

Gino Wickman:

Being humble in life, I personally believe the journey is better, that I personally believe more people are attracted to you, you attract other like-minded people, you attract people that want to fight for you, the journey is more fun. And so that's all translated into energy as opposed to the arrogant person.

Speaker 2:

The EOS life is?

Mark O'Donnell:

Doing what you love.

Speaker 2:

With people you love.

Mark O'Donnell:

Making a difference.

Speaker 2:

Being compensated appropriately.

Mark O'Donnell:

Have time for other passions.

Speaker 2:

The EOS Life.

Mark O'Donnell:

Hi. I'm Mark O'Donnell, Visionary at EOS Worldwide. And I'd like to welcome you to another edition of the EOS Life podcast, where we explore the why and how of entrepreneurs actively living their ideal life now, not later, and not in retirement. The world of entrepreneurial freedom and the impact on those around you depends on it. Today we continue and conclude our conversation with the creator of EOS and author of The EOS Life, Gino Wickman. In part one, we talked about the five points of the EOS life that Gino describes in his book, and today we're going to discuss the bonus mini book on the 10 Disciplines for Managing and Maximizing Your Energy. Gino, talk to us about how these disciplines connect to the five points of living your EOS life. What's the Genesis of these disciplines?

Gino Wickman:

Yeah. Great place to start. So here's kind of the origin story behind this because it is fairly new. So where the EOS Life has been alive and well, try and do the math, for the last 16 years, this is about a year and a half old. Okay? So this is very, very new and this is me being a little vulnerable. So the origin story is that there's book to do the EOS conference as your keynote speaker, and as is my process, I wait for the message to come to me. Okay? And so the first, whatever it was two or three years, my topic was The EOS Life. And we kind of put the finishing touches on that, and I felt like it was time for a new topic. And somehow at the end of January and the talk is in April, it comes to me at the end of January.

And so when I talk about being vulnerable, what came to me is that I think I'm going to share the things that I do personally to manage my energy, to keep my energy high. Just some personal disciplines that make me more effective up and over living the EOS life in those five points. So that's the first part of the story. I then delivered the message and it was incredibly well-received, and the reaction it gets when I share these 10 disciplines, it's different than any other reaction I get. And so there's something there, because it's like this whole other level. Okay? And then this year, the second year of the EOS conference, I delivered the same message and put a tidy or bow on it, if you will. And then I delivered the talk for a different audience, again, all getting that same reaction.

And so then when I was called to write this book, The EOS Life, as I'm writing the book, I had to make a judgment call, do I want to include this in the book? And I decided to do it, and I'm going to come back to that point, just a second, but same thing, I had 80 test readers on this book. And more test readers than I've ever had before, and same thing. It got the same reaction from those 80 test readers. And so all of that told me there's something here it has to be shared. And so what's a little wonky, if you will, is the EOS content is your EOS Worldwide. It's the intellectual property that I sold to you guys when I sold the business. Well, the 10 disciplines is very much mine. And so it's kind of weird this relationship that we have, but we have this wonderful relationship where we're these great collaborators for each other.

So I did the weird thing that would pretty much the way I do everything in my life as weird and different and unique and uncommon is I put a book inside of a book and I call it a mini book. And I just felt like it needs to be in this book. And then obviously you and I talked back and forth and we just decided it needed to go into this book. And so that's the origin story. And again, the reaction it gets just compelled to include it. And then we're obviously always obsessed about that disclaimer so the world knows 10 Disciplines is mine, EOS Life is yours, just so we're not confusing the world. So that's the weird thing I decided to do, and that's how this all came about. And so the last little point is this content is for race horses, okay?

And so the important disclaimer here is these 10 disciplines are for people who have the basics down, you're eating right, you're sleeping, you're exercising, you are successful, you are hard charging. And now what I'm going to do as a race horse is I'm going to reign in your energy so that you can run faster and win more races. This is not about taking somebody who's at level one and trying to teach them how to get out of bed and be motivated in the morning. This assumes that you are motivated, you are a hard-charging person, and we're going to make you even better.

Mark O'Donnell:

And how does this relate to the five points of the EOS life? Can you be living the five points of the EOS life? Can you be 8 to 9s or 10s in the EOS life and not be living these 10 disciplines? Or did these help you go from a 7 to a 10?

Gino Wickman:

So what I would urge the best way for the audience to understand this is keep them separate. They both literally stand on their own because I don't want anyone to feel obligated that you have to implement the 10 disciplines in your life, and also understand you can implement 2 out of 10. You don't have to implement them all. So the EOS life is completely separate and you will have an amazing life. If you never heard about these, this is like literally pouring gasoline on the fire. I mean, it is just taking it to a whole nother level, and just as quickly, you can be doing the 10 disciplines as a very successful person and not even know about the EOS life. And you're going to have incredible impact again if you're that race horse that I'm driving.

So bottom line, though, is the reason I wanted in the book is because they truly take it to a whole nother level when you're doing both, but there's nothing that says you have to be doing both.

Mark O'Donnell:

Nice. So the listeners probably are like, what in the world are these 10 magical disciplines by this point? They're like, well, I want fuel on my fire, so let's go. So let's dive in. What is discipline number one?

