



## This Is Your Life Podcast

Episode 32: "How to Create a Life Plan"

Published: November 14, 2012

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Hello and welcome to this episode of *This Is Your Life*. My name is Michael Hyatt, and this is the podcast dedicated to intentional leadership. My goal is to help you live with more passion, work with greater focus, and lead with extraordinary influence.

In this episode, we'll be talking about "How to Create a Life Plan." As you may know, I wrote an e-book on this topic about a year and a half ago called *Creating Your Personal Life Plan*, and amazingly, it's been downloaded more than 170,000 times. Later on in this episode I'll tell you how to get your copy for free if you don't have it. I want to share with you in this episode what a life plan is, why you need one, and how to begin creating one.

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Let's talk about "How to Create a Life Plan." Over the course of my life, I've worked with a lot of planners. As a corporate executive I've worked with *strategic planners*. As an individual, I've worked with *financial planners*. Now, as a speaker, I work with *event planners*. As the father of five daughters I've worked with my share of wedding planners. In fact, four of them to be exact. To be more accurate, I've paid them.

I've met very few life planners, people who have a written plan for their lives. Most people I've found are passive spectators watching their lives unfold a day at a time. They may plan their careers, the building of a new home, even a vacation, but it never occurs to them to plan their lives. As a result, when they get into their 40s, their 50s, sometimes even their 60s, many of them are left wondering what went wrong.

Their health is failing. Maybe their marriage is broken, or their career is stalled, or their spiritual lives seem dead and unfulfilling. They become victims of what I call *the drift*. The drift for me is a metaphor for living a life without a plan. For example, years ago Gail and I went to Maui to celebrate our anniversary. This was a great vacation. On the second day, we took snorkeling lessons. Neither of us had done it before, but we started there at the hotel in the swimming pool. Then we progressed to the coral reef next to our hotel.

We loved it. It was like swimming in a huge aquarium. Later that same day, we rented some snorkeling gear and determined we would venture out on our own. We discovered a new sport we could do together, so we were pretty excited about it. The next morning we went out on the beach. There wasn't another soul around. It was like a scene from *The Blue Lagoon*...pristine, tranquil. It was stunning! We couldn't wait to get into the water.

As we paddled around in the lagoon, facing down in the water, we were mesmerized by the aquatic life teeming just a few feet below us. We saw these brightly colored fish, gently swaying plants, and, of course, the coral reef itself, which was alive with activity. It was truly a "Wow!" experience. At some point, I decided to lift my head out of the water and look around. I don't know why; I just did. I gasped. We were caught in a riptide, and we had drifted more than a mile out to sea. The shoreline looked impossibly far away, and our hotel...*all* the hotels...looked like toys in the distance.

I immediately shouted to Gail, who fortunately was still just a few feet from me. She looked up, saw our situation, and then she looked at me in near panic. "Oh, my gosh! What are we going to do?" Fortunately, we had a "boogie board" with us. We brought that along so we could place shells and other items we had hoped to find on the ocean floor, so we both grabbed onto it, and we started paddling and kicking for our lives, literally.

I think we must have swum for more than an hour, but eventually, as we neared the shore, we stood up in the shallow water, and we trudged up to the beach. We collapsed in the sand. We were utterly exhausted, and we haven't been snorkeling since. We realized just how close we had come to disaster. This was not the outcome we had intended when we innocently slipped into the water that morning.

So many people experience this same kind of thing with their lives. They look up, and they find themselves far away from where they thought they would be at this point. Let me ask you a question. Does this describe your life or perhaps just some aspect of your life? Unfortunately, most people won't change course until something traumatic happens that gets their attention. It happened to me.

Several years ago I was in New York City on business. I was having a relaxing dinner with one of my colleagues, and suddenly, as we were finishing our meal, I started to have chest pains. Initially, I tried to ignore them. I kind of shifted my position in the chair, hoping it would go away, but then slowly and quietly I began to feel this sense of panic. I felt the room was kind of closing in on me, and I sat there maybe for five or ten minutes (it seemed like for an eternity) debating what I should do next.

