Creating Your Future

CREATED FOR THE INTER-VERSITY MENTORSHIP FORUM

COMPILED BY: UNITED FAMILIES INTERNATIONAL

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Key Take Aways

1) Life rarely goes exactly how we plan. There are tools to help us get what we want. Goal = Something I want that I'm willing to put effort toward.
2) Goal Loops are a plan to deal with unexpected things in our lives. Helps us pivot to what we want. Questions to ask ourselves about life experiences:
   a. 1) What went well & why? (Trains brain to look for the positive & analyze.)
   b. 2) What didn't go well? (Forces us to look at reality.)
   c. 3) What did you learn? (Finding words to describe cements the learning.)
3) Failure is just "one page in our story" – not the whole book! Expectations color the story we tell ourselves; learn to manage expectations. Learn how to pivot!
4) Get trained; stay optimistic (you will fail), goal loop my experience.
5) Take action! "No one is coming" – to rescue you. (famous Harvard Professor). People will help you, but you must initiate action. Take responsibility for your life.
6) Know the "why" of your goal. Analyze your goal along the way; there is much to learn. Own your goal; make sure it is yours & not someone else's goal for you.

Questions & Answers -
from the Zoom Chat CHAIN - Dec 2, 2023

I feel maybe I should do my goal for me and not anyone. (This was a follow up question after discussing what to do when we feel pressured by our parents to follow a certain path in university.)

> The reality is that many of us have family pressure to do well in school or choose a certain degree. If we only think about what our parents want for us, our motivation will suffer. If we only think about what we want for ourselves, we miss out on the wisdom of an older generation and create conflict within our families. What I am suggesting is to accept the reality of our parents' support, wisdom, and desires for us, but don't accept it blindly. Ask yourself – what part of this do I want to do? What part of the goal can I own for myself. If you can find a reason that is meaningful for you, you will be more motivated to actually learn and benefit from your time in university.

So, let's say I am starting a business of selling cooking oil which has very many competitors, how will I convince customers that my product is the best and is of high quality?

Remember we talked about Outcome, Purpose, and Takeaways? This is a perfect example.
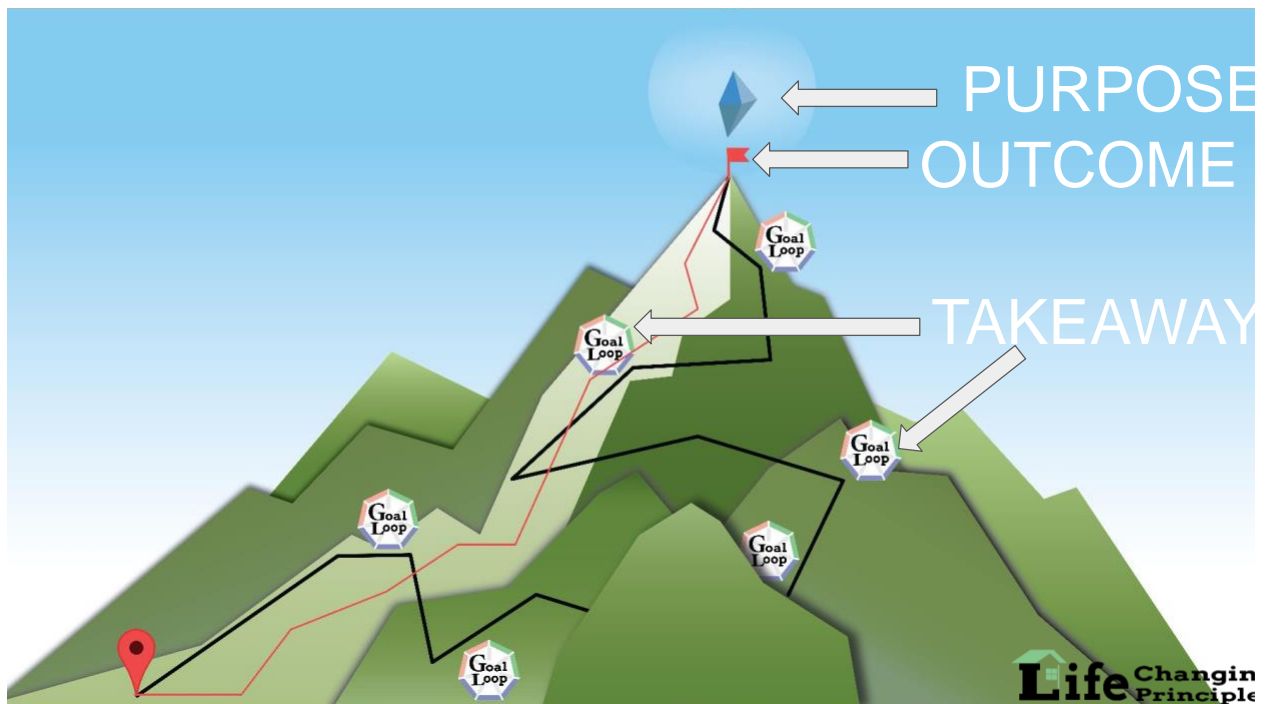
The outcome is that you want money from cooking oil sales.

