



## Four Gauges for Your Life and Work Guide & Template

Have you ever found yourself in a funk? You love your work, you've got a great team, you're even making progress - but **you're just in a funk.**

Sound familiar?

What about when someone asks you how you're doing? **Have you ever answered honestly?** Are we really "great" or "fine" all the time?

For years, I've noticed that I periodically struggle with getting motivated and staying motivated. We don't like to admit it, but these low times are occasionally accompanied by mild depression and frustrations. Many associate these times with weakness - convincing themselves, I'm not a good leader or I'm in over my head.

Obviously, a depressive state is not healthy. And **if we are not healthy, we simply cannot [live and lead effectively](#).** We cannot respond to challenges and opportunities calmly and decisively.

In 2011, I began journaling when these [low times](#) occurred. I was looking for patterns - anything that would help me know when they were coming, prepare for them, prevent them, and use them as opportunities to grow.

I even tried to fix the problem using various methods including diet and exercise. You can read my post about how [I lost 30 pounds](#) in the process. There was no one thing that worked. For more than 20 years, some leaders have talked about **4 gauges to assess health in life and work.** So I began to review the gauges periodically and **what I learned has been life-changing for me.**

To help me review the 4 gauges, I developed a guide and template which includes specific questions and action items which can be completed in just a few minutes. In fact, we've modified the guide and template for all types of leaders - in sports, corporate settings, nonprofit leaders, healthcare, government, education, and more.

I'll give you my template in just a minute, but first, let me tell you about the 4 gauges...

### 1. Physical

A [healthy diet](#), rest, and regular exercise are key components to physical health. When I neglect these areas, I do not have the energy required to live and lead effectively. So I work out at least 3 days a week, get at least 7 hours of sleep each night, and maintain a healthy diet.

I've also learned that if I push my body too hard, I will experience a physical breakdown or psychosomatic complications associated with high stress.

Here are several questions that I use to assess my physical health:

1. How many times have I exercised the past two weeks?
2. What has my diet been the past few weeks?
3. What habits have I developed that are destructive to my body?
4. Am I having regular dental and physical checkups?
5. What have I done this week to be well and healthy?
6. Am I sleeping through the night?

## 2. Mental

It's easy to get stuck in a rut – doing the same things and thinking the same way. Occasionally, we do this while expecting different results. To mentally prepare for the day, **effective leaders continually test their thinking, opinions, and conclusions.**

Here are a few questions for assessing mental preparedness:

1. What have I put into my brain this week?
2. What do I regularly watch? Listen to?
3. What am I currently reading?
4. Who am I allowing to speak into my life?
5. Are these things positive or negative influences on my mind?

## 3. Spiritual

The pace of my work has dramatically increased over the past few years. Since my spiritual gauge is important to me, I regularly check my life's dashboard. And I can tell when I am spiritually empty, half full, three-quarters full, or, occasionally, full.

If the Spiritual Gauge isn't your style, you may want to spend time reflecting and meditating. For me to keep my faith gauge where I want it to be, **I have committed myself to solitude, study, and attending church regularly.** I discovered that these spiritual disciplines clarify life's challenges and provide intensity and passion for my life and work.

Here are several questions that I use to assess my spiritual health:

1. What have I done this week to improve my personal relationship with God?
2. How often and for how long did I read my Bible?
3. How often have I prayed this week?
4. What am I doing in my relationship with God that is new?
5. When is the last time I allowed God to move in an extraordinary way in my life?
6. What are my spiritual goals? What do I want God to do in my life and family?
7. Who do I have that is regularly speaking truth into my life?
8. What have I done to mentor my children spiritually this week?

9. Am I honoring God with my finances?

#### 4. Emotional

Our problems often signal a state of emotional emptiness. [When the crisis hits](#) we become more reactionary, testy, and short with people. **We see people as interruptions to our "real work"**. You know there's a problem when you're on your way home from work and you consciously hope that your spouse has everything under control and the kids don't need much from you. You simply don't have any more to give to [the most valued people in your life](#).

To assess my emotional health, I often ask:

1. Do I not want to relate to people right now?
2. Do I feel like I just need to get away?

The one discipline that has helped me to control my emotional gauge is finding an outlet - a recreational activity that takes my mind away from the pressures of work. Running and writing have become recreational hobbies for me - one of the [three reasons I started this blog](#). **You'll have to intentionally schedule time into your calendar for unwinding** otherwise life happens and crowds out emotional health.

Here's what is interesting - the emotional gauge is the only gauge you can't directly control. **The emotional gauge is a byproduct of the health of the other three gauges**. Trouble in one or more of the other three gauges, directly effects the emotional gauge.

The gauges need to be measured objectively, not subjectively. **How you FEEL about how you are doing does not matter nearly as much as how you're REALLY doing**. So, using the questions provides measurable outcomes to evaluate each gauge.

I have made a conscious decision to [live healthy](#), so I have more to offer than a handful of years of frenzied activity.