

## Chapter 3

### What you focus on grows.

**A**lmost everyone remembers playing with a magnifying glass when they were a kid. It's fun. You hold it at varying distances from what you are looking at and see how things get larger. Most kids then take it outside and try out what they have heard about focusing the sun's rays on something they want to burn. First a leaf and then...the ever present ant. Kids chase the ant around with a focused beam of sunlight and usually the ant winds up toast. Cruel to the ant, yes, but kids do learn something from all this. They learn that sunlight really can be focused into an intense beam that has power. They learn that magnifying glasses, just curved pieces of glass when sitting on a table, can become light and energy intensifiers. They learn that what they focus the glass on becomes bigger. Words become bigger, fingernails become bigger, even the power of the sun becomes concentrated and under their control. Magnifying glasses are powerful!

Later on, in school, children (and adults) may learn how the magnifying glass works: the convex lens operates by angling reflected light off an image so that these angled rays of light meet at a point above the object. The closer that point is to your eye, the better it is magnified. By moving the lens closer and farther away from the object you change the focus of these angled lines and the object appears smaller or larger, clearer or fuzzier. The whole point of the magnifying glass is that you can use the lens to focus on things and make them larger—to magnify them. This principle of optics doesn't apply just in terms of vision and light. It also applies in life. This is because our minds are very much like magnifying glasses. What we focus our mind and attention on grows much, much larger. It is magnified. The third law of life sums it up: "what you focus on grows." "Big deal," you might say. "What do I care if what I focus on grows?" Actually, if you will keep reading for the next 5-10 minutes I will tell you why it is a big deal—a VERY big deal and why using this law effectively can help you change your life for the better.

First, what does focus mean? If someone asked you today, right now, to define the word "focus" what would you say? Stop reading for a few seconds and think about it. What would you tell them? Given what we just discussed about light you might say that focus is "angling light rays to a single point." That would be a good enough definition for "focus" as a verb with respect to light rays. How about with respect to everyday life? How would you define "focus?" "Focus", as a noun, is actually a Latin word that means "hearth" or "fireplace", a place in a house where things are burned. Some say it got applied to the science of optics and light because the point where the light waves converge is like the "burning point of a lens". Burning certainly applies to kid's playing with the light of the sun, doesn't it? So, "focus" is the place of energy concentration or, in reverse, the place from which energy radiates, like a fireplace. "Focus" as a verb means, then, to concentrate on, to cause energy to converge on, and to selectively bring the energy of your attention to bear on something. The definition of "focus" is

important because it is all about energy and energy is power. How does focusing on something get played out in life? From a psychological point of view, focusing on something requires several processes about which you probably aren't even aware even though you perform them all the time.

First, the object has to have *salience* to you. "Salience" comes from another Latin word, "salire," which means "to jump or leap." So, "salience" means that that something "leaps out" at you. This suggests that the thing needs to be important to you, to really mean something to you, and to have real value to you so that you will choose to focus on it. I apologize to anyone from Idaho but Idaho just doesn't have salience to me. I just don't think about it at all unless there is some news from there that makes it "jump out" out me. I am writing this in North Carolina—that state is important to me right now—it is salient to me. Something needs to be salient or important enough to us to attract our attention: the next step in the focusing process.

Second, we have to *selectively attend* to the object that is important or salient to us. My left foot is very important to me—I really like it and want to keep it. Although it is salient to me I am not paying much attention to it. Now if I stub a toe on my left foot in a minute or drop something heavy on my left foot, you better believe that it is going to get my attention. So my left foot (as yet unharmed) is important/salient to me but I am not really attending to it—I am not focusing on it. Salience alone, then, is not enough for focus. You also need to add some selective attention. My attention right now is selectively pointed toward writing this sentence and the next ones because these sentences are salient to me. Salience + Selective Attention = Focus. Because I am focusing my energy on these sentences they are actually growing longer and are being recorded on this page (the third law of life: *what you focus on grows*). If, however, I was not focused on creating them there would be no sentences at all because focus creates growth.