The purpose is that you want to understand why customers buy from certain businesses.

The takeaways are the lessons you learn in each goal loop.

I don't know what will cause more humans to buy your product. But experience can teach you the reality. If it was me, I'd set up a bunch of goal loops.

- What if I give them free samples?
- What if I deliver it door to door?
- What if I create a professional looking label for the bottle?
- What if I create a story about my company that people resonate with?
- What if I research what makes good quality cooking oil?
- What if I ask 10 people what they like about their cooking oil?
- What if I ask 10 people what they wish cooking oil would do?
- What if I sell it in different size bottle than are available right now?

- What if I create a website?
- What if I make funny videos on social media?

Then for each idea – you goal loop it. What went well with that experiment? Why did that part go well? What didn't go well? What are you learning?

Never forget your purpose. Your purpose is to understand why humans buy cooking oil and when you understand that then you'll be able to build your business.

Someone told me that goals don't last for lifetime, that goals help us to achieve one task and encouraged me to build systems that last long rather than depending on goals. What's your say on that?

I agree. Goals don't last for a lifetime. We get to the top of the mountain and reached the flag, but then we see another mountain & flag, another thing we want. So, we will always have new goals. I also agree that building systems is an important key to success. The two can work together. Say I'm in university and I need better systems to balance study and social life. I would use goals and goal loops to build systems and see if they work for me. Maybe my first plan is to study every weeknight and then have Saturday and Sunday free for social time. My first goal loop might teach me that this doesn't work because I'm too tired after class to do all of my homework and my friends like to hang out Tuesday and Thursday nights at Mukisa's place. So, I learn from my goal loop asking the 3 questions and I create a new system. Maybe this time I find I love studying Saturday mornings because everyone else is sleeping in and I can concentrate in the quiet. Once the Saturday morning system is in place, you can keep using goal loops to build more systems that work for you.

Whenever you feel like failing, always change the plans, but never change the goals.

This comment is true many times. It's all about persistence. However, I just finished a Harvard course entirely on this question – is Persistence a panacea for everything? It turns out that it isn't. The purpose of a goal loop is to pause and ask the three questions:

- What went well and why?
- What didn't go well?
- What did you learn?

Goal loops put past failures behind you. But they also give you a fresh start. They give you a moment to pause and ask yourself – do I need a new plan? Do I need to shift my goal a

bit? Do I need to pause this goal and work on something more important? Persistence is important. But it's also important to be mindful and intentional about the choices you're making, and which goals you are pursuing.

LESSONS LEARNED in the CHAT:

Even if I fail it's still half of my journey.

Thank you so much. I am learning a lot from here that there's always a way things will flow provided you get started, and this is where many people think that they have failed, but it's a goal loop.

A lot of times when someone talks about goals, I tend to think of them as the end result of grand schemes. What I've learned today is that every single task we decide to complete is a goal, and that taking time to review and celebrate the small success propels me towards achieving my bigger goals.

Tools & Helpful Links:

Websites

Life Changing Principles   https://lifechangingprinciples.com/

Worksheet
- Practice Goal Loops
  http://www.unitedfamilies.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/LeAnn-Hunt-Goal-Loop-Worksheet.pdf

Videos:

- "Three Habits of Personal Accountability" (2:27)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0puE3NbASf8

- "Accountability is a Love Language" (12:13)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVJgy-uGyw4

  > Highly-viewed TEDX talk. African woman explains the importance of identifying: 1) What happened? and 2) What is the plan?

