

Hi!

Let me add my voice in welcoming you to the Design Your Life<sup>®</sup> program at Kripalu! I'm so glad you'll be joining us for what will surely be a transformational weekend! I am here to make sure that you are well taken care of leading up to it.

**Prerequisite: Homework Assignment**

Please complete the required homework assignment on the following pages, which is two weeks before the program begins. Email your completed homework as an attachment to [coach@handelgroup.com](mailto:coach@handelgroup.com), with subject line: *Kripalu Homework*. Please also bring a printed copy of the homework with you to the weekend.

**Suggested Reading Assignment**

We'd love for you to read Lauren Handel Zander, [\*Maybe It's You: Cut the Crap. Face Your Fears. Love Your Life\*](#) prior to the course!

Let me know if you have any questions and I look forward to seeing you!

Best,  
Lauren and Laurie

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## The Handel Method® Design Your Life™ Weekend

Welcome to your Design Your Life™ Weekend! This homework assignment is the first step in what will be a fun whirlwind of profound self-discovery and change. Please take time to thoroughly answer all parts of the homework, and submit it by the deadline communicated to you by your coach.

### **Homework Assignment:**

Your homework consists of six parts:

- I. Your Biography
- II. The 12 Areas of Life
- III. Prioritizing
- IV. Parent Traits
- V. Hauntings
- VI. Send Us Your Photo

Please limit your total homework length to no more than 15 pages, single-spaced, 12-point font.

Anything you send us or talk about during the weekend is confidential within the group itself. If there is anything that you do not want discussed within the group, please note it at the beginning of your homework. Anything not noted may be used for educational purposes during the course. And remember, the more you share, the more you will get out of the course!

Be sure to bring a copy of your homework with you to the course.

Enjoy!

*Note: If we read anything in your homework that indicates that this course may not be a fit for you and your*

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*needs, we reserve the right to request that you not attend the course, accompanied by a full refund.*

## PART I: Your Biography

Write a short biography about yourself, including your background, your family, your history, and your career. Give us a good introduction to you.

## PART II: The 12 Areas of Life

We divide your life into 12 areas:

1. **Relationship to Self** — what do you say about yourself to yourself? “I am such a loser,” “I am the smartest person on the planet,” etc.
  - **Bad habits** — such as vices, biting your nails, overeating, drinking, smoking, partying, addictions, whining, etc.
  - **Character Traits** — things that don’t work about you, such as anxiety, anger, moodiness, lying, fear, whining and being a brat.
  
2. **Body** — weight, appearance, presentation, how you look.
  - **Health** - physical, mental & emotional.
  
3. **Love** — are you currently in a relationship or not, what are you looking for, what would your dream relationship look like?
  - **Dating**
  - **Romance** — giving and receiving attention with your partner.
  - **Marriage**
  - **Sex** — are you happy with the quality and frequency? When was the last time you had sex? Is there cheating of any sort in your history?

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4. **Spirituality** — however you define this.
5. **Career** — how's it going, level of satisfaction, do you love what you're doing, what do you strive for?
6. **Money** — are you happy with the amount you earn, the amount you've saved, how you spend your money, and how it's managed?
7. **Time** — how well do you manage your time, to-dos, and scheduling? Is there anything you wish you'd get to but don't?
8. **Home** — do you like your house or apartment? Does it reflect you well? How does it feel and look? Does it feel like home?
  - **Personal Space and Organization** — is your personal space organized, immaculate, clutter-free, etc.?
9. **Family** — your participation with your parents, siblings and children.
  - **Parenting**
10. **Friends** — depth, intimacy
11. **Fun & Adventure** — vacations, self-indulgent time, out-of-the-ordinary events.
  - **Learning** — about things that interest you, such as learning to fly a plane, play the guitar, or speak Spanish.
12. **Community and Contribution** — are you involved with any activities in your community? Are you happy with your contributions to something larger than yourself?

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For each area of your life, please answer the following four questions. Take each area one-by-one, and answer all four questions before moving on to the next area.

**1. Describe what your dream is for this area.** What it would feel like, look like? In addition to the results that you accomplish, focus on how it would feel to be experiencing your life this way. Be thorough in your description:

- Create the full picture in detail.
- Dare to dream. Make it a stretch for yourself. Don't be afraid of failing.
- Give yourself goosebumps when you write it.
- Make it something you can believe in and really get behind.
- Write the whole description in the present tense as if it is already happening right now.

**2. Rate each area on a scale of 1-10 (see below)** based on where you are *right now*. Be **honest**. A low number doesn't mean that you are a bad person. The more honest you are about where you really are, the more you will learn.

**10 - Perfect:** Unsustainable state of affairs. Reserved for individual episodes and fleeting moments of bliss.

**9 - Extraordinary:** The highest sustainable rating for an area

**8 - Highly Satisfactory:** Significant additional effort would be needed to elevate rating to a "9." A source of pride.

**7 - Satisfactory:** Solid. You can't complain, but you may be coasting because the situation is good enough to live with. However, it is not a source of pride.

**6 - Moderately Unsatisfactory:** Not intolerable, but frayed around the

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edges. You can talk yourself into calling it a "7" but it's not easy. This Area needs work, although it doesn't have to be today.