Third, focus on an object means that I become very *sensitive* to it. I increasingly detect its presence or absence because I am paying *selective attention* to it as something that is *salient* to me. For example, a few years ago, when I needed a new car, my wife suggested that I think about buying a certain make/model. So I won't suggest any particular make/model over others I'll just call it an "Alpha". I had never thought about Alphas before. In fact I hadn't really even noticed them. After she suggested it, I looked at it online and sort of liked it. Then we went to a local dealership of Alphas and I sat in one, played around with it, and test drove it. Alphas were now *salient* to me and I was *selectively attending* to them. I was focused and that focus led me to buy an Alpha after which I started noticing them everywhere in all sorts of colors. Did they just appear because I bought one? No. They had always been there; I just had not *detected* them because I wasn't paying *attention* since they weren't *salient* to me before my wife's suggestion of them. After I bought one I became sensitive to Alphas and still detect them when I see them. I focus on them and see them every day.

OK, so how does all this work on the practical, everyday level in terms of making some changes in your life by using the power of focus? Let's start with focusing on negative

things so we can end discussing the results of a positive focus. A sure way of multiplying your problems in life (things that are *salient* to you because they are YOUR problems) is to pay more *attention* to them by:

- thinking about them more
- really concentrating on how awful and bad they are
- rehearsing all their nasty attributes over and over in your mind until you have them completely memorized
- sharing them with everyone
- even writing them all down so you won't forget any of them!

All of these activities are *focusing* behaviors and focusing on problems causes them to expand and grow in your mind until all you can see are your problems getting bigger and bigger filling your entire mental field of vision. Pretty soon it gets so crowded with problems that nothing new and positive can get in at all. Then you start noticing problems everywhere! You become very sensitive to them and all you come to see are problems. Yours, mine, his, hers, theirs, everybody's problems all get your attention. Sound fun? You can recognize someone who is actively focusing on and thus growing their problems like kudzu in a Georgia summer because problems are all they discuss. Over and over and over they review them with you to make sure that you, like them, will never forget them. If you dare to suggest to a negatively focused person that they may be overlooking something positive or creative in their life, they will quickly reassure you that nothing good is actually there or, if there, can long remain alive because their problems will soon crowd it out. And you know what? They are right! They are feeding their problems so much everyday by focusing energy on them and are so consistent in depriving anything potentially good of any focused energy that their problems will, in fact, continue to choke out anything else. Anything good, loving, wise, hopeful, creative, any solutions or positive elements all wither without energy since their focus is elsewhere. They are, instead, growing their problems by giving them all their focus-energy. This is a sad example of the effectiveness of the third law of life: *what you focus on grows*.

The good news is that this law is neutral—it doesn't care what you focus on—the law simply says that what you *choose* to focus on grows, period. And you will *have* to make a choice because the truth is that you are going to focus somewhere, that's just what living minds do. Because it is your mind, you not only get to choose but you are entirely responsible for choosing that on which you focus. You choose what you will grow in your life. Where you focus is your responsibility (remember the first law of life about personal responsibility?). You can choose, if you want, to focus on positive rather than negative things (or problems). If you focus your energy on what is good about your life, what you already have that you want, what you are already blessed with—these things will grow. All of this is certainly not to say “just forget your concerns or things in your life that aren't working and they will all go away”. No, that would be irresponsible and foolish. But it IS to say that if you focus more on what is already positive and positive solutions to issues you are working on changing—these things will grow.