- "Dream Chasing: A Complete Guide for Helping You Reach Your Goals" (6:11)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpKvs-apvOs

Articles:

- "What is Goal Setting & How to do it right!"
  https://positivepsychology.com/goal-setting/

- "10 Tips to set Goals and Achieve them"
  https://www.betterup.com/blog/how-to-set-goals-and-achieve-them#:~:text=Goal%2Dsetting%20is%20the%20process,within%20a%20specific%20time%20frame.

Appendix A

Worksheet:

GOAL LOOPS

What went well & why?

What didn't go well?

What did you learn?

What went well & why?

What didn't go well?

What did you learn?

What went well & why?

What didn't go well?

What did you learn?

What went well & why?

What didn't go well?

What did you learn?

Presentation Slides:

Why do you want to get to the flag?

PURPOSE

OUTCOME

TAKEAWAY

Life Changing Principles
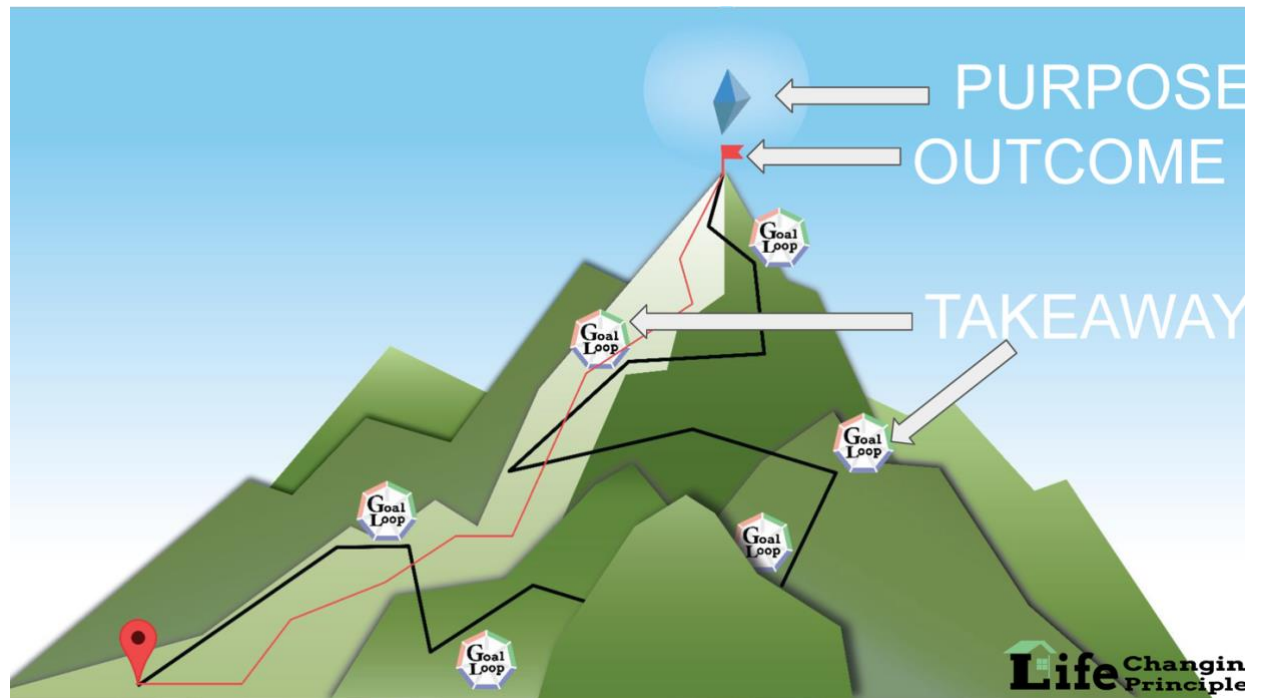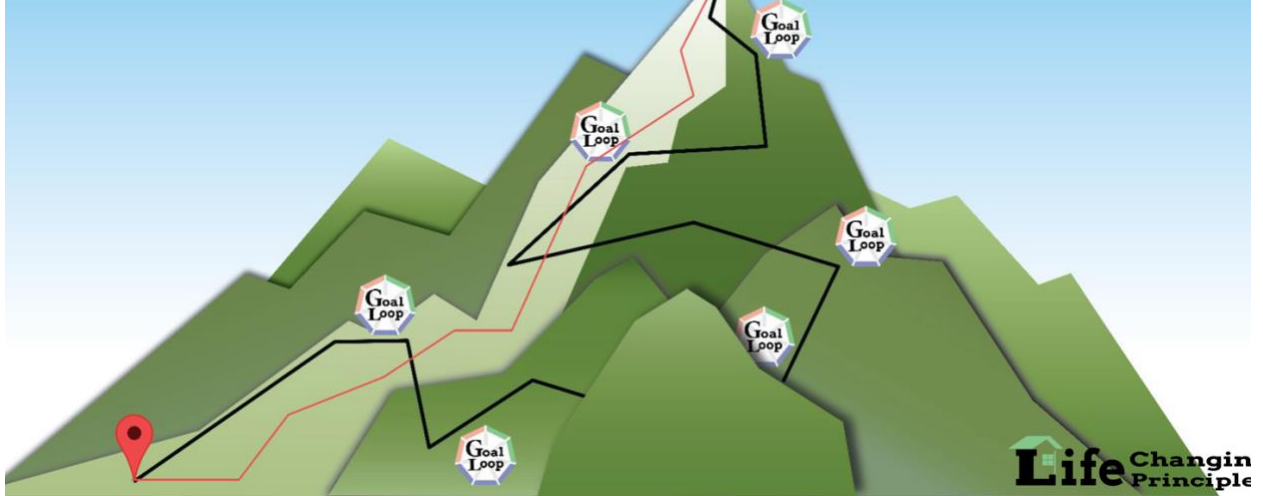
Is this *MY* Goal?