Finally, I overcame my embarrassment, and I blurted out to my friend, "I think I may be having a heart attack!" My friend immediately took control. It was unbelievable. He paid our bill, hailed a cab, got me to St. Vincent's Midtown Hospital in midtown Manhattan, which happened to be the one that was closest to our restaurant. After some preliminary tests, the doctor said, "Look, all of your vitals look fine. You're not having a heart attack or heart problems, but just to be safe we'd like to keep you overnight."

They strapped me into a biometric bed, and then they let me "rest." I say "rest" in quotation marks because it's pretty tough to sleep when you're all buckled in and wired up like you are in a biometric bed. Needless to say, I didn't sleep much. The next morning the doctor came in, and he said, "I'm not sure what happened last night, but your heart seems fine. I suggest you go to your primary care physician when you get back to Nashville and follow up on this."

My regular doctor didn't find any problems either. Nevertheless, I ended up in the hospital twice more over the next year, thinking each time I was having a heart attack. Nobody could find anything. I even saw a counselor wondering if perhaps I was experiencing some stress-induced panic attack of some kind. Finally, in desperation and thinking I might be going crazy, I made an appointment with a renowned cardiologist here in Nashville who had saved the life of one of our authors who raved about him to me.

I went to him, and the cardiologist ran me through a battery of tests, and then he called me back to his office. He said, "Mike, your heart is fine. In fact, it's in great shape. Your problem is twofold: acid reflux, probably as a result of a small hiatal hernia, and stress." Then he continued. He said, "About 30 percent of my patients who think they're having heart problems have an acid reflux problem. The symptoms are very similar. Fortunately, it's easy to treat."

Then he warned me. He said, "Stress is also something you need to address primarily through rest and exercise. If you don't make this a priority, you could be back in here with a real heart problem," which was, of course, a giant wakeup call to me and got my attention, because I *didn't* want to end up with a heart attack. I realized if I didn't do something different, I was going to arrive at a destination I didn't choose just like we ended up in the drift story at a destination we didn't choose. I was going to have to get more intentional about my life, so as a result, I ended up engaging in this life planning process with an executive coach who I hired by the name of Daniel Harkavy.

What is a life plan? A life plan is a short, written document (8 to 12 pages long max). It's created by you for you. It describes how you want to be remembered. It articulates your personal priorities. And it provides the action plans necessary to take you from where you are to where you want to be in every major area of your life. Most of all, it's a living document that you'll tweak and adjust as necessary.

That's it. That's my definition of a life plan, but don't be deceived by its brevity because length does not necessarily correlate to impact. Think about this. The Gettysburg Address is only 256 words, a little more than a page, and yet it had an enormous impact in history. The Declaration of Independence is

only 902 words, about four pages. The Sermon on the Mount is about 2,500 words long, about 11 pages. Just because it's brief doesn't mean it can't have a significant impact on your life. It's like the rudder on a boat.

Here's my premise for this episode: *a life plan contains your answers to three powerful questions.*

1. **How do I want to be remembered?** I've often found in planning anything, the best place to begin is at the end. What outcome do you want? How do you want this story to end? In *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People*, Stephen Covey says that Habit 2 is to begin with the end in mind. This is a good practice on anything, especially your life.

In his excellent book, *The E-Myth Revisited*, Michael Gerber makes the ultimate application of this principle. If you're at a place where you're listening to me right now that you can close your eyes as I read this, I'm going to read just a segment from his first chapter. I'd love for you to do that if you can. Don't do this if you're driving a car or operating heavy machinery, but if you're in a place where you can close your eyes, do it. Here's what Gerber says.

"I'd like you to imagine that you're about to attend one of the most important occasions of your life. It will be held in a room sufficiently large to seat all of your friends, your family, your business associates and anyone and everyone to whom you are important and who is important to you. Can you see it? The walls are draped with deep golden tapestries. The lighting is subdued, soft, casting a warm glow on the faces of your expectant guests.

