitchen and laboratory to bring my idea to life—it kept me from getting stuck in my head." BOB

"Michael's teaching encouraged me to believe in myself while challenging me to get specific and make sure I was pursuing something I truly wanted." JASON

Bonus: The Best Questions from Extraordinary People

I love a good question, and I suspect you do too.

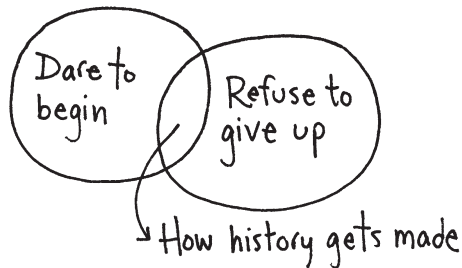
I asked 52 people I deeply admire to share their very best question, and why it was so powerful for them. Contributors include Oliver Burkeman (author of *Four Thousand Weeks*), Haesun Moon (author of *Coaching A-Z*), Susan David (author of *Emotional Agility*), Warren Berger (author of *The Book of Beautiful Questions*), and many more.

If you'd like to expand the number of questions that are rocking your world, pick up your copy of my free ebook *The Best Questions from Extraordinary People*. Get your copy at DoSomethingJournal.com.



T H E

FIRST CYCLE



Week 1

Weekly Focus

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Go Deep

What permission are you waiting for? From whom?

Sometimes we find ourselves waiting for someone to say,

“Yes, you can do that.” You can just give that to yourself.

What would you like to give yourself permission to do right now?

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Monday

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What do you notice? Be present. Stop being distracted.

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What do you want? Tap into what matters most. Stop denying yourself.

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What's the one thing? Claim the most important thing. Stop trying to do it all.

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What's the best thing that happened? Celebrate the day. Stop and savour the good.

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Tuesday

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What do you notice? Be present. Stop being distracted.

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What do you want? Tap into what matters most. Stop denying yourself.

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What's the one thing? Claim the most important thing. Stop trying to do it all.

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What's the best thing that happened? Celebrate the day. Stop and savour the good.

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Mid-Week

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Orient

What's happening by default?

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“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any.”

ALICE WALKER

Wednesday

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What do you notice? Be present. Stop being distracted.

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What do you want? Tap into what matters most. Stop denying yourself.

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What's the one thing? Claim the most important thing. Stop trying to do it all.

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What's the best thing that happened? Celebrate the day. Stop and savour the good.

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Thursday

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What do you notice? Be present. Stop being distracted.

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What do you want? Tap into what matters most. Stop denying yourself.

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What's the one thing? Claim the most important thing. Stop trying to do it all.

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What's the best thing that happened? Celebrate the day. Stop and savour the good.

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Friday

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What do you notice? Be present. Stop being distracted.

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What do you want? Tap into what matters most. Stop denying yourself.

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What's the one thing? Claim the most important thing. Stop trying to do it all.

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What's the best thing that happened? Celebrate the day. Stop and savour the good.

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End the Week

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Distil

What was the most important moment?

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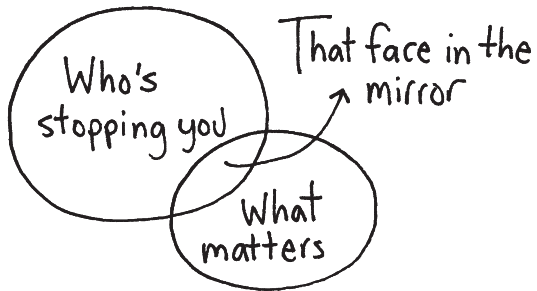
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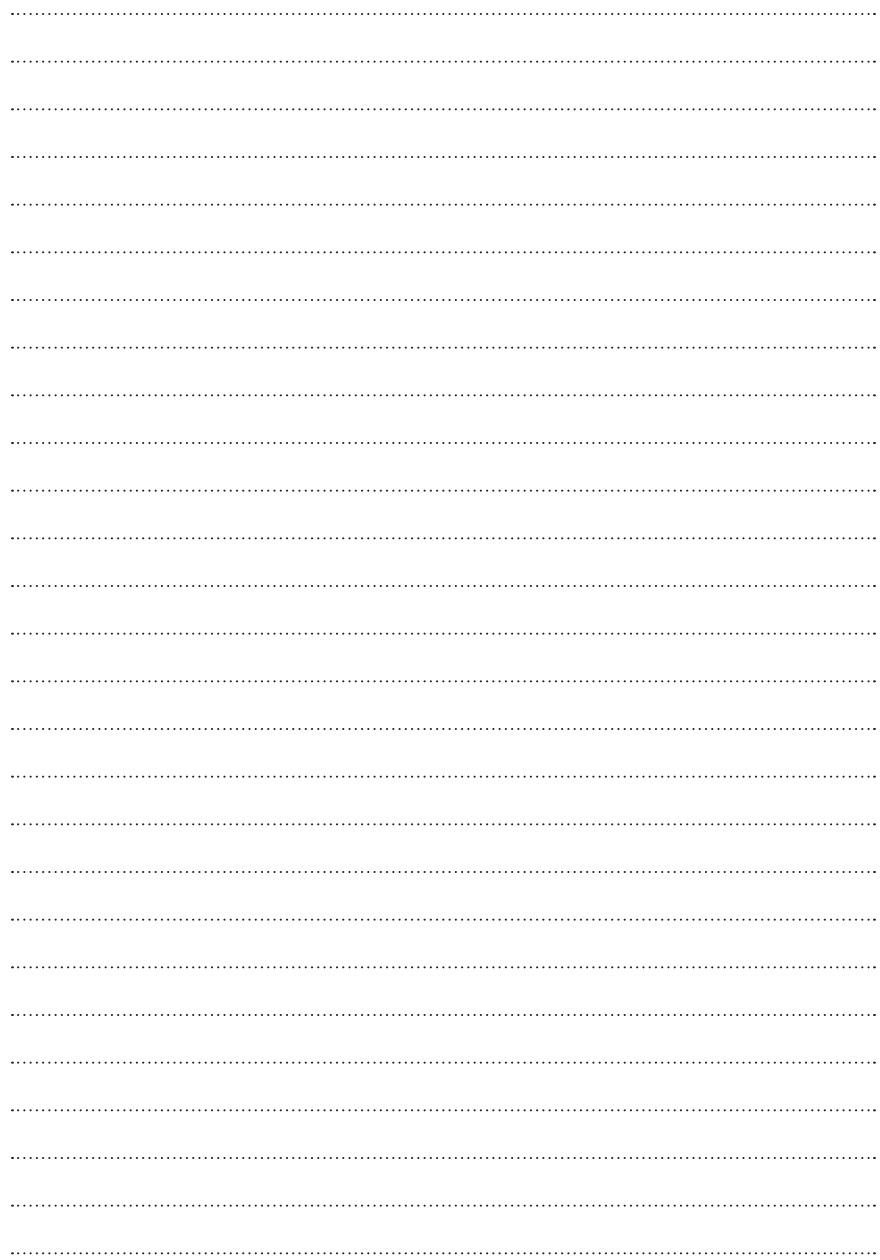
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