



Reigniting Your Purpose

An Experience on Reducing Cognitive Friction,
Reigniting your Purpose, and Leading with Intention



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Why is Purpose important?



What purpose does

- Gives meaning
- Stay connected
- Gives direction
- Clarity
- Process stress
- Removes friction



How your brain responds

- Pays more attention
- Activates motivation and reward pathways
- Better decision making
- Lowers threat response
- Activates the sympathetic nervous system



How you feel and act

- Focused
- In control
- Motivated
- Intentional
- Energized
- Happier
- More confident

Purpose is like a cheat sheet. It makes everything you do easier and more enjoyable.

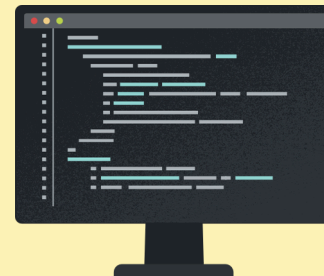


Your brain was NOT designed for this much noise.

*Notifications /
Interruptions
250-300/day*



*Meetings
5-15+/week*



Every decision costs energy. Every interruption pulls attention. Every unresolved thought occupies mental space.

Cognitive Energy Is Finite

What Drains the Jar

- Decision Fatigue
- Switching between tasks
- Unclear priorities
- Open loops
- Emotional labour
- Clutter
- Trying to remember everything
- Notifications / Interruptions



What the Jar Is For

- Focus
- Decision Making
- Problem solving
- Creativity
- Staying calm under pressure
- Communication
- Strategic Planning
- Doing meaningful work

Most of us are spending our best energy reacting instead of creating — and the jar empties before the real work begins.

Notifications & Interruptions

Recovery Time  **23 Minutes / 17 secs**

Your brain has to remember:

- What was I doing?
- Where was I in the process?
- What was I thinking?
- What matters next?

Drains time & energy

The cost is not just the interruption — it is the recovery time after it – Gloria Mark – UC

What's emptying Your Jar?

What drains your mental energy during the day?

What decisions feel repetitive?

What interruptions pull you away from important work?

What creates the most friction in your day?

What is one change I can make immediately to reduce my energy expenditure?

The Brain Under Overload



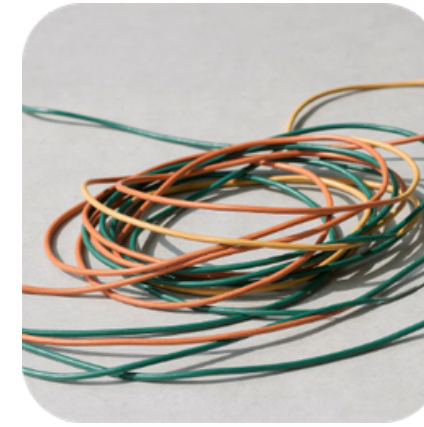
Prefrontal Cortex Fatigue

- CEO – Thinking brain
- Planning
- Reasoning
- Judgement
- Decision making
- Strategic thinking
- Problem solving
- Intentional leadership



Emotional Regulation Drops

- Amygdala takes over.
- Emotional regulation.
- Emotionally reactive.
- Survival Mode
- Start of reactive leadership



Physiological Effects

- Cortisol (stress hormone) spikes,
- Sympathetic nervous system activated
- Fight or Flight
- Muscles tension
- Exhaustion



Thinking Collapse

- Creativity
- Innovation
- Strategy thinking
- Stops generating new ideas
- Managing immediate threats

The Modern Noise Epidemic

Fragmented attention — the relentless pulling of the mind in dozens of directions simultaneously. And there is a dimension of this exhaustion that is rarely named: emotional suppression.