The chairs are handsomely upholstered in a golden fabric that matches the tapestries. The golden carpeting is deeply piled. At the front of the room is a dais, and on the dais a large, beautifully decorated table, with candles burning at either end. On the table, in the center, is the object of everyone's attention: a large, shining, ornate box. And in the box is...you! Stiff as the proverbial board. Do you see yourself lying in the box, not a dry eye in the room?"

After reading this short vignette in *The E-Myth Revisited*, I asked myself, "How do I want to be remembered when I'm dead?" It's a sobering question, isn't it? In fact, it's an incredibly powerful question, because to answer it you have to fast forward to the end of your life and look back. It forces you to put everything else into perspective.

There is a great commencement address the late Steve Jobs gave at Stanford University. He said, "Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything—all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure—these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important." I wonder if he knew how prophetic he was being when he gave that commencement address.

Regardless, in creating a life plan and answering this first question, "How do I want to be remembered?" it's helpful to identify the key people in your life. How do you want them to remember you? I have seven individuals or groups who matter most to me in my life plan.

1. God.
2. Gail.
3. My children.
4. My parents.
5. My colleagues.
6. My friends.
7. My followers.

Your list may look slightly different. It may be in a different order. Then I wrote under each one of those headings how I want them to remember me. For example, here is what I wrote under Gail. This is how I want Gail to remember me if I happen to precede her in death. Under her name I wrote, "I want Gail to remember how I loved her, understood her, helped her accomplish her dreams. I want her to remember specific times we shared together: times we laughed, times we cried, times we spent discussing things that were important to both of us, and times we just held one another and watched the sunset."

Under the section called "My Colleagues," this is how I want the people I work with to remember me. I wrote, "I want my colleagues to remember my servant leadership, my integrity, my humility, and my commitment to having fun. I want them to remember how much they learned and grew as a result of knowing me. Most of all, I want them to remember how I stood for the greatness in them and empowered them to accomplish far more than they ever thought possible."

The idea here is to be clear about the outcome. How do you want to be remembered by each of these people or each of these groups? Mark Twain once said, "Let us endeavor so to live that when we come to die even the undertaker will be sorry." Creating a life plan begins with answering that question, "How do I want to be remembered?" A powerful, powerful question and it's the first question you need to answer if you want to create a life plan.

**2. What matters most to you?** Maybe you've never given yourself permission to ask this question. You know what's important to your parents. You may know what's important to your spouse. You most certainly know what's important to your boss. But what is important to *you*? What matters most? This is really a question about priorities, and the life plan itself is built on a metaphor that compares your "life accounts" to bank accounts.

This, by the way, is something I learned from Daniel Harkavy at Building Champions. I highly recommend his company, Building Champions. If you want to go deeper on this topic, you can find them at [BuildingChampions.com](http://BuildingChampions.com). In this metaphor, each account has a certain value, just like a bank account. A few have large balances. Others might have some respectable balances. One or two might be overdrawn.

For example, your career might be going great, but your health account is overdrawn, where you're eating too much junk food and you're not exercising regularly. That was my experience. Or perhaps, you're in great shape physically, but your marriage has gone flat. You and your spouse have become like strangers living in the same house. Your goal in this section is to answer the question, "What is important to me?"

Again, let me illustrate from my own life plan. I have eight different accounts, and they fall out in this order:

1. Spiritual.
2. Self.
3. Gail.
4. Children.
5. Friends.
6. Career.
7. Finances.
8. Ministry.

For me, number one probably is no surprise to you. It might be, but number one for me is spiritual. Spiritual people often put this account first, but after that is when people get confused. What comes next? Your spouse? Your kids? Your career? I want to suggest that you consider putting yourself next. Why?

What does the flight attendant say right before the plane takes off? "In the event of a change in cabin pressure, panels above your head..." I have this memorized because I've done it so many times. "...will open revealing oxygen masks. If this happens, reach up and pull the mask toward you until the tube is fully extended. Place the mask over your nose and mouth, slip the elastic strap over your head, and adjust the mask as necessary. Breathe normally and know that oxygen is flowing. Remember to secure your own mask before assisting others."