Principle #2

Honor Your Autonomy and Own Your Goals

Who Owns the Goal?

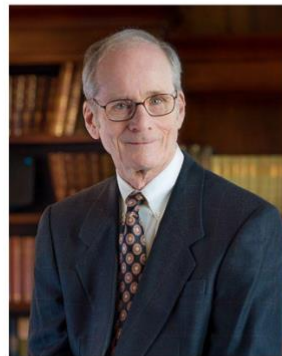Father Mum Professor

Girlfriend Me

Tik Tok

Life Changing Principles

Who Owns the Goal?

Where did you first get the idea?
Who would be happy if you met the goal?
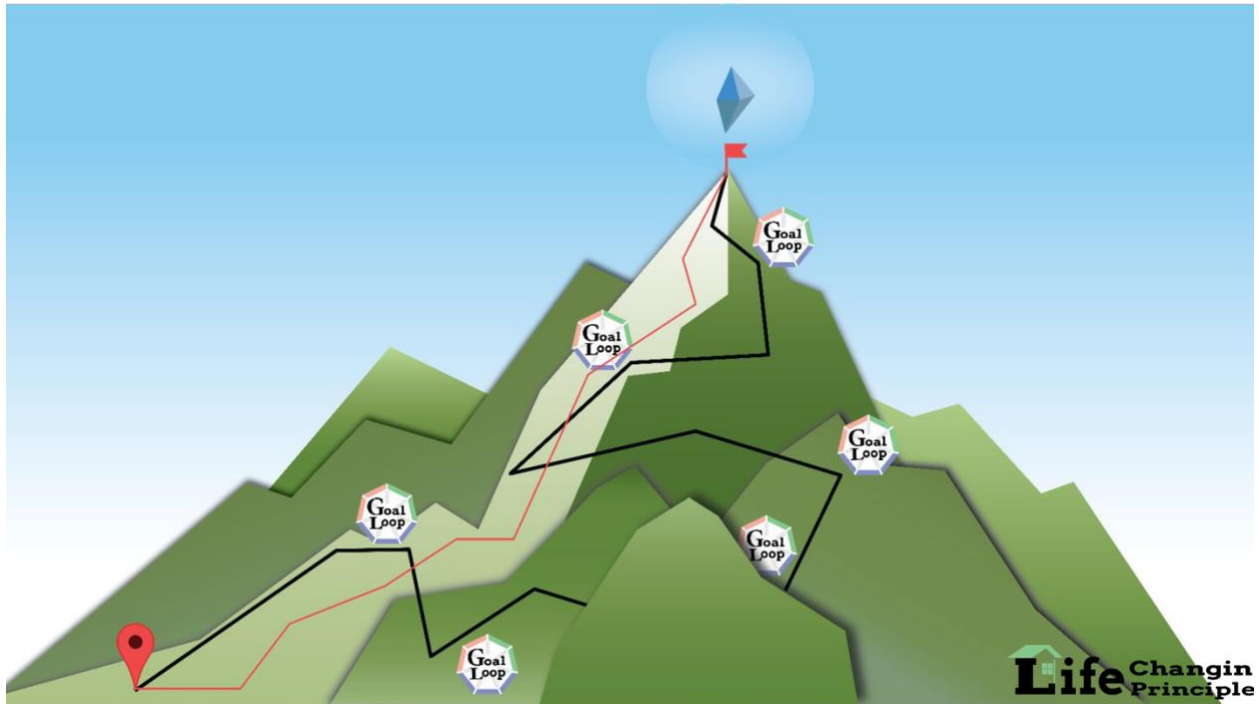Do you feel pressured to do the goal?