External Noise Sources

- Notifications
- Interruptions
- Meeting culture
- Open-plan office environments
- Expectation of constant availability

Internal Noise Sources

- Emotional suppression
- Imposter syndrome
- Unspoken anxiety
- Unprocessed stress
- Self-doubt
- Pressure to keep up

The Compound Effect

- Recovery time disappears
- Loss of clarity
- Mental clutter builds
- Priorities become blurred
- Lack of focus
- Brain stays on alert

"People are exhausted from pretending they're okay." — Brené Brown

The Brain Is for Thinking, Not Holding

When the Brain Tries to Hold Everything

- Mental bandwidth is full – no space for thinking
- Creative connections can't find each other
- Brain fog sets in
- Listening becomes shallow
- Reactive rather than intentional
- Brain scans for what forgot
- Uses up our working memory
- Attention becomes divided
- Make more mistakes
- Slower processing speed

When You Offload to External Systems

- **Innovate**
- **Connect**
- **Listen**
- **Think**
- **Create**
- **Lead with Intension**
- **Garden (weed, time of year, watering, sunlight)**
- **Brain dumping** — capturing every open loop
- **Organization** — frees mental RAM
- **Routines** — eliminate thoughts (ex. driving)
- **Calendaring** — time-block = deep work and recovery

“Your brain is brilliant at processing, and terrible at storage.” David Allen

Signal = Purpose 80/20 rule

What Lives in the 80% (Signal)

- Developing your highest-potential
- Strategic thinking
- Direction
- Creativity
- Innovation
- Effective decision making
- Doing the deep work

What Lives in the 20% (Noise)

- Meetings without clear purpose or direction
- Emails that could be delegated, automated, or eliminated
- Decisions others are capable of making
- Reactivity to urgency that is not genuinely important

Steve Jobs believed: Every unnecessary decision steals energy from meaningful thinking.

Stop searching. Start building.



Purpose is built in small moments

- Time
- Life experiences
- small moments
- Choices
- Consistent Actions



Purpose is built through small acts

- Advocating for something you believe in
- Helping someone feel seen
- Doing something because it matters



Purpose is built through small contributions

- Ideas shared in meetings
- A helpful comment
- Thoughtful decisions

Purpose is not a lightning bolt. It is a pattern — recognized over time, in the moments when you were most fully yourself.



The Purpose Spectrum

Here is a roadmap to help you recognize what brings you alive, what gives you meaning, and where your purpose may already exist.

Joy

What consistently brings you genuine delight.

Strengths

Where do you operate with effortless excellence? The work that energizes you.

Curiosity

What pulls your attention without effort? What subjects make you lose track of time while learning?

Flow

What makes time disappear completely?

Contribution

Where do people naturally seek you out for help, guidance, or perspective?

Impact

What feels meaningful even when it's difficult? What makes you proud?

Purpose is a living Spectrum of signals coexisting together to create a life that genuinely feels meaningful.

Recognizing your Signal

- When do I feel most useful?
- What problems do people naturally come to me for?
- What work feels meaningful even when difficult?
- What makes time disappear completely?
- What strengths do I use without forcing them?
- What contribution gives me energy?

List one area you care about protecting, improving, or building?

Reactive Leadership vs. Intentional Leadership

Reactive Leadership

- Urgency-driven — responds to the loudest issue
- Emotionally depleted from absorbing team stress without recovery
- Multitasking — illusion of productivity
- Fragmented attention — busy but disconnected from what matters
- Decision fatigue = judgment by end of day
- Responding to the environment not shaping it
- Culture = chronic overload and low psychological safety

Intentional Leadership

- Purpose-driven — clear values and direction
- Protects cognitive energy
- Creates space before reacting
- Focused on signal over noise — prioritizes
- Protects deep work
- Leads with presence
- Uses systems to reduce friction and automate the predictable

Intentional Leadership is a set of practiced skills, supported by systems, and reinforced by self-awareness.

Goals vs Purpose

Goals

Give the brain a Target

Move us toward our signal



Purpose

Gives the brain direction

Is our Signal

BOTH – Activate motivation, focus, reward pathways

PURPOSE – drives you after GOAL is achieved

Michael Phelps – A Purpose Driven Life

Signal vs Noise Audit

Signal - deserves your energy

- What am I doing that supports my purpose?
- How often am I using my strengths?
- How am I creating meaningful impact?
- What helps me lead with intention?
- What am I doing that creates clarity, connection, or progress?