Gino Wickman:

So this is one number one is what I call 10-year thinking. And where this comes from is I discovered this when I was 35 years old, best gets, right? In the middle of my 30s. I'm 53 now, so I've been living by this religiously for 18 years. And the awareness the aha was up until then, again I was just hard charging long-term goals and short-term goals, but I was pretty impatient, I wanted everything now, and I was just working hard and less short term focused. When I discovered this and shifted my thinking to 10 year timeframes, what I realized is time slows down, there's a calm that comes over you, there's a patience that comes over, you literally start making better decisions, and then ironically, you get there faster.

And so it was transformative for me and has been transformative as I've shifted my thinking. And then there's a great quote out there that goes, "People overestimate what they can get done in a year, but they underestimate what they can get done in 10 years." So the irony is you are literally going to get more done in your life if you will shift to thinking in ten-year timeframes.

Mark O'Donnell:

So why 10 years? Why not 25?

Gino Wickman:

Well, there's a philosophy out there to think in 20 year timeframe. There's a philosophy, think in 100-year timeframes. That's how the Japanese do it. So that's probably the better way, but here's the reality, I'm just trying to get that person that keeps thinking about today, this week, this month, this year at best, and I'm just trying to get their brain to go to ten-year thinking. So 25 and 100-year thinking is probably better, but that's like too big of a pill to swallow for 99% of the world. So let's just get one victory with 10-year thinking.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. Got it. Got it. That's great. And when you talk about 10-year thinking, inside of the 10 years, you have a business cycle, right? And so do you want to talk a little bit about the business cycle inside of that 10 years? And what is the mindset that understanding or knowing a business cycle when the economy is working the way it normally works? How's that work?

Gino Wickman:

Yeah. So what's interesting about what you're asking is this is like the icing on the cake when I'm about to share it, because just shift your mind to 10-year thinking and your world is going to change for the better. The icing on the cake is something my business mentor, Sam Cupp, taught me when I was 26 years old, I would guess, maybe 27. And he said, "Gino, in business, there is a 10-year cycle, okay? And in that 10 year cycle, you're going to have two great years, six good years, and two terrible years that will potentially put you out of business." And so if you add that up, that's 10 years. So ironically, it fits in

what we're talking about. He taught me that now almost 30 years ago, and it has held true for 30 years, three ten-year cycles in my life.

And so the power of the lesson in this and the icing on the cake is my passionate plea to everyone listening out there is that in your business, you are going to experience this. When you're having your two great years, don't get cocky, they're coming to an end. Six good years that ain't all bad, but there are two years that are going to kick you in the ass and potentially put you out of business. And so the biggest message is be prepared, be prepared. So be prepared means have at least six months of cashflow sitting in an account somewhere, both in your business account and your personal account at a minimum, ideally a year's worth of cash.

So the thing that's going to kick you in the ass, you never know what it's going to be. Who would have guessed that would have been a pandemic in this 10 years, but they're all different. The Great Recession of '08, '09, industry changes that kick you in the ass, the need for a turnaround in my family's business, you have no idea what it's going to be, don't even try to predict it, but something really bad is coming within. So we're coming out of this pandemic, get ready, there's something else in the next 10 years that's going to kick you in the ass. Don't try and figure out what it is, it's coming, be prepared. And the peace of mind and something that thrills me is everyone that I've taught this to, since my mentor taught it to me in the last three years, all of our EOS implementers, my clients, I cannot tell you when this pandemic hit, how many texts, calls, emails that I got from people saying, "Thank you for that lesson, because I'm good. I am prepared for this."

So if you weren't prepared and you're licking your wounds right now, just be prepared for the next 10 years. That's the most important thing. The past is the past, just be prepared. So thanks for asking that because I love teaching that message to the world, to anyone that will listen to me because it's true.

Mark O'Donnell:

That's right. And I think the really interesting part about this is if you have this 10-year thinking, that pressure to deliver, to perform, right now I have to have it all right now, and also having the ten-year thinking that there's going to be two years that are going to be really, really hard, there's going to be two that are really great, and six that are pretty good. Now, all of a sudden, you just have this total sense of calm and control and preparedness, and pretty much everyone wants to have that sense of calm and control and preparedness that they're just really ready for anything, mentally prepared for pretty much anything, right?

Gino Wickman:

Yeah. And I would add to that is we're talking about energy management and maximization. So where this translates to energy, just imagine now all of your decisions are ten-year decisions. So just think about what that does for your energy in terms of that urgency. When you get your ass kicked for those two years, ten-year outlook says, "I'm going to be just fine five years from now, but right now, I'm getting my ass kicked. I got enough cash to survive this thing, I got to make some brutally difficult decisions, I might have to lay off half my people right now, but I'm going to be fine in five years." So think about what that does for your energy. So 10-year thing is truly transformative for your energy, which is, again, the whole topic of this conversation.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah, for sure. All right. So discipline number two, take time off.

Gino Wickman:

Yeah. So there's a couple of these that there's a glimpse of it, a flavor of it in the EOS life points, but this is just fundamentally understanding physically, psychologically, tangibly every measure that if you will take time off, you will be better. And again, we're talking about energy here. So just understanding that I've got to take time off as a human being and that time off, a urge that you think in terms of days off, not an hour off. When you get home at 7:00 and don't work from 7:00 to 8:00, you didn't take an hour off. So stop doing that to yourself out there. It's a full day off. It is two full days off. It is a full week off. For me, the month of August, it is a full month off. It's turning the world off, turning your worklife off to let, as some will say, your soul catch up, to let your everything catch up to the harried pace you're running too hard and fast.