The bottom line is this: If you don't take care of yourself, you can't take care of anyone else. You're not in shape to take care of somebody else. You have to take care of yourself in order to be spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, and physically available to others. For example, if I don't feed myself spiritually, I don't have the spiritual resources necessary to maintain perspective when things get crazy. This is one of the reasons I read the Bible and pray daily.

If I don't look after my own health and I become sick, I'm not much use to my family or my employees. This is why I run and try to eat nutritionally sound food. If I don't make the effort to work through my own emotional wounds, I end up reacting to others instead of being in a position to serve them. That's why I think counseling and therapy is a valuable endeavor for many people. If I don't get sufficient rest, I get grumpy. No one wants to be around me, and that's why I try to sleep a solid seven hours every night.

This is all part of the discipline of self-care and why I encourage you to put yourself second on your priority list. Not because you're being selfish, not because you think you're more important or more valuable than everyone else, but simply for the fact you can't serve them adequately unless you take care of yourself. In creating a life plan, it's helpful to identify the main categories of your life. Let's call them "life accounts." Once you do that, you can prioritize them, and that's all you have to do in response to question number two.

*What matters most to you? What are your priorities and how would you order them?* Your list doesn't have to look like mine. It doesn't have to look like your spouse's. It doesn't have to look like your parents'. This is *your* list that is not going to be graded. It's really for you to determine what matters most to you.

**3. How can I get from here to where I want to be?** The other day I got to thinking a life plan is a little bit like a GPS system. As I reflected on this, I jotted down (in fact, I blogged on it) and thought this is true in at least seven ways.

Number one, *a GPS gets you where you want to go faster and with less hassle.* That's the whole purpose of any plan, to make sure you can get to your intended destination, whether it's building a piece of furniture or building a house or building a rocket ship. It doesn't matter what it is, but the idea is to get you where you want to go faster and with less hassle.

Number two, *a GPS starts by asking you to input your destination.* If you don't know where you're going, it can't help you get there. The same thing with a life plan. It won't do you any good until you answer that first question: "How do you want to be remembered? What is the destination you're aiming for?"

Number three, *a GPS determines your current location.* That's where it always begins. "You are here." The same thing with a life plan. You have to be honest. You have to recognize where you are. And you have to acknowledge that before you can go anywhere else.

Number four, *a GPS plots the best route to take you where you want to go*. That's the whole idea behind a life plan. It doesn't mean it won't be revised. This is not going to be etched in concrete. You'll revise it and tweak it a lot, but at least it gives you a plan. It gives you a path to follow in getting from where you are to where you want to go.

Number five, *a GPS helps you get back on track when you take a wrong turn*. That's one of my favorite things about using a GPS system. When I do get off track, it doesn't chide me. It doesn't reprove me. It simply says something like, "Please make a legal U-turn at the next opportunity." Rather than making me feel wrong, it gets me back on track so I can get back on the path.

Number six, *a GPS requires an investment*. I think I paid about \$50 for the Tom-Tom GPS system I have on my iPhone. Now you have Google Maps. You have Apple Maps, but it sometimes does require an investment. A life plan is the same way. It's not going to require an investment of money, but it is going to require an investment of time to get a life plan, because you're going to have to think intentionally about your life and where you want it to go.

Number seven, *a GPS won't work unless it has a signal from above*. I'll let you figure that one out on your own, but I think that's a pretty clear reference that unless you're getting a signal from above, it's going to be tough to navigate through this life. I'm not saying you can't do it, but it's a whole lot easier when you have a clear signal.

So in creating your life plan, you create an action plan to get you from here to your destination. This is actually a series of action plans built around each one of the priorities you articulated in question number two. You do this for every major area of your life. It consists of three parts. In the e-book, if you go back and compare it, I actually have five parts, but two of them are optional, and I'm going to keep it really simple for the sake of this episode and focus on the three primary ones.

Again, this is the action plan for each one of these major priorities. First, it consists of an *envisioned future*. What does it look like, the place you're trying to get to? What does the destination or the outcome look like? Secondly, it consists of your *current reality*. Where are you now in relationship to your goal? What is your current reality? Thirdly, it consists of the *specific commitments* you're willing to make to get from here to get to there. Let's talk about these one at a time.

