



# Leadership Emails

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**Today...Choose to Be Extraordinary!**

**October 20 - November 10, 2022**

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Kevin's Leadership Emails are powerful explorations into personal development, both inside and outside of the practice.

Enjoy reviewing all this transformational, thought-provoking content.

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## Where Does Discipline Come From?

The last two weeks' worth of messages have created interesting conversations and led many of you to the same question:

How do I create self-discipline and/or increase my level of self-discipline?

**I appreciate it when people explore thoughtful questions in order to make smart decisions for themselves in their pursuit of excellence!**

For me, self-discipline exists within me. I believe discipline is part of my DNA, so to speak. More specifically, I was fortunate to have discipline instilled in me from a young age. I have had many powerful influences that led to my current level of commitment to creating a life well-lived, and hopefully, a life worth remembering.

My father woke up and went to work, every single day, regardless of how he felt or what circumstances existed in the world around him. He finally took his first sick day EVER after his cancer doctor said he simply had to. My dad's commitment to his career and taking care of our family was learned through observing his actions.

My mother was raised on a farm, so there was no other option but to be committed and self-disciplined because everything was on the line every day. She carried those experiences as a young girl into adulthood and motherhood: her discipline to be an extraordinary mother is beyond measure. I can only hope to be as good of a father to my kids as she is a mother to me.

Knowing that about my mom, it is unsurprising that my grandfather (my mom's dad) was the single greatest example and influence in my life as I observed his discipline in farming and his commitment to my grandmother who had debilitating arthritis. He became her conduit to all things in life and cared for her in every aspect while maintaining the farming operations. I am still in awe of his commitment and fortitude. I miss him dearly.

Discipline, for me, is simply a way of life, yet I can always use more of it, as well as the reminder of just how important it truly is. This is why I seek out advice and guidance from others who display the characteristics I want to embody. To build on the last couple messages I've written, I will share Jocko Willink's answer to the question, "Where does discipline come from?" I hope you find value in reading his perspective.

**From Jocko Willink's *Discipline Equals Freedom Field Manual*:**

Where does discipline come from?

This is a simple answer.

Discipline comes from within.

Discipline is an internal force.

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Sure, you can have discipline imposed on you by a person, like a drill instructor, or that self-help guru on TV, but the reality is: he won't give you real discipline.

Because that external discipline is not strong.

It will not survive.

It cannot stand on its own.

What you are looking for, what you need, is SELF-DISCIPLINE.

Self-discipline, as the very term implies, comes from the SELF...YOU.

It comes when you make a decision to be disciplined.

When you make a decision to be better.

When you make a decision to do more, to BE more.

Self-discipline comes when you decide to make a mark on the world.

If you don't think you are disciplined:

It is because you haven't decided to be disciplined...YET.

It is because you haven't created it...YET.

So where does it come from?

It comes from YOU.

So make the decision.

Make the commitment.

Become the discipline...embrace its cold and relentless power.

And it will make you better and stronger and smarter and faster and healthier than anything else.

And most important:

It will make you FREE!

**Imagine for a moment the collective goodness that would come from you and your entire team committing to a higher level of discipline in just one aspect of your daily life serving patients. After the initial commitment and following through, you then add more effort to discipline in additional aspects of your daily "to-do's" and you will be witnessing a monumental shift in the impact you all have on others, including yourselves.**

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**Now this is something to ponder!**

**Are you ready for such a commitment?**

**I pray you say, "YES!"**

**Your community needs more of YOU!**

**Your team needs more of YOU!**

**Your loved ones need more of YOU!**

**YOU deserve to make the choice to be a more disciplined, more committed version of YOU!**

**Choose wisely!**

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## When and Where to Start

**This current series of messages on Discipline has evolved naturally. I had no intentions of writing a four-part series on the topic: it naturally came to life based upon your engagement and connecting with what has been stirring inside of me. Today's message is arguably the most important, as it focuses on taking action...for those of you who have not started...YET!**

**Let's turn our attention to Jocko Willink's encouragement to kick procrastination to the curb and get change in motion...NOW! For those of you who have already begun, I thank you, and be sure to thank yourself too! For those of you who have not taken the first step toward creating more discipline and moving closer to freedom, I pray today is the day it happens. The goodness on the other side of your commitment and action will be well worth it!**

**From Jocko Willink's *Discipline Equals Freedom Field Manual*:**

Overcoming Procrastination: When and Where to Start

People want to know how to stop laziness. They want to know how to stop procrastination.