And so what happens is you recreate recreation. And so you're enjoying recreation. You're literally recreating. And so you are a better person. So it's just buying into taking time off. And now all of a sudden, let's take one step further, my impassioned plea, and what I'm teaching you to do in this book is to pick your number of days. And so I take 160 days off a year. Non-Negotiable, that's my winning formula that makes me a better worker, a better producer. I'm more productive when I take that time off. When I take that month off in August, and we have this sabbatical challenge with the EOS life, and so we're going to hopefully have thousands of people that start taking month-long sabbatical.

When I come back from that sabbatical, which by the way, I'm just doing math, was 10 days ago, I just got back 10 days ago, I come back better and I turn it off for 30 days. I don't think about business, and I literally do everything in my power to forget what I do for a living so that when I come back, I hope I'm still passionate about it. And now this is 21 years running, I've come back 21 years running more passionate than ever about what I do. So I come back better. And so simply put, take time off, pick the number of days you're going to take off, preschedule all of your vacations. You want to motivate yourself. We're talking about energy here. When you know you've got a vacation coming in, you're going to spend time with your spouse, you're going to spend time with your family, you're going to spend time by yourself or time with friends, you get excited and you look forward to those things. And that creates energy as well.

Mark O'Donnell:

So I think it's interesting now in that people are working at home, they're remote, we have all the tech all around us that kind of ropes us into work being easy and accessible all the time. I would love to not have a phone at all. I mean, that would be fantastic because it always seems to hook you. What do you do with your phone so it doesn't hook you when you're supposed to be taking time off?

Gino Wickman:

Yeah. Well, the first thing is you can't take big blocks of time off, and a week is a big block of time, right?

Mark O'Donnell:

Sere.

Gino Wickman:

Hey, this isn't as big of an issue, but to take a week off, you have to have an assistant or assistance. So somebody has got to cover you when you're gone. And so right now I'm talking to all the entrepreneurs out there and I'm talking to all the leadership team members out there. You have the luxury of having an assistant or assistance when you go away. For the employees in organization, it's a little more

challenging. You might have to have another employee that backs you up, but I want to start with the entrepreneur and I want to give it to you to its purest form, and then you just got to get a little creative for everyone else. And that is, I can only speak for myself. I do not check email, I rarely see my email. My assistant takes care of all of my email pretty much since the day email was invented.

And so I beg you to embrace this. We're talking about energy management. We're not going to go in too far into this, but you get sucked into your email. It drains your energy. Quick math, if you will give your email to someone, it frees up three to five hours a week as the quick math, and I think it's very generous math.

Mark O'Donnell:

I think so.

Gino Wickman:

So I don't check my email, my assistant does. When I go on vacation, my voicemail is immediately changed for anybody that has my cell phone number, and it just says, "I'm on vacation. I'm not checking this voicemail. If you need anything, call my assistant." So everything is directed to my assistant. It's just one funny thing happened, and that is a text message came through my phone about 10 years... What was it? About 10 years ago when texting started?

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah, give or take.

Gino Wickman:

In of all things, your dear friend and my dear friend, Jonathan Smith, was the first text I ever received from someone. And when that came through to my phone, I went, this is going to change everything because it pierces the shield. And someone talk about how to handle texts-

Mark O'Donnell:

It vibrates your pocket.

Gino Wickman:

It pierced the shield. It was the first time someone penetrated my fortress when I was away on vacation. And so Jonathan, you son of a gun. So anyway, now the texts roll. So first of all, you've got to condition everyone in your world that if you want to be protected, texting should not be your primary way. But I do like to text, it's very efficient, but bottom line is when I'm on vacation, that's the one thing that pierces the shield. When a text comes through, I do not get sucked into that text. I reply that I am on vacation until this date, and I will reply to this when I get back. If you need anything urgent, talk to my assistant. So I'm fanatical about still pushing that away. The last thing is I conditioned everyone in my world, I'm gone in August, you can't find me in my work world, and I'm not going to respond to texts in three seconds, my assistant manages all emails.

So my world is conditioned that nobody is trying to get a hold of me in 15 minutes. You're never going to call me and get a hold of me and get a response in 15 minutes, but you will hear back in 24 hours. So again, what were the texts? I just let them know I'm on vacation. That's long dissertation on how you manage that. Point was you got to have an assistant or assistance, somebody who's assisting you for that to work.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. And it's really about protecting the time off. Otherwise, you're just doing work in a different location, right?

Gino Wickman:

Exactly right.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah.

Gino Wickman:

And again, let's go all the way back to time off. We're managing energy here, shame on you out there if you say, but I have to. I can't, I this, I that. Well with all due love and respect, your energy is going to be a little shittier as a result of... I don't know how else to say it.

Mark O'Donnell:

No, I get it.

Gino Wickman:

So my energy is high because I don't get sucked into all that stuff. So forgive the profanity, but it was necessary on that point.

Mark O'Donnell:

It's all good. It's all good. So where are we? Discipline number three.

Gino Wickman:

This is, I call, know thyself, okay? But what's important here, so we're talking about energy management, you must know thyself. The reality of this discipline is to be your self, but you can't be yourself until you know yourself. And so I got to start with the first link in the chain, if you will. So you out there, you've got to embark on a journey to know exactly who you are. And I pray for you there's a day that you literally, it's almost like there's a set of bullet points on a document, and that is you and the wacky you that you are. My impassioned plea is that you let your freak flag fly, and you just be the unique being that you are. And again, so that whatever that is, you're an introvert, you're an extrovert, you're a little quirky, you're funny, you're hardworking, you're intense, you're whatever it is, that is who you are and do not apologize for it. And the second you know thyself, you can start being yourself. And the day that you are fully yourself in every aspect of your life, your energy is going to shoot through the roof.