OK, so how do you recognize someone who is focusing on and growing positive, productive things in their life? First, you will see them moving. Yes, I mean physically *moving*. You will definitely not see them planted on a couch like a potato. Positively focused people are up and doing. What are they doing? Well, almost anything that even remotely relates to making what they already have larger or giving away some of what they have or working to make problem issues smaller. They are talking about their goals and describing their objectives they are currently working on to achieve those goals. They are framing their language in terms of achievement, expansion, increase, more, etc. They may even be writing down their blessings to remember them, relish them, review and share them with others. They are thinking about these good things, thanking God for them, and enjoying them. In short, they are growing all these positive aspects of their lives like they are in a greenhouse—so many positive things growing that problems either get put on the side because they aren't big enough to warrant attention or, if they are big enough, are solved by proactively working on solutions to them rather than just giving energy to the problem itself. And, as above, these people become much more sensitive to positive things and blessings outside themselves. They see them everywhere: yours, mine, his, hers, theirs, everybody's positive and creative movement forward gets their attention. It gets so crowded with good things that it is hard for negative things to get a foothold for long. Sound like more fun than focusing on the negatives? Yes, it is. And it is infinitely more productive because this approach focuses on positive solutions to problems rather than on the existence of the problems, themselves. Focus and sustained work on positive solutions means more implemented positive solutions for problems which means more problems are solved which, in turn, means fewer problems and a greater percentage of positive outcomes. Focus on problems means more problems. What you focus on grows. You pick what you want more of.

So which person are you? Find out right now. Write down all your problems on the left side of a piece of paper and then write down all your blessings, the good things in your life, and your positive solutions on the right side. Which side is bigger? Now take a really good look at your lists. If you are like most people you were able to capture even the tiniest problem. You didn't forget any of those little guys. Were you, though, as careful in capturing all the little blessings? Did you go into as much detail about all the things that are really good? How about all the things you completely forget about on a daily basis but that, if you lost any one of them, you would really notice by its absence? How about the fact that you can read this sentence? Some people can't. How about that you can hold this book without trembling so much that it falls out of your hands? I know people who can't. Did you drive to and then walk a short distance to the store to buy this book or even walk to your front door and open it to get it delivered to you? Ever think about walking as a blessing? Some people can't walk or drive. Did you write your lists as I suggested above? If so you did what a number of my current patients with significant hand tremors can't do: write. Try a day not driving, walking, reading, writing and holding things and see how that feels. If you really want to tune in to all the blessings you have but don't really notice or appreciate go to any nursing home and spend an hour there. Just walk down the halls and notice what you see, smell, hear, feel, maybe even taste. Poke your head inside someone's room and say hello. Don't

be shy. It doesn't matter that they don't know you—you will be the first person not affiliated with that nursing home who has personally said hello to them in weeks, maybe months. They will be very grateful to you. See what these people have and don't have. Notice who is in their life and who is not. See what they can do and can't do. Then look at your lists again. Puts things in perspective, doesn't it? There are probably at least 25 large or small blessings, positive things, or solutions in your life that you overlooked. Write them down. Focus on them. Appreciate them. Make them grow.

Our minds are extremely powerful and very, very few of us are at all aware of just how powerful they truly are. We use our minds to focus on things, that is, to *attend* to things that are *salient* to us. The power of that focus is not unlike the power of a magnifying glass focusing the rays of the sun. Think about all the things that have been achieved by men and women over the history of this planet. Men and women have made incredible achievements in science, math, medicine, electronics, art, social and political systems, manufacturing, construction, communication, and on and on. How did they accomplish any one of these things? It all began with a single thought. One person, usually, had an idea, a thought that something that did not yet exist as an ability or achievement COULD exist and COULD be done if enough mental energy (focus) and work were directed toward it. Someone chose something s/he thought was important or salient to people and that person selectively attended to it and, in the process, became very sensitive to similar solutions or achievements. They may have also looked at completely different solutions or achievements for clues as to how to proceed. But they only knew what was completely *different* by first knowing what was totally *similar*. They had to know one before they could figure out the other. This person probably also shared their idea with others who then “caught” the salience of the idea and began to focus their attention on it. More focus and more energy expressed as thought, work, learning through success and failure over time yielded a novel solution or product that had never existed before like this computer on which I write this page. Somebody, decades ago, focused on the idea of this computer as a possibility and then made it real through sustained focus and hands-on work. This is just one example of the power of our minds to create what had never before existed. Because you, too, have a perfectly good mind you also have this power to create more of what you want in your own life through your use of focus. But how do you actually do it?