They have an idea in their head. Maybe even a vision.

But they don't know where to start, so they ask...and they say:

Where do I start?

When is the best time to start?

And I have a simple answer...HERE and NOW.

That's it.

You want to improve?

You want to get better?

You want to get on a workout program or a clean diet or start a new business?

You want to write a book or make a movie or build a house or a computer or an app?

Where do you start?

You start right HERE.

When do you start?

You start right NOW.

You initiate action.

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You GO.

Here is the reality:

That idea isn't going to execute itself. That book isn't going to write itself. Those weights out in the gym, they aren't going to move themselves.

YOU HAVE TO DO IT.

And you have to do it now.

Stop thinking about it.

Stop dreaming about it.

Stop researching every aspect of it and reading all about it and debating the pros and cons of it...

Start doing it.

Take the first step and make it happen.

GET AFTER IT.

HERE and NOW.

**Let's take a moment and think about your practice and the objectives you have set for yourself and your collective team. Ask yourself, and as a team ask each other:**

What can I do TODAY to get started on an initiative I (we) continue to put off?

**Whatever your answer is, decide to get started HERE and NOW.**

**A powerful team-building activity would be to create a list of "Items to Take Action On" and post it somewhere for all to see and interact with. Take an item, start it, finish it, cross it off, and keep going until the list is done. Then, build the next list. The reality is, all the lists will never be done. Let's embrace that fact; not let it stop us from taking action HERE and NOW.**

**We are only a couple of months away from the New Year, and we all know how motivating it can be to start fresh when the calendar changes. But why put off that great feeling? Start HERE and NOW to create the momentum needed to make 2023 an extraordinary year.**

**I encourage you to replicate this exercise in your personal life too. Because why not?!**

**While you are in this mindset of taking action, apply it to all aspects of your life: health...faith...education...love...whatever is important to you...the time is HERE and NOW!**

**In the end, it is your choice...what will you choose?**

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## Industriousness

It is officially November and I have a total of nine messages left before we close the books on 2022 and enter a New Year, which I am declaring to be “2023...The Year of Excellence.”

I am already in the throes of creating what I hope to be my most meaningful and influential body of work yet. For fifty-two weeks, I will focus on EXCELLENCE: how can we be our best every day, while striving to make our best better as each day passes.

It is going to be an extraordinary journey, which I pray you join me for, by engaging at a deeper level than ever before in order for all of us to share our gifts at a level rarely, if ever, seen.

A level at which we will be lights unto the world with those we serve in our professional careers, while also being a blessing to our loved ones we choose to spend time with in our personal lives.

Thank you in advance for participating in creating a powerful force of good that is about to come. Let's bring that invigorating energy about the future into the present, and today, illuminate legendary coach John Wooden's words on the importance of planning.

*Industriousness (Planning)*  
*Part 1*

There is no substitute for work. Worthwhile results come from hard work and careful planning.

In 'Inch and Miles,' I boiled down the concept of industriousness to 'work,' but that book is for children and needed to be simple. Here we need to expand industriousness to include planning. Undirected diligence isn't very efficient; therefore, an element of planning must go into hard work. It is the combination of the two that results in industriousness.

When I coached basketball at UCLA, I believed that if we were going to succeed, we needed to be industrious. One way I accomplished this was with proper planning. I spent two hours with my staff planning each practice. Each drill was calculated to the minute. Every aspect of the session was choreographed, including where the practice balls would be placed. I did not want any time lost by people running over to a misplaced-ball bin.