And a story I like to tell is when my wife threw me a 30th birthday party and I walked through the door and I hear surprise, and there's 100 people in this room, and I look at all the eyeballs and there were six factions of my life in that room. There were my business partners, my employees, my family, my wife's family, my high school friends, and my new friends. And I looked around that room and I said, "Who in the hell am I going to be today?" Because I was a different person with every single one of those factions. And so that was a light bulb moment, and that's when I changed my life to realize that

holy crap, I'm being who the hell am I? I don't even know who I am. So you've got to figure out who you are and just be that in every situation and your energy will shoot through the roof.

And so how do you do that? There are a million ways, but I would suggest a couple of things, profiling tools. Profiling tools are powerful, Colby, Myers-Briggs disc, and like 1,000 other ones. Culture Index is another one that I like. Those are my kind of top four, but there are 100 of them out there. So profiling tools help you start to understand yourself, and I would take those very serious. Number two is therapy, go get therapy. You're all a little screwed up out there. I did my seven years in my 20s. So therapy is good. And it's going to help you understand all of your quirks, your neuroses, stuff going on in there. And so that's one. And another one is just start asking people about your strengths and weaknesses and get insight from people in your life.

So the one thing I loved about the strategic coach program, Dan Sullivan is one of my greatest mentors. In the first year of that program, he has you ask like 5 or 10 people in your life, "What are my strengths and weaknesses?" And you get this wonderful feedback. So I learned a lot. I was probably 27, 28 when I first did that in his program. That was incredibly insightful. So lots of ways to know thyself, but please start the journey and be yourself. Let your freak flag.

Mark O'Donnell:

Which is hard to say like five times really fast.

Gino Wickman:

Sure it is. Sure it is.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. It reminds me of a story that I might get the artist wrong, but I think it was Michelangelo, and who did the sculpture of David, right? This beautiful sculpture. And someone came up to him and asked him, "Hey, well, how did you create this beautiful statue?" And his response was really, "Oh, it's easy. I just took away everything that isn't the statue." And I think it's the same thing that all the profiling tools that helps you figure out who you are, but it also helps you figure out who you're not, and so you can essentially stop pretending. And I think it is a journey where you're just chipping away, finding that authentic self over time. I think the delegate and elevate tool that we talked about in doing what you love earlier, it's not a profiling tool, but it is another way for you to know yourself because you're just chipping away quarter after quarter of what is not.

Gino Wickman:

Yeah. So you don't have prompts like three things. I'll try and sum fast. First of all, that's one of my favorite quotes, that Michelangelo quote. Number two, this is where there's another little sliver of the EOS life in this doing what you love, but what's important about this one is it is so much more robust, because when we talk about doing what you love, that's in the context of business and it's very tactical. This is you freely being you. And so in addition to doing the stuff you love to do, and you're great at and work, this is your personality shining through, this is every aspect of your life, this is get ready because the second you are fully you, you are going to freak some people out in your life that have had total control over you, and they don't know the real you, and it's going to freak them out. And they're going to do everything in their power to get you to change back to that phony person that you were.

So you're going to scare some people away, you're also going to experience judgment. People are going to judge the wacky, unique you that you are, and do not apologize for it. So get ready because

that's one of the reasons people don't fully become themselves is because they have people in their life that are just holding them back, pulling that crab back into the barrel that's trying to climb out.

Mark O'Donnell:

Right. It's really about you being your six-year-old self, right? I mean, six-year-old Gino run around, six-year old Mark run around. That's a scary sight that scare a bunch of people.

Gino Wickman:

You got it. That's exactly right.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. So let's go to discipline four, discipline four.

Gino Wickman:

Let's do it. So I call this one be still, two simple words. And so be still means that, again, we're managing energy here, you've got to it intervals, take time and just stop and be still. And so you can call this many different things. You can call this meditation, you can call this prayer, you can call this, anyway, a bunch of different things, but it's just silence. It's where you are literally by yourself, somewhere comfortable, a chair sitting on the floor, whatever works for you, and you're just being still for 10 to 30 minutes a day. Some people do this for two hours a day, but 10 to 30 is the magic formula. And so the best way someone taught this to me in terms of an analogy or the effectiveness is if you picture like a jar, a glass jar with a lid on it and some water and sand in there.

And if you shape that jar and set it on the table, it's very cloudy and murky and muddy, if you will, and you can't see through it. But if you let that jar sit for 15 minutes, all of a sudden, the sand settles, the water becomes very clear and lucid. And that's exactly what you're doing is you're settling yourself so your body can just relax, be clear. And this is where that saying comes up, you're letting your soul catch up to your body. You're running so fast. And then so I call it being still and it is transformative. It is incredibly powerful. And it's a habit. It's a discipline. It's a routine. It takes time. So if you do this once for 10 minutes, and you go that did nothing for me, from that point make a long-term commitment to this. You'll be more creative, you'll have better ideas, but again, your energy will shoot through the roof.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah, I believe I read somewhere and I forget where it was that 20 minutes is sort of the ideal, but whatever is best for you. Do you do any breathing during that time? Are you just sitting?

