

e-tips...

to help you Live Well

## Living Your Why



Imagine that the 60 Minutes video crew secretly videoed your life for seven days. Then on Sunday night they broadcast a list of what's most important to you, based on the way you prioritized your time, money, energy, and relationships. What would the report tell you about your life?

Your emotional response to this image gives you clues on how well you're living your why. The author and business leader Hyrum Smith observes, "When your daily activities are in concert with your highest priorities, you have a credible claim to inner peace." Being out of alignment results in the opposite – you're conflicted, out of sync, confused about your priorities, and more likely to make unhealthy choices.

I've reflected on why I sometimes get so distracted and off course from where I really want to go. The list is long, but let me share a few of the significant ones.

First, I forget — I simply forget — what's most important to me and instead I hitchhike onto the priorities of other people. Because it's so easy to see what other people are doing, it's easy for me to get influenced by their priorities. Remember buying the kayak because my neighbor has one!

Second, I don't say no to what isn't important, then I'm too busy and too tired to say yes to what is. While it's clear I need to know what's most important to me, I also need to define what I'm going to say no to and increase my skill in doing just that.

Third, when I'm not taking good care of myself, when I'm hungry, tired, or stressed, I become reactive, impulsive and judgmental. Consequently, I make poor decisions. Think of the Snickers advertisement!

This exercise of examining what gets in the way of living my why has been very helpful to me. At the same time, I've reread the book *Essentialism* by Greg McKeown, which directly addresses this topic. I'm going to experiment with a few changes in the next 60 days including the following:

1. Posting my why in multiple places where I can see it daily.
2. Editing out non-essential activities in my schedule that aren't consistent with my why.
3. Beginning a "no" list that includes what I'll say no to.
4. Compartmentalizing my email work to a certain time each day. (This one will be the hardest.)

I'm very excited about this effort because I want to live my life with meaning and purpose. I love, love this quote by Henry David Thoreau: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

By: Terri Anne Flint, Ph.D., L.C.S.W.  
Director – Intermountain Healthcare  
EAP & Employee Wellness

● ● ●  
**Intermountain Employee Assistance Program e-tips are messages that teach, remind, and inspire in our journey to live well.**