Life Changing Principles

Richard Ryan   Edward Deci

Life Changing Principles

Goal Loops

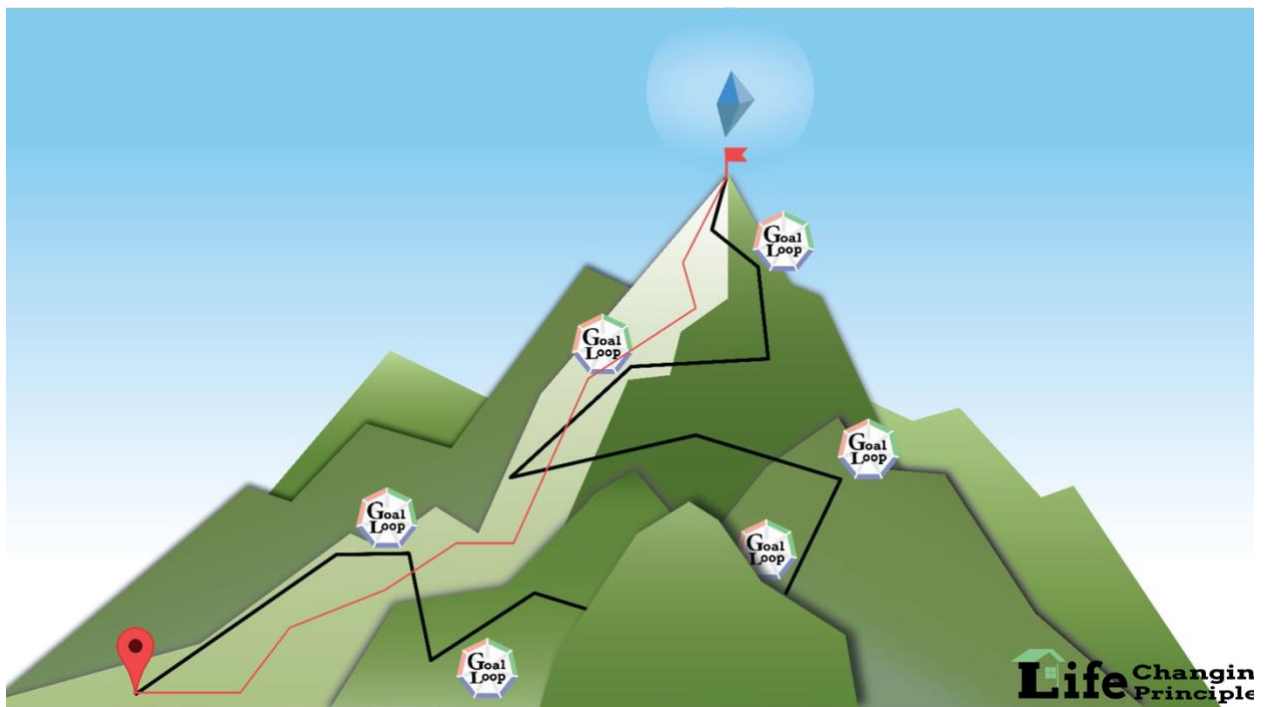| What went well & why?	What didn't go well?	What did you learn?