Gino Wickman:

This is what I've learned because I've probably read 10 different books on meditation, and all 10 teach something different. So the point in that is you've got to find your formula. So definitely breathing. And so when I'm really having trouble calming my mind, I count my breaths. Okay? And when I don't need to really call my mind, I just focus on my breathing. And so that helps. But I would suggest most of the time, I'm not focusing on my breathing. I will start there for two or three minutes, but I just sit. And one of the things I picture myself doing to start things off is just kind of grounding myself. And so like, somebody gave me an example of, if you picture like a burlap sack of potatoes and you tear it open on the bottom, all of the potatoes kind of blow up, fall out of there.

I literally picture my body just doing that where you're literally just falling into the chair and all of your weight is grounded. And then I also kind of picture being connected with the above, and then that kind of locks me in, if you will. But that's my way, and there's just a million ways to do this. I also, if you've ever heard of Muse, it's actually a device you wear on your head and it measures your brain activity. It gives you a great indication of how active your brain is being and how close to settling in you are. And that'll help you understand where you really are. It's like a \$250 device connected to an app on your phone. It's not something I do in my stillness every day for 30 minutes, but from time to time, once or twice a week, I'll put it on for 15 minutes to see where I am.

And it's incredible because I know when I'm completely settled in, and then I know when my brain is still very active. And that's a great way of scientifically knowing exactly where your brain is. But literally, there's so many different ways to do it.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. I've never heard of that. That's super cool. I know what I'm buying later.

Gino Wickman:

Muse, M-U-S-E. I kind of figured you would.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. Yeah. Now I'm going to-

Gino Wickman:

My kids bought it for me like three years ago, and then I kind of forgot about it and I wanted it again. I forgot they bought it for me, so I bought it however long ago. It'll be there. If you buy it on Amazon, it'll be there tomorrow.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah, I bet. I bet. So I've done Wim Hof breathing, The Iceman, and I have a good time with that.

Gino Wickman:

Phenomenal. And that book, *Breath*, it's a great book. And so those are all great techniques for doing what we're talking about, be still.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah, absolutely. All right. So discipline five, know your 100%.

Gino Wickman:

Yeah. So knowing your 100%, again, there's a sliver of this in the EOS life, but this is much more robust in terms of knowing your 100% is about what I call your work capacity. It does not only rolling in how many hours are you going to work per week? And I've shared, I'm a 55-hour a week guy. Let's pretend the example is you're a 50-hour week person out there. This is looking at the entire year and saying, how many weeks am I going to work a year? And how many hours am I going to work every week? And again, you're not going to perfectly work 50 hours a week, but again, using me as the example, I worked 40 weeks a year and I worked 55 hours a week inside of those weeks, and then I take the rest of the time

off. The point though, is this isn't about time off, the point about this is work. What time are you going to devote to your craft?

And if you really look at it that way, again, we're managing energy, there is an amount of time literally to the hour that if you work one more minute than that, your energy will wane. And so what I've learned now in being obsessively focused on this after 25 years, this body, this brain, this energy ball, 40 weeks a year, 55 hours a week, that is my mass output. And anything more than that, it's too much. I start to burn out. So I found my perfect formula. And so I call it your work container, figure out your work container, maximum output keeps your energy high and any more than that, it starts to wane. It's just figuring it out, dialing it in, because here's the simple point, you can not work 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. It's humanly impossible. So now let's work it backwards. You can't work 364 and 23 hours.

So somewhere between zero and 365 days, 24/7, there's a formula for you, and we're all different. Just figure out your formula, and in that, you will maximize your energy.

Mark O'Donnell:

So for me as a former engineer, right? So I would document and do log books, and I would write down everything to find my number, which is right around 55 hours. How would you suggest people go through the process to discover their 100%? So for you, it took a little while to find that 55. How did you document that? How did you track that?

Gino Wickman:

So I would say a few things. Number one, awareness. It all starts with awareness. If you will just be aware of what I'm saying, that's 90% of the work, because now the radar's up, you're aware of this thing. Okay? Number two, I look back at when I was building EOS Worldwide and writing those books. I mean, I was killing myself. And I look back to those days and I realized I would come home and I would just be like dead. I would sit on that couch-

Mark O'Donnell:

Stare at the ceiling.

Gino Wickman:

... and watch TV with my wife, and I just be like, aah, because I was just pushing it so hard. So there's an indicator that that's too much, okay?

Mark O'Donnell:

So your wife tells you.

Gino Wickman:

So if there's too much of it, we got to cut that back a little bit. The next thing is I religiously, every year, am counting my days. So when the year's done, I go back through my calendar, and Dan Sullivan's Strategic Coach program has this entrepreneurial time system he calls Focus Free and Buffer Days. You don't have to embrace that, but the point is I'm adding up my focus free and buffer days. Another way to look at it is just add up your work days, add up the days off, and you'll start to see. And so for 20 years I'd done that, I just become more aware, wow, so this year I did this many days and this is how I felt. And so again, awareness, awareness, awareness. And then the 55 hours, which is interesting you say 50

hours, because I think I'm actually now a 50-hour a week person, and this is the year it shifted, this last 12 months.

So I think I'm actually going to start saying 50 hours, because again, through this awareness, what I always realized, I take most weekends off, but I realized that from 7:00 in the morning until 6:00 at night, that's like my peak max output, highest energy, and that's 11 hours. And I would do that Monday through Friday. And so that was like my perfect formula. Now it's almost like it's like, maybe 7:30 or 8:00. And again, I'm just aware of these things. I'm realizing it's probably closer to like 10 hours a day, five days a week now. So just awareness, measure it, pay attention to it. It'll come up on this point here.