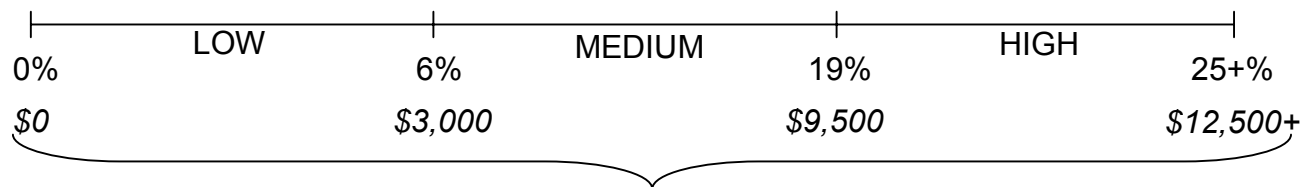
Let's talk specifics. What specific behaviors do you need to execute to use the incredible power of focus to get more of what you want in your life? I'll outline the behaviors in five steps and the first ones should be very familiar to you since they come right out of the formula for focus (salience + selective attention = focus).

**Step One:** You have to figure out what is important or salient to you. As we discussed, salience means something “jumps out” at you. It might “jump out” and be important to you because it is already something you deeply value and have specifically chosen as important in your life. It might “jump out” at you without your choosing it or ever wanting it like the example of something accidentally falling on my foot. Or, and this is the one to watch out for, it might “jump out” at you very slowly over time so that you don't even notice that something has become important to you. It is not something you made a big

choice to include in your life but it got its place of importance almost by default or through little, nearly unconscious choices. No matter how something has gained importance in your mind and in your life, you need to get clear about what these important things are. This is key since focus means you have to attend to important things and you won't know what attend to if you don't know, first, what is important.

So, how do you figure out what is important to you? How do you uncover things that have grown to be important but you might not even be aware of them? You do the Watergate test. Around 1969 when the *Washington Post* reporters asked the Nixon Administration informant, "Deep Throat", how high the corruption went in the government; he said "follow the money." To determine what is really important to you use Watergate Test Number 1: "Follow the Money." Go to your checkbook and open it. Look at the transaction register for the last two or three months. Read backward in time, look at each check entry, and see where your money went. You can also look at the last several months of your credit card statement or receipts you may keep for purchases. Some credit card companies will provide you with a chart that shows the categories in which you spent money (e.g. travel, gasoline, dining, clothing, etc.). Use all these to get an idea of where your money is going. Because your money will tell you, in part, what is important to you.

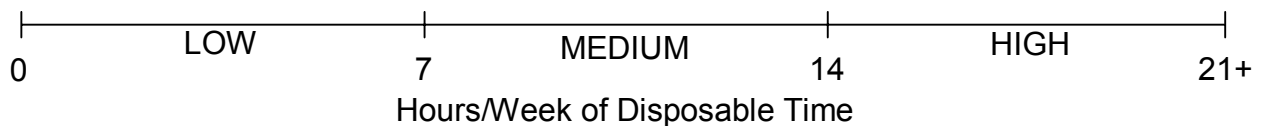
Let's say your income (before anything is taken out) is \$50,000 a year. Probably your biggest expense is going to be housing (rental/lease or mortgage). That's clearly important but it's also something that is almost a given—you have to have housing and it may take the largest chunk of your gross income. Besides housing, though, it will help if you take a little time and write down some of the things on which you spend money. Here's a quick and easy method: below is a line that goes from 0% of gross income up to 25% (for a \$50,000 income that range is from \$0 to \$12,500). The line is divided into three sections: Low, Medium, and High with corresponding percentage ranges for each. Now I know these percentages won't work exactly for everyone who reads this but adjust as needed for your case. From what you learned looking at your money records, write down, in the space above the appropriate section on the line what your money is buying each year (you can use your data from your 2-3 month period to multiply out for a yearly total—that's close enough). No judgments, please. *Complete honesty is needed without judging yourself about how you are currently spending your money.* Just note what the yearly amount of money tells you about what is currently important to you (whether you chose it to be important or it just got that way). OK? Put in about 10-12 of the biggest areas that get your money over one year.