1. **An envisioned future.** This is where you describe how the account looks when you have a "positive net worth." In other words, in a financial account that's easy to see. If the number is positive, it's good; if it's negative or red, it's bad. Here you have to do a little more work. You need to describe this life account when it is functioning at its best using the present tense like it's already a reality.

For example, in my health account, here is how I describe my envisioned future: "I am lean and strong possessing vibrant health and extraordinary fitness. My heart is strong and healthy. My arteries are supple and clear of obstructions. My immune system is in excellent condition. I am disease, infection, and allergy resistant. I have more than enough energy to accomplish the tasks I undertake. This is

because I control my mental focus, work out six days a week, choose healthy foods, take supplements as needed, and get adequate rest."

I'm not saying this is my present reality. In fact, it's not. We were on vacation last week, and I ate terribly the whole time, but I'm getting it corrected this week. The point is in this envisioned future section, you're articulating what it looks like when it's operating at peak performance, in its perfect state, because you want to have a goal to shoot toward.

In my children account, I said, "I am close friends with each of my children. I demonstrate unconditional love and acceptance. They love to spend time with me because I'm a good listener, a positive encourager, and a creative problem solver. I'm a mentor, teaching them by word and deed. Whenever they wonder what it means to be a spiritual leader, a loving husband and father, a committed friend, or a successful businessman, they look at me and model my behavior. I am the patriarch of a dynasty of influential children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Together our lives are changing the world."

When I read that, it inspires me. It gives me clarity about my future, and it inspires me in the present to try to move myself incrementally toward that envisioned future.

**2. Your current reality.** Now is the time to be brutally honest with yourself. Where are you in relationship to your envisioned future? You can't pull any punches here. The more honest you can be, the more progress you'll see. I list these as a series of bullets, and I try to write down the first things that come to mind without too much analysis or self-reflection.

For example, in my health account, I wrote these bullets just recently when I reviewed my life plan. I said, "I feel great. My stamina is great. It's been a long time since I've been sick." Frankly, that has been my reality, and it still is. Another bullet: "I feel good about my weight and overall fitness." Another bullet: "I'm running four days a week for at least 60 minutes." Another bullet: "I'm not presently doing consistent strength training. I'm concerned this will eventually catch up with me." Now here is where I'm getting honest with what's missing. I said, "I'm eating pretty well, but I could be more consistent in avoiding high glycemic carbs."

Again, it's going to be different, obviously, for you. You're going to have different accounts. You're going to have a different reality, but the key is to be super honest. No one is going to see this except you, and the more honest you can be the better. I would share more and more examples, but frankly, it's too personal. That's just how you want it. You want it to be so personal, so honest, that if anyone else read it, you'd be embarrassed. Keep in mind you're not going to be sharing this document with anyone except for one or two people you'll intentionally enlist to keep you accountable if you choose to do that.

**3. Your specific commitments.** This is where you specifically commit to certain actions in order to move from your current reality to your envisioned future. Again, I list these as a series of bullets. For example, under my health account here are some of the specific commitments I made in my most

recent iteration of my life plan. I said, "I run or cross train four days a week." Another bullet: "I do strength training three days a week." Another bullet: "I drink two-and-a-half liters of water a day." Another bullet: "I make healthy food choices a la *The South Beach Diet*." Another bullet: "I get an annual physical and semi-annual dental checkup."

By the way, one of the beautiful things about a life plan is you have the ability to harness the power of incremental change over time. I've written a post on that, and I'll provide a link in the show notes to it. The point is you make these little decisions, these small commitments that create big results over time in your life. It's amazing what I've seen people do and what I've accomplished in my own life by articulating these clear, specific commitments as a part of my action plan.

Again, an *envisioned future*, your *current reality*, and your *specific commitments*. Those three aspects of an action plan and one action plan for each of these priorities. We've covered three questions in this episode. We've talked about, "How do you want to be remembered?" That's question one. We talked about question number two, "What matters most to you?" And question number three, "How can you get from here to where you want to be?"