Mark O'Donnell:

It'll come up. Yeah. Yeah. Awesome. So discipline number six, say yes often. I mean, say no often.

Gino Wickman:

You should've seen what that just did to my energy when you said that wrong. So the discipline, so everybody's clear out there with your humor, it is say no... often. And so this one is powerful. So a few things here, first of all, my favorite Warren Buffet quote, and there's so many of them, but he talks about how the difference between successful people and really successful people is that really successful people say no to almost everything. And so that's point one. And so the point is, if you're a successful person and you're busy, there's a lot of stuff coming at you, and a lot of you are saying yes to everything. So imagine what that's doing to your energy. You've got to start saying no to things. And what's beautiful about this, and the reason that it's number six is see the previous five disciplines, because when you're operating by the previous five disciplines, what you must say no to is so obvious, and what you should say yes to is so obvious. So these all kind of tied together when we get to this six discipline.

The other quote I would share, so for anybody that really wants to get good at this, I highly recommend you read Intentionalism, a book by McCowen, is the author. And you will see how I live my life every day. When I read that book, it was a religious experience because it was my life to a T, but he shares a very powerful quote. In the quote, I'll get it 80% right, but the point will come through. And it's a quote in the book where this person talks about the mere thought of saying no to someone gives us physical discomfort. We literally, most human beings feel physical discomfort to say no to someone, but you have two choices in life, you can say no and feel that discomfort for a few minutes, or you can say yes, and re-read it for days and weeks and months, sometimes years. So very, very powerful.

So I love saying no to people. I relish it. It gets me excited. I've gotten so good at it, but it's so easy for me to say no, because it's so obvious what I say no to. And so I get asked literally 20 things a week that I say no to. There's a lot of stuff coming at me, and if I said yes to it all, I keel over and die because it'd be too much. So it's a no brainer, so intuitive, obvious, simple to me and everyone out there just needs to build that muscle. And so I suggest two things, first of all, if you were in a live audience together, I literally have you all look at each other and shout, no, to start to build the muscle. And then number two, I just urge you to think about the next seven days of your life and look at your calendar. There's something you're about to do that you must say no to, or be aware of something that's about to happen in the next seven days to say no to. Say no to something in the next seven days.

You point when you have scheduled already that you need to cancel, somebody's going to ask you something you must say no to. So say no to it, celebrate it, and start to build this muscle and habit for saying no. Again, your energy will shoot through the roof.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. This may be, to me, one of the most powerful ones and maybe the one I struggle with the most. And what always brings me back is that if I say yes, chances are, I'm not going to be able to live my ideal life, my EOS life. All right, discipline number seven, don't do \$25 an hour work if you want to earn six figures.

Gino Wickman:

So discipline number seven is don't do \$25 an hour work... if you want to earn six figures, okay? So I'm not knocking \$25 an hour work. We need people doing \$25 an hour work. We need \$15 an hour, \$20 an hour. So the point here is, this isn't about how to make more money, this is about if you're a six figure person, you want to earn six figures, you do earn six figures, you're that type of a race horse, if you will. This is about managing your energy in that as a six-figure earner or somebody who wants to earn six figures, doing \$25 hour work is going to crush your energy, zap your energy. And so we want to keep you at that level. And so the simplest way to describe this is this advice was given to me when I was 23 years old and it changed life.

And one of my mentors, Ed Escobar, who said, "Gino, if you want to earn six figures, you should not be cutting your lawn." Okay? And so in its simplest form, I get no energy cutting my lawn. I hate cutting my lawn. If you, out there, love cutting your lawn, keep cutting your lawn. This is about, I realized I could pay someone \$25 to cut my lawn. That's going to free up an hour of my time to work, to do something I love, to spend time on a passion, to spend time with a family member that's going to help me earn more money. So the idea here is just to not do those kinds of activities. Now, let's go right to work. So if you're checking email, if you're opening mail, if you're doing paperwork, so think about all the \$25 an hour work, you shouldn't be doing that.

You should pay somebody \$25 an hour to do that work so that you're freed up to do this stuff that you have energy for, \$100, \$500, \$1,000 an hour work. Yes, you'll make more money, but again, your energy will go through the roof. Don't do \$25 an hour work if you want to make six figures or you are making six figures.

Mark O'Donnell:

Very nice. This is one thing that, for myself, I've been pretty much always really good at. I would pay kids to deliver my newspapers. Like, I'm going to get the paper route and then you're going to do the work.

Gino Wickman:

Yeah. And there's a formula out there that says that you're going to get like a 4 to 5X return when you pay somebody to do that work because it's freeing you up to go be more productive or something else. So this also is scientific, because I, too, once that was taught to me at 23, here we are, 30 years later, I have been obsessive about that and very good at that. And so I just hire people around me to do all that stuff, and the busier I get, I just hire more people to do it so I can just keep elevating myself to that high dollar an hour work, stuff I love to do where my energy's high. That's magic formula.

Mark O'Donnell:

For sure. All right. Discipline number eight, prepare every night. So tell us about that one.