*Example \$ amounts for a gross annual income of \$50,000*

Once you are done logging in at least 10-12 items that are getting varying amounts of your money, look at the list. We knew housing was going to be in the High section and that is normal (unless you know you are living way beyond your means in terms of housing), so let's look at other things. All the items in the High section and most, if not all, the items in the Medium section are important to you now. Look at each item in these two sections. Did each of these become important/salient to you by chance or by choice? By default or by decision?

Watergate Test Number 2: "Follow the Time." Some things that are important to you might not have been picked up by the money test. So we need to also take a look at where you are spending your time. Every one of us gets 24 hours for each of our days. Let's say you sleep 8 hours (actually people aren't sleeping enough, research says, and most of us need around 8 to function and focus well) and you work 8 hours or so each day. The total of sleeping and working, 16 hours, leaves another 8 for commuting to and from work, carpools, errands, eating, unwinding, studying, being with family, etc. If we allow 5 hours for all those activities that leaves about 3 hours each day that are at your disposal. You might say, "hey, I don't have 3 hours each day to do what I want!" Actually, you may have more! According to a recent study by the *Federal Reserve Bank of Boston* and reported in *Time Magazine* in October 2006, most American adults watch 2.5 hours of TV each day and, if they happen to get another hour of disposable time...they give TV half of it! That's 3 hours a day. So, 3 hours of disposable time each day, on average, is actually a conservative number. As you did with money, take a really good, honest look at what you are spending your time on each week and write it on the line below. Like the money line, this one has three sections and, using 3 hours per day, I have created Low, Medium, and High breakpoints for a week (7 days X 3 hours/day = 21 possible hours of disposable time/week). Get really honest with yourself, *without judging yourself one little bit about where your time is currently going*, and write in the sections 10-12 activities on which you spend the time amount of time noted in each section below.



Did you pick up some things here that the money test didn't catch? Where is your time going? What are you attending to right now? What do you see in the Medium and High sections, especially? Is this where you *want* your time to be spent? You may be spending 99% of your time on things *you think* are important to you or others tell you *should* be important to you. As you compare them to what you deeply value, though, you may see they really aren't important after all.

Now let's use one last test. Watergate Test Number 3: "Follow the Energy." I can't quantify your energy as easily as I can your time but I think you have now caught on to how the line works. Below just note in each section which things or activities you are spending Low, Medium, and High amounts of energy on each week.



Work (including raising kids/homemaking) probably got into the High section. What else do you see in the Medium and High sections? Where is your energy going each day, week, month, and year? Just see it, note it, and keep it in mind *without judging yourself about where you are currently spending your energy*.

Face it, you and I have limited amounts of money, time, and energy. Since you are wanting to grow, through increased focus, what is salient to you and what you want more of in your life, you will have to pick the things on which you want to focus your money, time, and energy. You can't "selectively attend" to everything. "Selective" means you have got to make some hard choices and those choices need to be for the top-most things that are important/salient to you and on which you will direct your attention in a focused way. Look again at all the Medium and High items in your Watergate tests. Are these really what are important to you and what you want to grow? Which of these items got in by default rather than by a specific decision on your part? Which of these got in by chance rather than your specific choice? Which ones really aren't important to you? What item/s that may not even be on these lines is important to you should be included and needs your focus? I asked you to suspend judgment of yourself earlier but now is the time for judgment. I don't mean judgment or criticism of yourself because that will only shut you down. I mean, rather, clear judgment to determine what is really salient and important in your life and what you truly want to see grow. Now that you have the data that says something is currently getting your money, time, and energy you need now to say either: "yes, that really needs my focus because it is important to me" or "no, I don't know how that got so much of me in the past and I need to cut my focus on it way down because it's not really that important to me."

You may have come up with a long list of things you feel are very important to you but you will have a hard time focusing on each equally so I'd suggest that you select 3-5 of the very most important things that need much more growth in your life and *write them down*. These will be the things that you have decided, as they grow through your focused energy and work, will make the biggest positive impact on your life. Make them very specific and make sure that you can actually attain the growth of these things—don't set goals that are fuzzy or unattainable. You do not have to focus on only these few items forever but you will need to focus on them until they have grown to the size you want. After that they will need some maintenance level of focus to stay healthy and you can then select another set of items for your main focal energy. Now that you know what is most salient/important to you, we can go on to Step Two.

