

Be Specific

All right, in this session of Guidestone University we're picking up where we left off in the last session with the tips for completing your Simple Personal Plan. We've talked about Getting Away, we've talked about Keeping it Simple, and in this session we're going to look at Being Specific. Being so specific that we can get significant progress with our Simple Personal Plan.

And I want to illustrate this by sharing with you my experience when I wrote my very first Simple Personal Plan years ago. When I wrote my actions for my account for Sarah, my wife, I wrote, "I will regularly communicate my unconditional love for her by always thinking of her first, valuing our differences, caring about her feelings, respecting her opinions, sharing my most intimate thoughts and by expressing appreciation and care."

Now at first glance when you hear it you're like, "Man, that's pretty good. Go back and read that again. Let me look at it on the screen or hey, I'm going to jot that stuff down." Here's the problem with it. When you really go back and think about it and say, "Okay. I'm going to communicate my unconditional love to her by, thinking of her first, valuing our differences, caring for her." For sure you're thinking, "How am I going to do that?" And for me, I didn't make significant progress with that for months, if not years, because it wasn't specific enough. And I learned over time if I am not getting the results that I want, I need to get more specific. And I'm going to show this principle to you on your screen there.

So, if you're not getting the results you want in any area, this will work in any area, not just in Simple Personal Plan. If you're not getting any results in any area, with a team member, with a child, with your spouse, at home, at work, in your leadership, in the community, whether you're engaged in some non-profit work, whatever it is, in your place of worship. If you're not getting the results that you want the vast majority of the time, all you need to do is to get more specific.

Let me show you what that means specifically as it's related to my actions in my Simple Personal Plan Account for my wife. So, when I updated my Simple Personal Plan, I got

more specific and here's what I wrote for the actions for my Simple Personal Plan Account for my wife, Sarah.

Number one, spend time with Sarah at the end of every day communicating with her with no interruptions from 9:00-10:00 p.m.

Then number two, go on a lunch date every Friday with her at noon. Leave our phones in the car.

And then the last one is, take her on two weekend getaways each year, one before May 30th and the other before November 30th. Unplug from technology.

Now, the difference is those are way more specific. In fact, they're more specific that I can plug them right into my calendar – each one of them. And so, if you look into my calendar, in fact here's a screenshot of my calendar, every single evening from 9:00 to 10:00 p.m. on my calendar is to spend time with Sarah.

If you're going to the master calendar that I used, my annual time block where I plan out my year in advance, you would see on there, weekend getaways with Sarah. You would see on there, vacation time that's carved out just our family. My wife and my two children. And then you would see on my calendar, every week, Sarah and I have a standing appointment on our calendar which now has turned into more than half day. We go lunch many times, or we go shopping, or we go see a movie while the kids are in school.

We spend significant time together every week because the time is blocked out on my calendar. It is very very rare that we ever shift that around or move it around, or cancel it because it has become top priority for us. The only way that those things became possible was because I got so specific with my actions that I could write them into my calendar. And that's what you need to do with each one of your actions. If it's not specific enough to plug into your calendar, you will not make the progress with it that you desire. So, get more specific.

Now, let me show you what this principle looks like. We call it the principle of specificity – if you can say that. So, here it is. When you get more specific, that specificity leads to a higher level of accountability, and higher accountability leads to higher results. When we don't get the higher results that we desire, we need a higher level of accountability. And the best kind of accountability is self-accountability. So, if we can create the more

specific actions ourselves, or we might get someone to help speak into that process with us, but when we're engaged into that process, it creates self-accountability which gives us the best opportunity getting the results that we desire. Does that make sense? So, getting more specific leads to a higher accountability which leads to better results.

Here's our action step for this session. We're going to go back and look at the actions that we created from each one of our Simple Personal Plan Accounts. And we're going to make sure that they're specific enough to plug right into our calendar. So, if you have questions of any on those, then paste them inside the Guidestone University the Leadership Community inside Facebook. Let us look at them, we'll give you some feedback or email them to us using the email address inside Guidestone University. We'd be happy to give you some feedback on that and help you make progress on those areas.

We want you to be successful, and the way to be successful with these actions is to get so specific that you can add them right into your calendar, plan for them as part of your day, your week, your month, your year and get the results that you want.

All right, so that's the third tip. We've talked about Get Away, Keep it Simple and Be Specific.

And we'll see you in the next session.