



Essentialism

The Disciplined Pursuit of Less

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Rating

9 Importance
8 Innovation
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Take-aways

- Essentialism is not about how to get more things done, but it is about how to get the right things done. It is about making the wisest possible investment of your time and energy in order to operate at your highest point of contribution by doing only what is essential. There are far more activities and opportunities in the world than you have time and resources to invest in.
- You need to learn how to make a conscious decision of what is your top priority and put all of your energy towards reaching that goal.
- The disciplined pursuit of less each and every time you are faced with a decision about whether to say yes or whether to politely decline. It is a method for making the tough trade-off between lots of good things and a few really great things.
- Essentialism is about learning how to do less but better so you can achieve the highest possible return on every precious moment of your life.
- Live a life true to yourself, not the life others expect from you, by disciplined pursuit of less to every area of your life.
- Living life as an essentialist is not easy. You will find you're not like everybody else. When other people are saying yes, you will be saying no. When other people are doing, you will find yourself thinking. When other people are speaking, you will find yourself listening. While other people are living a life of stress and chaos, you will be living a life of impact and fulfillment.
- The life of an Essentialist is a life of meaning. It is a life that really matters. The life of an Essentialist is a life lived without regret. If you have correctly identified what really matters, if you invest time and energy in it, then it is difficult to regret the choices you make. You become proud of the life you have chosen to live.

Relevance

In this summary, you will learn

- 1.) What are the core mind-set of an Essentialist
- 2.) What are the Essentialist approach

Summary

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Essentialist – Core mind-set of an Essentialist

An Essentialist has to be operate with a different mind-set. The core mind-set of essentialist are:

Individual Choice – You can choose how to spend your energy and time. Without choice there is no point in talking about trade-offs. The ability to choose cannot be taken away or even given away – it can only be forgotten.

Prevalence of Noise – Almost everything is noise and a very few things are exceptionally valuable. This is the justification for taking time to figure out what is most important. A non-Essentialist things almost everything is essential. An Essentialist thinks almost everything is non-essential.

Reality of trade-offs – You can't have it all or do it all. If you could, there would be no reason to evaluate or eliminate the options.

The Essentialist approach would be:

Explore and Evaluate – Will the activity that I am investing make the highest possible contribution toward my goal?

Exploring meant the ability to discern the vital few from the trivial many. Evaluate what really matters.

ESCAPE – The Perks of being unavailable

LOOK – See what really matters

PLAY – Embrace the wisdom of your inner child

SLEEP – Protect the Asset

SELECT – The Power of Extreme Criteria

Eliminate – It is simply not enough to determine which activities and efforts don't make the highest possible contribution; you would have to actively eliminate those that do not.

How can we cut out the trivial many ?

CLARIFY – One Decision that makes a Thousand



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- DARE – Power of a Graceful “No”
- UNCOMMIT – Win Big by Cutting Your Losses
- EDIT – The Invisible Art
- LIMIT – The freedom of setting boundaries

Execute – Once you have figured out the activities and efforts to keep, you need a system to make the executing as effortless as possible.

How can we make doing the vital few things almost effortless?

- BUFFER – The unfair advantage
- SUBTRACT – Bring forth more by removing obstacles
- PROGRESS – Power of Small Wins
- FLOW – Genius of Routine
- FOCUS – What’s important now ?
- BE – The Essentialist Life

The disciplined pursuit of less can change your life for the better in the following ways:

More Clarity – Life will become less about efficiently crossing off what was on your to-do list or rushing through everything on your schedule and more about changing what you put on there in the first place.

More Control – Gain in confidence in your ability to pause, push back and not rush in. Remember that if you do not prioritize your life, someone else will. But if you are determined to prioritize your own life you can. The power is within you.

More Joy in the Journey – With the focus on what is truly important right now comes the ability to live life more fully, in the moment.

Realities

The power of choice. When you forget you have the power of choice, you allow others to determine what fills your time instead of yourselves. Essentialists remain empowered by choice to determine what they do and don’t do with their time.

The momentum of focus. For every ten things Nonessentialists do, Essentialists do one. Instead of diffusing their energy, they focus it and gain momentum to make more impact than they otherwise could. When you complain about being “spread too thin” at work, this is a sure sign that you need to shed tasks and train our focus.

The importance of tradeoffs. To do one thing is to miss out on others—and maybe even essential things. The more you commit to doing, the more strained your schedules for the the things that are truly important, including family, rest, and play. Essentialists weigh every opportunity against the potential tradeoffs.



The value of extreme criteria. Essentialists don't consider the minimum requirements for a yes. They use extreme criteria: Is this exactly what I want? Am I ideal for this opportunity? As McKeown says, "If it isn't a clear yes, then it's a clear no."

The role of the journalist. The role of a journalist is not to regurgitate facts, but to explain the meaning of those facts. Essentialists act as journalists of their own experience. Instead of allowing others to determine what matters and why, Essentialists make that determination for themselves.

The power of clarity. Essentialists pass on about 90 percent of opportunities. If you are clear on what you do, you can filter out a thousand things you shouldn't. To gain this clarity requires asking hard questions, making difficult tradeoffs, and exercising self-discipline. And Essentialists know it's totally worth investing in the 10 percent of opportunities that make sense for them.

The liberating possibility of no. Saying no to the many trivial requests, Essentialists are really saying yes to what matters most in their lives: their faith, their family, their health, their calling.

If there is one thing you take away from the book the most - Whatever decision or challenge or crossroads you face in your life, simply ask yourself, "**What is Essential?**" **Eliminate everything else**".

About the Author

Greg McKeown is an author, business writer, consultant, and researcher specializing in leadership, strategy design, collective intelligence and human systems. He is currently the CEO of THIS Inc., a leadership and strategy design agency headquartered in Silicon Valley. He has taught in companies which include Apple, Google, Facebook, Salesforce.com, Symantec, Twitter, and VMware.