**Step Two:** If you are going to grow something, you need to know what its current size is so you can measure changes as it grows. You have to know where you are, right now, in terms of the amount or level of your top-most important things. If spending more time with someone to grow a relationship is your important item, then how much time are you spending each day right now, *before* you start focusing on growing it? Measure it in minutes, record it, and track it as you work to improve it through focus. If you want to grow your finances, exactly how much money do you want to produce? How much debt, in dollars, do you want to pay off? If you want to improve your health and have decided to focus on diet and exercise, how many calories are you eating each day now? How many minutes are you spending exercising now? How much do you weigh now? No matter what you want to grow you need to *measure* where you are now: the baseline. You also need define *how much* you want so that you will know when you get there. Lastly, you will need to determine a *specific timeline* for *when* you want to see your desired level of growth. Look at your most important 3-5 items and determine, for each, their baseline level right now, decide how much you want to have, and determine exactly when you want to have it. Write this down because writing forces you to commit to it much more than just thinking about it ever will.

**Step Three:** Honestly determine how much time you are *currently* spending selectively attending to each of your most important items. You need to know this. To focus, you will need to attend much more to each item and to do that you need to know where you are now. You may have learned, above, that what is really salient to you may NOT be what you are spending most of your time on, thinking about, talking about, rehearsing in your mind, etc. Write next to each item how much time you are selectively attending to it now by these behaviors and how much time you think it might need in order to grow to the extent you want. You can always change this later and increase or decrease as you see a need. But, *write* your best estimate now.

**Step Four:** You will need to develop a tentative list of specific things you will need to do to increase the level of your top-most important items. Human beings change by small steps, baby steps, as we saw in Chapter One. Plan your steps so that they are very specific and very small—smaller than you think you need. This way, when you get to that step in reality and find you don't have much energy it will be easier to take the small step and you will keep your momentum moving forward. If you get to a step and you

have lots of energy you complete maybe two small steps and move forward even faster. At the start, set yourself up for success by making the steps very small so you can be flexible when you actually get to them. To break down your specific, important goal into little steps you can use the “upward arrow method.” Write your goal with its desired size and the time you want to achieve it on the top of a sheet of paper with an arrow under it, pointing up to that goal. Then ask yourself, what is the thing I would need to have done *just before* I achieve the goal in order to achieve it? Write that little achievement (the prior baby step) just below the base of the arrow and draw another arrow under this achievement pointing up at it. What is the baby step I need to achieve to get to that? Write it down. Keep going until you reach the baby step you need to take as your very first one. Ask the advice of someone you think might be able to help you break your efforts into baby steps. As you go along in achieving each step you will see that steps may need to be changed, reordered, some deleted, some added, etc. That is OK—it is your list of steps and you can change it however you want and as often as you want as long as you *remain focused on each step towards your goal*. Focusing on each current and next step will help you keep the thing that is important to you at the forefront of your mind and ensure that you devote much, much more attention to it (mentally and behaviorally). You are turning the magnifying glass of your mind on what you want more of and you are directing all your energy and hands-on work towards it.

**Step Five:** You will need help as you go along and you will need to figure out some tactics that will help you keep your selective attention, energy, and efforts on the steps toward growing what is important to you. How can you do that? Following are some questions you need to address and for which you will need to develop some specific answers. Which friends or family members will be able to hear about what you are doing and *support* you? Who will hold you *accountable* for continuing to focus and take the next steps? What changes will those who live with you be willing to make to *help you stay focused*? How will you *reward* yourself when you have completed a baby step? You need rewards AND accountability continuously if you are going to remain focused on growing something important in your life. What can you do to deal with being *distracted*, from having your focus pulled from your goal? What can you do to get yourself refocused? Review your list of steps? Remind yourself of the importance of your goal? What? Focusing on the most important issues in your life and attempting to develop and grow them is tough work. Make sure you have what you need for this journey. Prepare to succeed and you will. Ignore preparation and you will fail. Follow the above steps to make sure you succeed!

