

BUILDERS

We're not changing our bad selves into something good, we're using tools to build our great selves into something more useful and beautiful.

"I'm giving you the tools you need to be able to change your future." (God)

"A goal without a target date isn't a goal—it's a wish." (Mike Speakman)

WHY BUILD?

We want to build something because we believe that it will help our lives be easier, more productive, healthier, happier, and/or more pleasant.

1) BRAINSTORMING

What I'm building:

- 1. What do I want to build this year?*
- 2. Why do I feel the need to build this?*
- 3. Why is this structure important to me?*
- 4. How long have I been trying to build this?*
- 5. Is it that it never changes or is it that the change is never enough?*

Why I want to build this structure:

- 1. Is what I want to build born out of a passion or duty?*
- 2. Am I building for myself or because I want to please someone else (other than God)?*
- 3. Is this to benefit myself personally (body: lose weight/how I dress/my health, etc.), passionately (soul: paint/write/sing, etc.), practically*

(better organized/get rid of stuff/better housekeeping, etc.), or spiritually (more compassionate/deeper walk/more Bible study, etc.)?

Why did my buildings in the past blow away with the wind? (So I can learn how to build sturdier structures):

- 1. What have been my pitfalls?*
- 2. What has been my biggest excuse?*
- 3. What has been my biggest downfall?*
- 4. What has been my biggest distraction?*
- 5. What has been my biggest hurdle?*
- 6. What has been my biggest struggle?*
- 7. How has setting goals worked AGAINST me?*
- 8. How has setting goals worked FOR me?*
- 9. What HASN'T worked in the past?*
- 10. What HAS worked in the past?*
- 11. Do I work better under long-term or short-term deadlines?*
- 12. What motivates me?*
- 13. Why can I believe this year will be different?*

2) BLUEPRINT

1. *What am I going to do differently now?*
2. *What changes can I make utilizing my body, mind, & spirit? (For example: Body—get enough sleep; Mind—record affirmations/listen to my self-talk; Spirit—check in with Holy Spirit daily)*
3. *How can I use my love languages (from the amazing book [The Five Love Languages](#) by Gary Chapman) to reward, love, and affirm myself when I do well or achieve a goal? For example, (depending on my love language): Words of affirmation—I can tell myself what a good job I've done. Giving gifts—I can give myself a cup of coffee or a little reward. Physical touch—I can pamper myself by a foot massage or a special lotion or soap. Quality time—I can reward myself with time with a friend. Acts of service—I'll take the time to wash my car, organize my desk, or do something for myself that I've been wanting to do.*
4. *Name my Sirens (In Greek mythology the Sirens were beautiful women who would sing and lure sailors onto the rocks of their island, shipwrecking the sailors to their death. So Odysseus plugged his sailor's ears with beeswax and had them lash him to the mast so he could see and hear but be incapable of changing the course of the ship.) I need to lash myself to the mast (pre-commit) so that I can row past the Sirens and not get lured (distracted). (This analogy is taken from the book—[The Procrastination Equation](#) by Piers Steel.)*
5. *Piers Steel, in his book [The Procrastination Equation](#), asks whether you prefer **inputs** (the time invested) or **outputs** (what is produced)? Knowing this kind of thing about yourself is a great help in building something with a solid foundation because, once again, it will be modeled after the unique person you are and not what works for someone else. Also, you might find (after trial and error) that it depends on the situation. For example, for a few weeks my goal was output (what is produced)—to write 500 words a day. Sounds simple, right? It didn't work for me. When I was tired my 500 words became an email to my friend or a journal entry (neither of which progressed my writing). What worked was saying I'd get in 10 hours a week of*

writing time (input—the time invested), that goal was flexible enough that I could flow around normal life.

6. Are you an **abstainer** or a **moderator**? Some people have to abstain from what they want to change, totally give it up. Other people are moderators, they can just alter what they're doing and do fine. For example, if an abstainer wants to lose weight they'll stop eating any cookies at all, because it's easier for them to stop altogether than to cut back. A moderator cuts back, limiting themselves to one cookie per day/week, etc. Neither one understands how the other can do it.
7. As you set up your commitment look and see if you're building a habit or just incorporating something into your life. For example, my friend Chong is developing a habit, so she's adamant that she never miss one, single day. I, on the other hand, am incorporating Jesus-time into my life, but my days are so unstructured that I feel that I need to give myself leeway to miss and not feel like I've "failed," so I've built in WILD CARDS, "free" days (or as I like to call them—"forgiveness cards"). Where Chong commits to every day, my commitment looks like this—"I'll spend 30 minutes a day with Jesus, 5 out of 7 days a week." That way if I come home tired or am out late I can go to bed and not feel like I've failed on my commitment.
8. Take your list of what motivates you and for each motivation write a way you can incorporate that into your **Building under Brain Change**.
9. For each one below, write at least one specific step you can take to overcome it.
 - Excuse:
 - Downfall:
 - Distraction:
 - Hurdle:
 - Struggle:
10. What bad self-talk am I telling myself?

3) BUILDING

Commitment: Here is where you need to be specific about what you're building. It needs to be measurable and achievable. For example, don't say, "I need to walk more." Make it, "I will walk 5 out of 7 days a week for at least 20 minutes (or 1 mile or whatever)." You can build more than one building but don't overload, it's better to keep it to 1 or 2 or it's easy to become overwhelmed.

What do I want to achieve in the next week? Finish the sentence below:

I WILL:

What steps will I take to enable me to keep this commitment?

Parameters:

Habits:

Brain Change:

Reward:

My plan for disappointment in myself is:

My Disappointed-in-myself Affirmation:

WEEKLY UPDATE

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how do I feel about last week?
- If I'm not satisfied, was it something mostly out of my control or was it something I could have done better with?
- If what I didn't do well last week was mostly out of my control, then did I do the best I could? If yes, give myself a hug and a pat on the back. If I could have done better, give myself a hug, a pat on the back, then write down one thing about it that I'll change this week. Make it specific, for example, don't put "spend less time on email" but put "I will spend 30 minutes less on email this week than I did last week."
- Why do I think I didn't do well last week? What emotions, situations, and/or self-talk triggered it?
- What is my goal for next week?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (if doing this in a group):

- Should we limit our change by starting with one thing or let each determine how many changes they want to begin with?
- Set each goal for the end of the week so that you can step back and assess how you're doing and what's working for you. It's so important to understand what works for you and what doesn't, and each week (at least for the first few weeks) you should be learning new things.
- Do we have a penalty for not meeting our goals each week? If so, what? (My friend & I would put a dollar into the pot for every goal we missed, for example, a dollar for every hour of the 10 I was short that week, then, since we did a lot of our work at Starbucks, we'd put the money in the tip jar.)
- What about a competition and the one who does the best gets a reward? (A WILD card? A WILD card allows you to miss one of your commitments that week, for example, if you only get in 9 hours of writing instead of 10, using your WILD card allows you to have still made your commitment.)
- At the end of a successful month the 3 of us reward ourselves together by _____.