I know we've just scratched the surface. I wanted to give you an introduction to this topic, because I think it is so vital if you're going to live an intentional life. If this sounds interesting to you, and if you want to go deeper and actually do this, I would encourage you to download my e-book, *Creating Your Personal Life Plan*. Again, you can find it for free at [MichaelHyatt.com/lifeplan](http://MichaelHyatt.com/lifeplan). Then schedule a day to get it done. Get alone by yourself, read through the e-book (it's not that long), and begin to map out a plan for your life.

Let's go now to a few listener questions. The first one is from Brad.

**Brad Blackman:** Hi, Michael. This is Brad Blackman, and you can find me online at [bradblackman.com](http://bradblackman.com). I'm calling from Nashville. My question is how much of your life plan do you create with your spouse? I believe it's essential for a husband and wife to be on the same page as far as their day-to-day activities and their bigger picture. So to what extent would you and your wife go about creating a life plan? Thank you and have a great day.

**Michael Hyatt:** Great question, Brad, and you're absolutely right. You must be aligned. You must be in sync with your spouse. That's the great part about doing a life plan. You find out quickly if you have different dreams, if you're not aligned, and if you're not in sync. What I would recommend and what Gail and I have done is we each worked on our own life plans separately. I did this before she did. In fact, a couple of years before she did because I was working, as I said earlier, with an executive coach to get this mapped out.

Then she eventually did it, and it was so much fun to compare notes and see how our dreams were similar and how they were different. We didn't see that as a bad thing. I tried to honor her dreams and what her goals were and to become fascinated by those and try to draw her out and ask questions.

"Why is that important to you? I think that's so interesting you included that under that life account. Can you explain more?"

I would find things I wanted to add to my life plan or places I wanted to get mine more in sync with hers. We don't have the same plan. We have our own plans, but they're definitely in sync. They're expressed differently. Her priorities aren't the same as my priorities. The first couple of them are, but beyond that they diverge, and that's okay.

The important thing is we're aware of one another's life plan. It gives an endless source of content to discuss. I would encourage you to both do it. Do *not* judge one another about the life plan but listen carefully and use it as an opportunity to get educated, to learn more, to become fascinated by your spouse, and really grow deeper in love. Yes, I would do it together.

The next question comes from Matthew.

**Matthew Green:** Hi, Michael. My name is Matthew Green, and I'm calling from Sydney, Australia. I run a new teacher mentoring website called [imanewteacher.com](http://imanewteacher.com). How do you create a measurable, challenging, and structured life plan while still remaining flexible and open to new ideas and innovations? Thank you so much for all you do through your site. It's a huge inspiration to so many.

**Michael Hyatt:** Thanks, Matthew. That's also a great question. You know, I think part of it is you just have to come to life planning with the mindset that this isn't the final word. This is not set in concrete. This is a draft of a plan that will change. It's inevitable that it will change. What I try to do is review my life plan every quarter, so I'm tweaking it every quarter. It's changing every quarter.

It's reflecting the reality of my life as it is now, and that's going to be different in three months. It's going to be different in six months, nine months, and twelve months, but I try to remain open to ideas, open to things that get interjected into my life that I couldn't have possibly known or considered when I was doing the life planning process, and that's okay.

So it's a living document. That's the key, and it's always subject to change. From my perspective as a Christian, it's always subject to be overridden by God's providence and God's will for my life. If that changes, that's okay by me. This is just a draft. It's just a path I'm taking until he shows me something different.

The next question is from Christopher.

**Christopher Scott:** Hi, Michael. This is Christopher Scott. I'm calling from Turlock, California. I blog at [christopherscottblog.com](http://christopherscottblog.com). I just was curious about what your thoughts are as far as goals in life planning regarding to faith and prayer. In the past, I used to always create really detailed goals and work on filling them out, but as I've grown in my faith a little bit longer, I've kind of wrestled with what it looks like to ask God about goals and how we let him lead us toward those goals. How do you check your goals out with him and how do those things go? I'm just curious to hear your thoughts.

**Michael Hyatt:** Wow! There is so much I could say on this, and maybe I answered this somewhat in my answer to the last question. I have a post I've written called, "Don't Leave God out of Your Plans." I have a link in the show notes where you can go read that, but I think sometimes people pit planning and prayer against one another, like if you're going to do one, you can't do the other. I think they go hand in hand.