Gino Wickman:

Yeah. And so I talk about how, when this came to me, these 10 disciplines and I decided to share it with the world for the first time, it's me being a little vulnerable because number one, I don't love talking about myself, I don't love sharing what I do because it feels braggy, and like tooting my own horn. And it's just also a little scary to say, hey, here's what I do, because then you open yourself for all the judgment that you receive. What I have done every year for 25 years is I believe very strongly that you should not go to bed until you clearly know exactly what you're going to do tomorrow. And now I have 25 years of history to report on how well this works. Again, we're talking about energy management.

So what I believe is when your day, your work day ends, and somewhere before your head hits that pillow is you've got to prepare for the next day. You got to know exactly what you're doing the next day. And so for some people, it's once they finish their day, they do it immediately, and then they've got the rest of the evening to themselves. Some people is just before they go to bed, they do it. It's always somewhere in there for me. There's nothing scientific about when I do it. It's just before my head hits the pillow. So what happens when you do this is you will sleep better, you will be more peaceful, your brain, your subconscious is literally working through the middle of the night, thinking about these things, and you wake up with ideas. And so you actually then wake up and you hit the ground running.

And so what I do, and this is the part that's a little bit vulnerable, is I do a legal pad. So I live my life from a legal pad. And so a lot of people might like the laugh when they see me with that legal pad because when I walk into a coffee shop, a meeting, or whatever, I got my trusty legal pad and pen. It's always here with me. And so what I do is I sit with a legal pad before my head hits the pillow, whatever time that is, and I literally lay out the next day time-blocking. So my meetings, my phone calls, my projects, my sessions, my whatever, it's all laid out in a linear fashion. And I wake up, hit the ground, running, working from that legal pad. And then I repeat that same thing every day for the last 25 years, I will for the next 25 years, and it makes me some degree more productive. I wish I could give you the math, but again, what it does for my energy is incredible.

Mark O'Donnell:

So what are you going to do when they stop making legal pads?

Gino Wickman:

Oh, well, I'll make my own. I'll cut down my own tree and I'll create my own pulp. I'll start my own... Anyway, so I don't think they will because everybody's different. But with that said, but you can do this on any technology that works for you. I'm not saying do this on a legal pad, although many do. You have to figure out the technology that you want to lay out your day on and just do what works best for you. And I'm just a big believer in the power of writing, and I urge that you write, whether it's a tablet, or legal pad, or what ever works for you.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. And there's just a ton of science around the value of handwriting something slow on a piece of paper. Hopefully, you can read it, which sometimes is a problem for me, versus typing. And also if you're going to do that night and you got the glow on your face and there's a lot of sleep science that disrupts your sleep. So I'm not making fun of your legal pad. I like it.

Gino Wickman:

It is okay if you do and it's [inaudible 00:47:06] of you.

Mark O'Donnell:

None whatsoever, unless I buy up all the legal pads and then you might have a problem.

Gino Wickman:

Exactly right. I've got a pretty good inventory of them, so I'm very [crosstalk 00:47:16].

Mark O'Donnell:

I bet you do. I bet you do. All right. So discipline nine, put everything in one place.

Gino Wickman:

So continuing the story of my legal pad, and I'll start with the context first and then share how I do it. This is a discipline where you have to decide where you're going to put everything because the normal successful person that's going throughout their day, they are making lots of commitments, they are solving lots of problems, they are having lots of ideas. And so with that, they're jotting these things down everywhere. And so they're putting a sticky note here, making a note in their calendar, putting something here, and that's everything. And so at the end of the day, there's just this mess of stuff. And half of it doesn't even get captured. And what's happening is your energy is very scattered, but you're also letting people down because you're forgetting things. And so this discipline says, decide once and for all where you're putting everything.

So every time you have an idea, it goes here, same place. Every time you make a commitment to somebody, it goes here. Every time you have a thought, it goes here. And so you're putting everything in one place. So again, it might be in your calendar, it might be in your tablet, it might be on your phone, it might be on your legal pad. But again, for me, it's my legal pad. And so this is where, again, jokingly that legal pad is always with me. And so when I'm walking into meetings, coffee shops, like I say, because when I have a thought, when I have an idea, when I make a commitment, I'm just jotting it down on my legal pad. And so at the end of the day, I have a bunch of additional notes in addition to how I laid my day out before. And when I then sit down to prepare for the next day, I'm pulling all of those things off of the legal pad and I'm compartmentalizing it where it needs to go.

Some things get moved to tomorrow, to get it done for tomorrow, some things go on my calendar two months from now, some things I take care of literally right there while I'm preparing for the next day. But the point is, that's the epicenter of everything. So I never let anyone down. My energy is not scattered. I'm following through on every commitment. My ideas are being captured. Sometimes I get to the end of the day and I go, whoa, that was a really stupid idea, and I just simply cross it off the list, but put everything in one place, and you will be much more effective and let less people down.

Mark O'Donnell:

Love that. Love that. So for myself, I've been getting things done Efficient Auto for a very long time, a book by David Allen. And one of the things that I think is really important, it doesn't matter what system you use, is really, if you're sick in bed with the flu, can you continue on executing that system faithfully? So I'm imagining, Gino, when you're sick in bed with the flu, you got your legal pad next to you and you got everything you need. So whatever it is you choose, you got to be able to stick with it.

Gino Wickman:

So interesting you say that because never at home is my legal pad near me.

Mark O'Donnell:

You mean you just don't carry it around all the time?