Goal Loops

Martin Seligman
Father of Positive Psychology

1. What went well?
   a. Brain searches for positive
2. and why?
   a. Your explanations change
3. What didn't go well?
   a. You face reality
4. What did you learn?
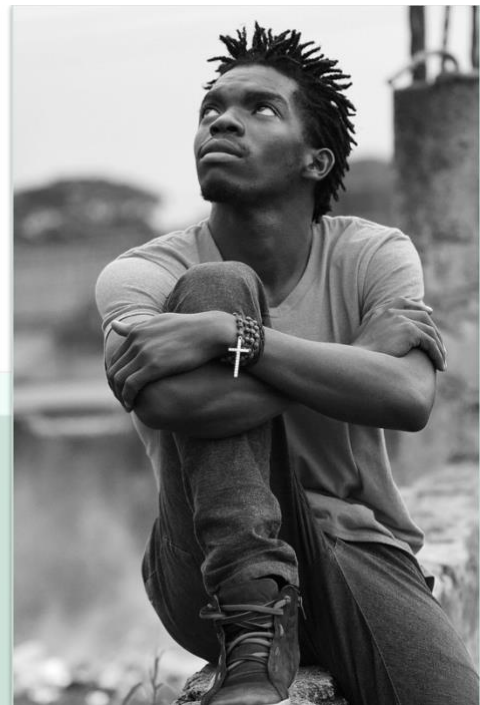   a. Finding words cements the learning.

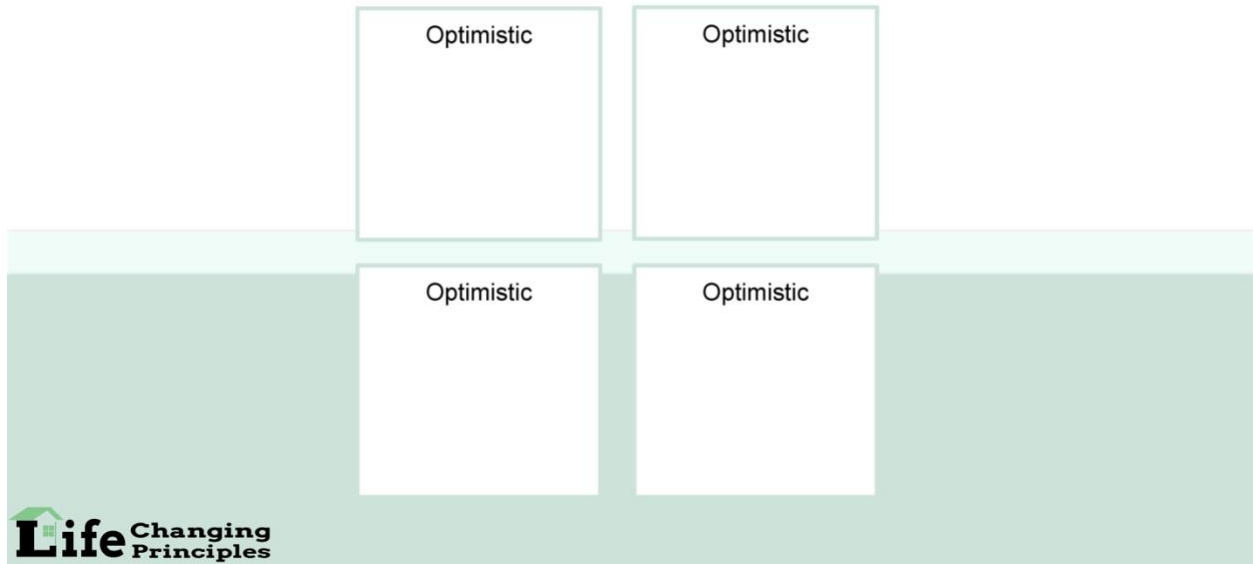# I Need a Volunteer

It's Just a Page

Principle #4

Overcome the Fear of Failure - It's Just One Page in your Story

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Ugandan Jobs Study

Rasul, I., Bassi, V., Bandiera, O., Burgess, R., Vitali, A., & Sulaiman, M. (2023). The Search for Good Jobs: Evidence from a Six-year Field Experiment in Uganda. Journal of Labor Economics. https://doi.org/10.1086/728429

Ugandan Jobs Study

Optimistic	Optimistic
Optimistic	Optimistic

Life Changing Principles

Ugandan Jobs Study

Optimistic 20%	Optimistic 20%
Optimistic 20%	Optimistic 20%

Life Changing Principles

Ugandan Jobs Study

	Trained	Untrained
	Optimistic 20%	Optimistic 20%
	Optimistic 20%	Optimistic 20%

Life Changing Principles

Ugandan Jobs Study

	Trained	Untrained
	Optimistic 30%	Optimistic 20%
	Optimistic 30%	Optimistic 20%

Life Changing Principles

Ugandan Jobs Study

	Trained	Untrained
Matched	Optimistic 30%	Optimistic 20%
Unmatched	Optimistic 30%	Optimistic 20%