I think, for the most part, my strength as a teacher emerged from planning and organization. By having practices carefully orchestrated, we were able to get more done in a shorter period of time. Practice under some coaches runs for three hours. Mine lasted an hour and a half to two hours. We didn't waste time.

**For those of you who are connecting with Wooden's description of the importance of Planning (Industriousness), I included the remainder of his message at the end of this email.**

**It is fascinating to hear him describe how planning helped him create the opportunity for successful outcomes while getting the best out of his team. There are an abundance of**

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principles intertwined within his story that you can directly apply to the happenings within your practice.

I would take time to read and discuss the entirety of this message as a team. I encourage each team member to identify 1-3 areas where Planning (Industriousness) would lead to creating more efficiency, better outcomes, or any other desirable achievement.

As individuals, we can achieve much. As a team, we can achieve GREATNESS! We can create an experience never to be duplicated by anyone in your community. You will advance your influence of getting patients healthier and happier than at any point in your professional careers. I hope this excites you and serves as the catalyst for your next level of effort to achieve extraordinary results as ambassadors of health for those you serve.

There is no better time than now to begin to plan for what's to come. It is exciting to know YOU have the power to experience something remarkable with focus, effort, energy, and intention. I will do my part by blazing the trail and shining a light onto its path in order to give us all the platform to live with EXCELLENCE every day more than we ever have before. I pray you come along with me on this journey!

**Here's the remainder of Wooden's writing:**

*Industriousness (Planning)  
Part 2*

For example, I didn't split the team into small groups, then talk to each group one at a time as some coaches do, and I rarely stopped practice to make a point. I didn't want the other players standing around while I spoke to only a few. If there was a need to address an individual or a group of players, I did it while the others watched or during the flow of whatever drill we were conducting.

Early in my coaching career, I learned an important principle from the legendary basketball coach John Brun. In *Basketball Methods*, he wrote, 'Don't take thirty minutes to say something you should say in thirty seconds.' Bunn was erudite (showing great knowledge), a great speaker and a brilliant man, but he didn't practice what he preached. He would expound way too long on details that didn't require that much explanation. I learned from his errors and always kept the few team meetings I had short.

I was a stickler for time management almost from the beginning. With me, being on time was and still is vital. Nonetheless, in my early days of teaching, sometimes when things weren't going well, I kept my team longer. This was counterproductive. I learned that when players are tired physically they are usually tired mentally as well. It took me too long to learn that does not lead to industriousness.

I also discovered that if practice did not always end when it was supposed to end, players would hold back a little effort and energy. When I saw this happening, I became a stickler for stopping on time. Whether we practiced for an hour and a half or two hours, my players knew exactly when we were going to stop and I stuck to it. They had no reason to hold anything back. As a result they worked harder during the scheduled time, and we got more done in a shorter amount of time.

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If people are going to become all that they are capable of becoming, it is important that they work hard; but it is also important that they are intentional about the hard work. Planning places the effort where effort is most needed. People who put these two components together have a firm cornerstone of industriousness upon which they can build toward success.

'Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty.'

- Proverbs

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## Defeating the Monster Within

As we build momentum towards “2023...The Year of Excellence,” we began last week by placing the focus on planning for all the necessary elements to give us the foundation to achieve a higher level of EXCELLENCE than we have in our past. As we make our to-do lists, it is important to remember it all starts in our minds. Enemy #1 is Resistance, as Steven Pressfield speaks about with authority. We must manage what flits and flutters around in our headspace in order to break through self-imposed limitations that have placed artificial barriers to growth and achievement.

Many of you are familiar with Pressfield’s description of Resistance from my presentations and writings. For those of you who with familiarity with them, you will find the following excerpt from Pressfield a refresher. For those of you who are being introduced to this concept for the first time, please pause and allow this portion of the message sink in as it will be the starting point for all the work we will do together.