What about things you don't want in your life? What specific behaviors do you need to demonstrate to use the power of focus to eliminate what you don't want? Since we've already gone through, in detail, the steps to increasing your focus on what you do want, the steps to decreasing what you don't want will be pretty easy. And, to help us, I have elicited the advice of Albert Einstein who said “The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.” Or, to state it another way “You cannot solve a problem by thinking about the problem. You must move your mind out of the problem and think, rather, about its solution.” Read these to yourself several times and really think about them. You might even copy them down

and paste them around the house for a while so that you see them and are reminded of them. They are truth. That truth is the basis of the steps to help you use focus to eliminate or reduce your problems. These steps are:

**Step One:** Answer, in writing, the following questions:

- What, very specifically, is the situation/issue/problem/difficulty you want out of your life?
- How much of this do you want out of your life? Part of it, all of it, how much?
- How much time, right now, are you spending thinking about it, chewing it like cud, mulling over it, talking about it, etc.?

Now, write down the core problem. After you have written it ask yourself “is that really the fundamental issue or is there something deeper? If so, write that down. Keep asking and writing until you get to the absolute core, bottom-line as you can get, distilled essence of the issue written on paper. Good. Now, in your imagination take a mental picture of this problem or issue and imagine what its negative image would look like. You’ve seen negative images on film, right? What is the exact opposite, the 100% negative image of your problem? That is, if you totally replaced this problem with the thing you want instead of it, what would that good thing be? Describe that desired thing in writing, specifically. Good. You have now set for yourself a top-most important (salient) goal. Make very sure that you describe it very specifically and that you can actually attain this thing and that it is not just a dream item for you. Once you have described it specifically, treat it like one of your top-most important items (as above) and, starting with Step Two (above) work through all the way until you have completed Step Five.

What you are doing in this process is getting your focus OFF your problem (because we know that focusing on problems only makes them bigger) and ON the positive solution to it expressed in steps you can take to focus all of your energy on making that solution a reality for you. As you transfer your focus from what you don’t want to its opposite: something you do want and then work toward achieving those positive goals, you will decrease what you dislike by crowding it out with the achievement of that which you desire. In some ways it’s simple math. As what you want grows and occupies your mental field, your experience, and your life, what you don’t want is crowded out. You don’t push the negative out directly because you DO NOT focus on it! You, instead, focus on its exact opposite, the positive thing you do want. You grow it, and it pushes the negative out. Does this mean that your life will be perfect and full of roses and all your problems will go away? Wake up! This is not dream land. This is reality and reality does not work that way. There will always be problems and some things, some people, some realities, and some situations you don’t like in your life to some degree. But focusing on what you do want will, more than you might think or realize, push these other things off of center stage in your life and will expand the percentage of what is good in your life. Forget getting to 100% great things. No one has that but what if you really assessed your life as 80% really good and 20% challenging to some degree? Or even 90/10? That would be a Hell of a lot better than where too many people are: 95+% crap and growing! It can and will happen *but only if you change where you focus.*

Let's sum up what you've learned about the third law of life: what you focus on grows. First, focus results from selectively attending to what is salient to you. You are always focusing on something and your focus causes whatever receives its energy to grow. The law of focus is neutral and you can use it for your good or for your ill. In the past you may have tended to focus on problems rather than good things you may already have and so tend to grow only more problems or at least bigger ones! But the law could just as easily operate to grow more blessings if you would turn your focus on them instead. This is because your minds and the imagination your mind produces is incredibly powerful. Sadly, probably no one taught you how to use your mind to focus on growing what you *want* and so you tend to grow more of what you say you *don't want*. There are, however, some very basic steps you can follow to grow more of what you want but you must first be very, very clear about what is really important to you and what you truly want to grow through your focused energy. As you get very specific about what you want, break each step toward it down into very small easy-to-do steps, and plan how you are going to remain focused on it, you will find that you really can grow what you desire and shrink what you no longer want in your life. This is very powerful. It is the power of a harnessed mind. It is like a magnifying glass focusing the power of the Sun on one point. You have that power and you have learned some basic steps in using it to put in your life what you want it to have—what you want to have. What you focus on grows.