The Bible talks a lot about planning. It's just that we have to keep our plans open to God's intervention or be willing to change if he directs us in a different way. That's all. The plan is not what's sovereign or the final determining factor; God is, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't plan. I think we plan, and we do it with an openness to his leading. I pray as a part of my life-planning process, and then I trust him to work in the planning process itself and direct me.

Somebody once said that it's almost impossible to steer a stationary object, and it's true in your life too. I think it's much easier for God to steer us if we're moving in some direction, even if it's slightly off kilter or in the wrong direction, but if we're doing it with the motivation that we ultimately want to please him and get to the destination he has for us, I think he'll be faithful to steer us in the right direction.

The last question comes from Lisa.

**Lisa Standring:** Hi, Michael. It's Lisa Standring from [everywomansmoney.com](http://everywomansmoney.com). My question is in regard to privacy concerning your life plan. I printed mine out. I had intended to look at it every Sunday night, but I found myself feeling rather shy and sheepish about somebody else finding it. I wonder if you could talk about that.

**Michael Hyatt:** Lisa, I think that's totally normal. If you've done your life plan properly, you are going to be embarrassed if somebody finds it because it's going to be a very honest document. Personally, I don't print my document out. I think you could print it out. You could put it in a desk drawer and keep it under lock and key if you want to. I just keep mine on my computer, and my computer is obviously password protected, but even the document is password protected. I use iWork Pages on the Mac, and it has a password function on it.

Could somebody break in and break that password? Yeah, and I'm not trying to discourage the CIA. If they decide they want to get something on my computer, they probably can do that. I'm just trying to discourage somebody from inadvertently finding it and getting to that information without my permission. I think password protection would be one way to do it if you keep it on your computer or in a locked drawer in your desk. That's a real concern. It's a legitimate concern, and I would urge you to do whatever you need to do in order to feel comfortable to be as honest as you can be in the life-planning process itself.

I want to leave you with this question, and I hope you'll leave a response on the blog post or on the show notes that accompany this episode. The question is...*Have you ever considered creating a life*

***plan and what would it make possible for you?*** You can answer at [MichaelHyatt.com/032](http://MichaelHyatt.com/032), as in episode #32.

It has been a few weeks since I mentioned my new audio course, "Everything You Need to Know to Get Published." So far, 600 people have bought the course and are on their way to getting published. If you've ever thought about writing a book but didn't know where to start, this course is for you. If you already have a book but want to do everything you can to make the biggest splash you can in the marketplace, this course is also for you.

It includes everything I've learned about publishing in more than 30 years in the industry as a publisher, most recently the CEO of Thomas Nelson, a literary agent and a two-time *New York Times* best-selling author. It's instilled into 21 audio sessions along with a workbook. I'm still offering a special discount and four free bonuses worth more than \$150. You can find out more if you're interested at [MichaelHyatt.com/getpublished](http://MichaelHyatt.com/getpublished).

The second announcement is my next podcast will be on the topic of ask me anything. I get all these random questions every week that don't really fit into a podcast episode, so I'm going to encourage you in this next episode, if you have a question about anything... It could be totally random. There is no topic. I'll try to arrange them into topics once I get them, but if you have a question on any topic, especially the ones I blog on like leadership, productivity, social media, or publishing, leave me a voicemail message at [MichaelHyatt.com/podcastquestion](http://MichaelHyatt.com/podcastquestion). This is a terrific way to cross-promote your blog or website, because I will link to it just like I did with the callers in this episode.

Well, that's about it for this episode of *This Is Your Life*. I'd be so grateful if you would rate my podcast on iTunes. That helps me tremendously with keeping my podcast visible so people who have never heard of it can discover it. If you'd like to comment on this episode, please go to [MichaelHyatt.com](http://MichaelHyatt.com). Go to the show notes for this episode and scroll down to the comments section. I would love to hear from you. Comment, question, whatever you have for me.

Until next time, remember: Your life is a gift. Now go make it count!