*A Note to Readers  
Steven Pressfield*

What is Resistance? It’s our own tendency...yours and mine and everyone’s...to yield to procrastination, self-doubt, fear, impatience, self-inflation, self-denigration, distraction, laziness, arrogance, complacency, and perfectionism. It’s our inability to focus, our incapacity to press on through adversity. It’s our terror of finishing and exposing our work to the judgment of the marketplace. It’s fear of failure. It’s fear of success. Fear of humiliation. Fear of destitution. It’s our inability to defer gratification, to acquire and act with self-discipline, self-validation, and self-reinforcement.

Resistance is our tendency to self-sabotage, fail to start, and fail to finish. In its most extreme forms, Resistance expresses itself as vice and even crime...abuse of ourselves or others, cruelty, addiction to substances, diva-ism, compulsive self-dramatization, self-aggrandizement, and self-diminishment.

How do we defeat this monster that lives inside all of us and never tires, never loses strength, never takes a day off, and is endlessly ruthless and protean and subtle and clever and diabolical in the ways it can set snares for us and bring our most notable and brilliant aspirations to nothing? How do we get past this force called Resistance and set ourselves on the path to achieve our dreams?

The title of this book, as we said, is ‘Put Your Ass (body) Where Your Heart Wants to Be.’

That, in nine words, is my answer. It’s the simplest and most direct way to get up in the morning and do our work...and to lie down at night feeling at peace with ourselves, knowing for this one day at least we have defeated our demons and moved twenty-four hours closer to living the True Self and Best Self we were born to be.

**Pressfield’s description includes a laundry list of challenges we all face. Some of us will have a long list, while others short. Regardless of the number of challenges you self-identify with, it is important to highlight them (really do this: print this message and grab a highlighter),**

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prioritize them, and begin seeking out resources to manage the Resistance you battle every day. If you would like recommendations, please send me a message. I will help you however I can, including scheduling a call to discuss and offer insight as to how to fight back the urge to give in to this powerful internal force.

Read a book on the topic.

Listen to a podcast or two or twenty on the topic.

Seek out someone who can help you through conversation.

Pray.

Whatever mechanism works for you, choose to pursue it!

I am no different than any of you. My list of challenges is longer than I prefer to acknowledge—yet I do—because acknowledgment is the first step in making it better. For me, my #1 ongoing, in-my-face challenge continues to be Self-Doubt. If only this enemy would leave once and for all, yet I know it never will.

I ask myself, daily, a version of the two questions Pressfield recommends:

Did I show up?

Did I try my best?

He concludes his thoughts on this subject by stating:

“If I’ve done that, then I’ve put my butt where my heart wants to be. I can’t ask anything of myself more than that.”

Excellent point, sir!

All we can do is our BEST! This is not a competition with anyone else. It is an internal drive to give everything we have, every day. The comparison is internal with your abilities and capabilities...your “potential.” This is why we are preparing to spend an entire year on the subject of giving our best...of striving for daily EXCELLENCE!

The key is managing the issue, not trying to eliminate it since this is all baked into our DNA at this point in time. Having reasonable expectations is key here. Otherwise, you will become quite frustrated when your challenge(s) continue to show up. When you anticipate their arrival and know how to deal with them, this is the key to winning the battles of an ongoing war with the “invisible” enemy within.

As we plan for future greatness, please prioritize getting your own house in order so we can accomplish more, faster, and with less angst or hesitation. This is a time where being selfish is important and encouraged. When you spend time getting yourself right and headed down the proper path, you will be able to feel good about the work you will do and the results you will achieve.

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Your patients deserve the best version of YOU!

Your team members deserve the best version of YOU!

Your family and loved ones deserve the best version of YOU!

And...most importantly...

**YOU** deserve to be the best version of YOU so others can benefit from your gift and the light you will shine onto the world around you. Choose YOU first, so others can enjoy the fruits of your labor!

*Today...Choose to Be Extraordinary!*