Life Changing Principles

Ugandan Jobs Study

	Trained	Untrained
Matched	DISCOURAGED WAITED	
Unmatched	Optimistic INTENSE SEARCH	

Life Changing Principles

Ugandan Jobs Study

5 Years Later

	Trained	Untrained
Matched	Lower Earnings Lower Quality Jobs Lower Quality Firm Unemployed	
Unmatched	Higher Earnings Higher Quality Jobs Higher Quality Firm Employed	

Life Changing Principles

Ugandan Jobs Study

	Trained	Untrained
Matched		
Unmatched	TRAINED OPTIMISTIC NOT DISCOURAGED TAKE ACTION	

Life Changing Principles

No One Is Coming

Principle #4

Stop Waiting - Take Initiative and Ask for Help
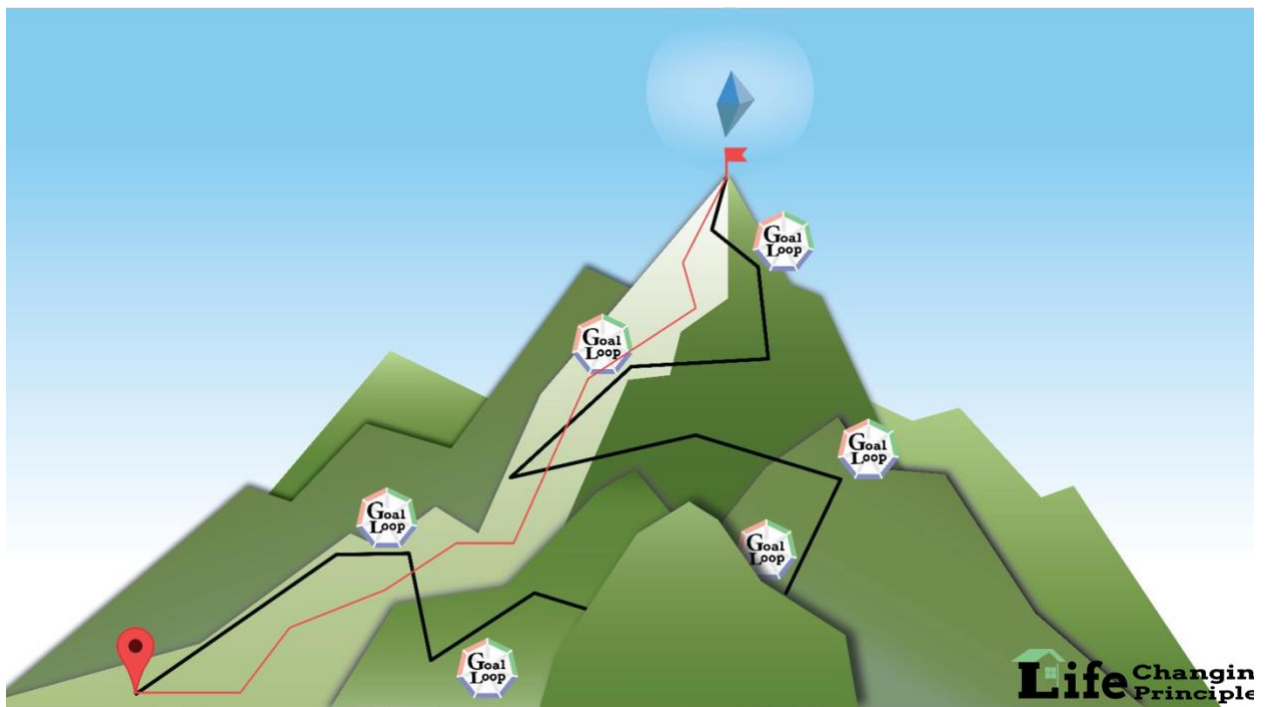

Tal Ben-Shahar

Harvard University

Positive Psychology

Most popular class in Harvard history

If it is to be
it is up to me

CREATE YOUR FUTURE

1. Why This Goal?
2. Is this *MY* Goal?
3. Goal Loops
4. It's Just a Page
5. No One Is Coming

Life Changing Principles