Gino Wickman:

But to your point, if I'm sick at home with the flu, it might be near me as I'm on the couch. But what is interesting is when I'm in a hotel room, when I'm traveling, the night before our QCEs, as implementers, when I ran those QCEs for 10 years, that legal pad was always sitting on my bed in the hotel room. And I literally wrote three to five things throughout the night, as I'm preparing for that next day, thinking about that next day, my gears are turning. So there's an interesting thing that you say that it is sitting on my bed when I'm in a hotel room as I'm having ideas because I'm in full on work mode when I'm in that state.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. And I always use the quote that under pressure, we don't rise to the occasion. We sink to the lowest level of our discipline and training, right? So whatever system you have, stick to it and make it a discipline you can do while you're sick in bed with the flu. So discipline number 10 out of the 10.

Gino Wickman:

Yes. And so this one is very simple, two words, be humble. So the first reaction when somebody hears this is what the heck does that have to do with energy. And so I'll do my best to describe it. So I'll start with a context here as well, and that is everyone out there is somewhere on a spectrum. And so if you picture this spectrum, and on the far right side of the spectrum is the word, humble, and on the far left side of the spectrum, as the word, arrogant, we are all somewhere on that spectrum. Okay? And obviously if you're a very humble person, you're all the way to the right. If you're a very arrogant person, you're somewhere to the left.

And what's interesting is if you look up the definition of each one of those words, the definition is almost exactly the same because the definition of humble is how you view yourself in the face of others, along the lines of how you treat others, your value in comparison to others. And when you look up the definition of arrogant, it's the exact same thing. So it's so ironic. So there was a great quote and I wish I could remember his name off the top of my head, but I can't, but his quote says, "Being humble is not thinking less of yourself. It's thinking of yourself less." So what I would suggest is this, for starters, you out there listening, think about that spectrum and put a dash on the line as to where you think you are, then I would urge you to go to five people in your life, the closest people in your life, and have them put a dash on the line as to where they think you are.

You might be a little bit surprised by what you learned, and it's simply this, being humble in life, I personally believe the journey is better, that I personally believe more people are attracted to you, you attract other like-minded people, you attract people that want to fight for you, the journey is more fun. And so that's all translated into energy as opposed to the arrogant person. And again, we all know those people. And then me personally, I will say in my 20s, I was going down a very arrogant path, and it was my father-in-law, Neil Pardun, who changed my life. God rest his soul, but it was through his example. It's not like he grabbed me and hit me upside the head. He taught me and showed me by his example that you can be both humble and have wealth.

And so he was just the most humble man, and by his example, I realized, wow there's a different way to live this life. Anyway. So I urge you to be humble, but that's for you to decide. And there will be a complete correlation, a total correlation to your energy.

Mark O'Donnell:

That's really good. And what that being humble and wealthy, it takes me to The Millionaire Next Door, Dr. Thomas Stanley, right? And the study of the millionaires that they are humble, right? I mean, they have the Timex watch, and they have the Ford F-150, or whatever.

Gino Wickman:

I love that you bring that up and I'm yet to correlate or bring that into this discipline, and it's so fits here. That's another book that was transformative for me. And what's powerful, and it talks about statistically, the wealthiest people in the world that you would never know they're wealthy. So a fascinating, fascinating book, and it makes this point about as strong as anything else I could imagine.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. Big hat, no cattle.

Gino Wickman:

Well, and then that's the other point. And then the people with all this stuff, they tend to be broke, in debt, leveraged to the hilt. That's fascinating stuff. As a rule, as a general rule, that's probably 90% true on both sides, and then you've got some exceptions.

Mark O'Donnell:

For sure. For sure. So that's the 10 disciplines. I mean, Gino, when you think about these 10 disciplines and adding the fuel to the fire of a race horse, is there any one of the 10 or 2 of the 10 that you would say, if you do just a couple, which ones would you choose?

Gino Wickman:

Yeah. It's so funny you say that. So it's like Sophie's choice. I mean, I do all 10, and I wouldn't stop doing any one, and I think they are all high gain. So what I would urge for somebody listening out there that says, "I can't do all 10, I'm not going to do all 10, I just want to do one," you pick because any one you pick, you are going to get lift. You are going to see an increase in energy. You're going to see an impact. Please do them all. You don't have to do them all, but you have to pick. Honest to God, there isn't this one super high gain, because using two examples, if you just start preparing every night, just start doing that starting tonight, you are literally, within three days, going to see a transformation in your energy. If you just start thinking in ten-year timeframes, you're going to instantly feel a change. So I can't pick one.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah. And they may want to just choose any of the 10, maybe one per quarter, right? So pick one, add one per quarter. These are disciplines, they're habits, right? And it takes a little bit to do these.

Gino Wickman:

One per quarter, one per year, one per week. You decide.

Mark O'Donnell:

Just do it.

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Gino Wickman:

Start with one. And then by the way, pick the one that's easiest for you. Don't pick the hardest one, start with the easiest one, see some results, then pick the next easiest one for you. So you'll get results from any one, but I'll say it again, I hope you do all 10.

Mark O'Donnell:

Yeah, for sure. For sure. Well, this has been great, Gino. Thanks again. Thanks for being on the podcast. I appreciate it immensely.

Gino Wickman:

My pleasure. What a blast? I appreciate you, brother.

Mark O'Donnell:

All right, you too. Thank you for listening to the podcast. I hope you got value from today's episode. Remember to ask yourself, how long will you wait until you demand the best for yourself? How long will you wait until you live your ideal life, the EOS life?