Noise - pulls you away from purpose

- What drains energy without adding value?
- What decisions do I repeat too often?
- What interruptions keep taking me off track?
- What am I doing out of habit, pressure, or reactivity?
- What can I delegate?

Whats your percentage?

Staying tuned in to your Signal

It's in your control

Intentional Mornings

- Protect first 60–90 minutes – sets the neurological tone for the day.

Decision Reduction

- Standardize predictable choices:
 - meals,
 - clothing,
 - processes,
- Delegate
- Decision Matrix

Batching & Automation

- Group similar tasks emails, check-ins, administrative work .
- Automate
- Systemize
- Delegate

Environmental Organization

- Reduce physical and digital clutter.
- Clean and organize all environments.
- Reduce shared spaces.

Intentional Boundaries

- Guardrails
- Say no to the non essential
- Limit availability

Reduce Before You Add

The Subtraction List

- Distractions
- Obligations
- Clutter
- Decisions
- Interruptions
- Unnecessary meetings

Brain Based

- Nervous system calms
- Mental bandwidth opens
- Attention improves
- Working memory improves
- Emotional regulation strengthens
- Brain directs energy easier to what matters

One well-removed friction point is worth ten new productivity strategies.



Your Signal System Framework

NOISE

- **Reactive habits** — automatic responses not intentional choice
- **Unnecessary decisions** — anything that can be standardized or eliminated
- **Clutter** — physical, digital, and cognitive
- **Emotional masking** — the cognitive cost of performing composure
- **Notifications** — the most reliable destroyer of deep attention
- **Multitasking** — the illusion of efficiency

SIGNAL

- Determine your natural **strengths** and areas of excellence
- **Purpose** — what gives your work meaning and direction
- **Flow** — the work that energizes you
- **Meaningful work** — contribution that matters beyond the task itself
- **Intentional leadership** — choices made from values
- **Clarity** — the felt sense of knowing what matters and why

SYSTEMS

- **Routines** — predictable rhythms
- **Automation** — tools and processes that handle the repetitive
- **Organization** — external structures that free internal mental space
- **Scheduling** — intentional time-blocking aligned with energy, not just tasks
- **Boundaries** — the non-negotiable conditions that make sustainable leadership possible
- **Intentional workdays** — designed on purpose, from purpose.

Your Signal System is a personally designed operating model for leading with clarity, energy, and intention — every day.

Build Your Signal System

Noise

What needs reducing/removing?

Examples:

- unnecessary notifications
- repeated questions
- unclear processes
- too many meetings
- cluttered inbox
- open loops
- reactive habits

Signal

What needs more space, protection, and attention?

Examples:

- meaningful work
- leadership priorities
- connection with people
- strengths
- values
- deep work
- thoughtful decisions
- creativity

System

What structure will help protect the signal?

Examples:

- decision rules
- templates
- routines
- calendar blocks
- automation
- checklists
- shared processes
- notification windows

What are 3 changes you can implement this week?

Individual purpose is powerful. Collective purpose is transformational.
Culture does not come from policies. It comes from leaders.

1

Leader Modeling

As the leader goes, so goes the team. Culture is caught before it is taught.

2

Psychological Safety

Create conditions where they can use their strengths and bring in the best version of themselves.

3

Visible Impact

Connect and show the impact and outcomes of their work.
Creates meaning and connection.

4

Personal Strength Alignment

understand an individual's strengths and passion.
This creates a team that operates in a zone of energized contribution.

5

Integrate Purpose

Purpose lives every day. Create a department Purpose statement.

You are a purpose

Research consistently demonstrates that a person's direct manager is the single greatest influence on their daily experience of work — more than compensation, company culture, or organizational strategy.

Good or Bad



Go Light Something Up!

Today – is the beginning of easier days, happier environments, and meaningful work and connections.



1. Sever the Noise

Identify cognitive friction and remove it with intention.



2. Name Your Purpose

Write it down. Even imperfectly.



3. Build Your Protective Systems

Design routine, boundaries, or structures.



4. Lead Out Loud

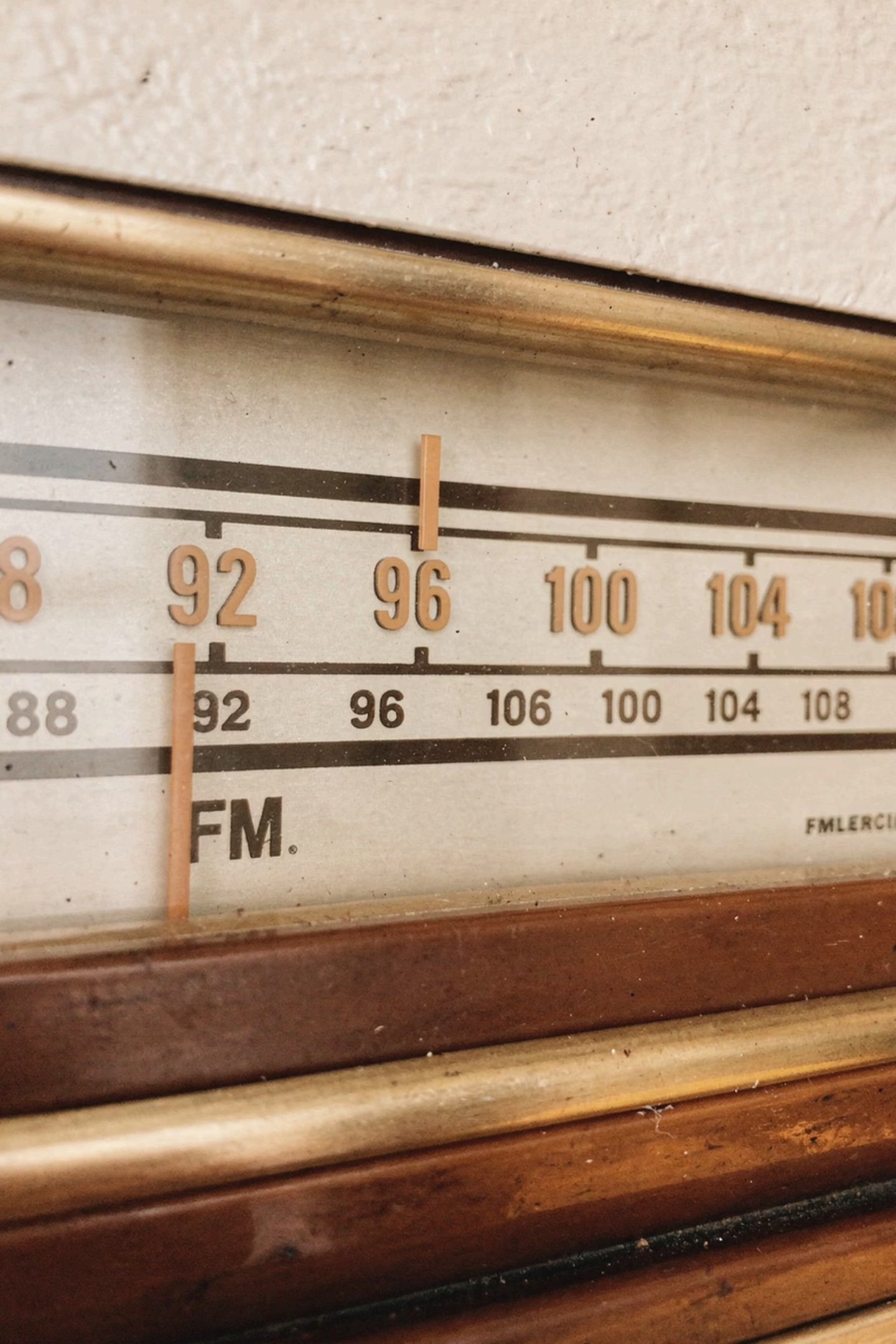
Live your purpose visibly. Name it in conversations.



5. Remember the Ripple

On hard days, remember: your influence extends far beyond what you can see. Every intentional choice you make today shapes someone else's tomorrow.

"Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive — and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive." — Howard Thurman



Signal. Not noise.

"If you don't know what your signal is,
you'll spend your day reacting to noise."

— Steve Jobs