**5 - Consistently Unsatisfactory:** A "6" that's been around a while. Still not intolerable, but it is likely you are avoiding the issues and not taking the steps necessary to change the situation.

**4 - Very Unsatisfactory:** Getting to be intolerable...but not yet. Requires a great deal of justification and/or denial to continue this number at a sustained rate.

**3 - Intolerable:** Things are bad. Very bad. It is not yet life threatening or a point of no return, but getting close.

**2 - Acutely Painful:** Virtually unbearable Things are hopeless. You wonder why you exist.

**1 - Excruciating:** Unsustainable level of suffering. Reserved for individual episodes and fleeting moments of hell.

**3. If the area is not at a 9/10, what does this area of your life look like right now?** Describe it to us in detail. Make sure you address all the points you made in your dream from question #1. If it is a 9/10, say why.

**4. If the area is not at a 9/10, what are the reasons or explanations?** Why are you stuck at the current number? What are your negative beliefs?

**For example:**

Area: Time

1. *Dream:* My life is in balance, I wake up feeling excited to live out a schedule that is an expression of *me*. My days mirror my priorities. I have ample time to further a career I love, connect deeply with my partner, nourish and exercise my body, and learn and grow as a person. I feel satisfied and full. I move between activities and meetings with grace and ease, arriving on time, efficiently dealing with business at hand (and enjoying it!), and leaving on time

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for the next engagement. The activities in my day have purpose and meaning, and I focus my attention on each one. I feel powerful and creative in what I take on. I am in command of the things I have to do and want to do. I take time to plan, delegate, execute. I end my days satisfied, exhilarated, and in love with life.

2. *Rating:* 5

3. *Current:* My life is horribly out of whack. My work is all-consuming. I work until late at night, and come home to find my kids already asleep. I don't have the energy to talk to my wife, and so unwind by watching mindless TV shows until bedtime. And then the day repeats. I used to enjoy reading and exercising and playing cello in a local quartet, but I don't have time for that anymore. At work, I am always in "fire alarm" mode, running between meetings that run late and make me late for the next meeting.

4. *Why am I not there:* I cannot have my dream because I have a very demanding job. The economy is bad and so we are doing more with less to keep clients. My boss doesn't listen to me when I ask for a lesser load, and I don't want to look bad by pushing the point. My subordinates are irresponsible and incompetent, and I spend time fixing their mistakes.

## PART III: Prioritizing

What are the top five areas (from Part II) that you want to work on?

## PART IV: Parent Traits

There's no getting around having your parent's issues and personality—you just have your own version.

1. Please list every characteristic and aspect of your parents, both positive and negative. Your parents are complicated people, so please give us a nice long list! We

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really need to get a full sense of who each parent is.

**For each trait, give:**

- One word that describes the trait. Mean, cold, adventuresome, meticulous, etc.
- A few sentences describing the facet.
- An explanation of how you have that trait. Don't just say "have" or "don't have," but rather describe how it lives out in you.

2. Please describe the traits of your parents' marriage and explain how that trait lives on in your own relationships.

***Examples***

Dad: Stubborn

He always needed things his way and would go all the way to yelling at mom to get them. He had to be the one to drive and decide where we went to school. He had an ability to scare people into obeying him.

*How it lives in me:* I can be stubborn too, though not violent. I usually pout instead of yell--until I get my way with most things. I too don't normally give up until I get my way.

Dad: Well-read

He was always reading something, and devoured books and information.

*How it lives in me:* I do get my love of learning and books from him.

Their Marriage: Volatile

My parents would always be yelling and screaming at each other unless dad was into a project.



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*How it lives in me:* I am not married yet but could imagine it would be pretty stormy. I have been critical of the people I have dated. This is probably why I have never been in a long term relationship.

## PART V: Haunting Incidents

We believe that each memory that you can distinctly remember contains important information. In those memories— whether they are painful, joyous, embarrassing, shocking or lonely— are clues to patterns in your life.

Please write out the incidents from your life that haunt you. Dig deep— there should be at least 10 incidents on your list. Each haunting should have at least a 3-sentence description, and it should be clear to the reader what the incident was.

### **The following are hauntings:**

- When you think of X person, you don't want to see him/her again
- Anyone that you once loved and don't love anymore
- Anything that you haven't told your parents; for example, that you snuck out of the house when you were 15 years old.
- People who have betrayed you or you betrayed
- How you have been cheated or been cheated on
- Lies that you are going to the grave with
- Embarrassing events that have happened in your past
- Deep moments of making decisions with yourself that you remember
- Dreams you have sold out on
- Anything that you have quit or failed at

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## **Example Hauntings**

"When I was 7 years old, a boy in my class on whom I had a crush told my best girlfriend I was a fatso and asked why was she friends with me. I was so devastated when I heard this, that I ran home and skipped the next day of school. I have always felt fat since then, no matter how thin I am."

"I had an affair with my college professor. There was nothing wrong with it per se but it ended up pretty rocky and I am still haunted by him and it."

"When I was 6, my father took me on a boat with his friends and tied a towel around my head. I was scared, told my mother, and she made sure that I never went over to my father's house again."

"My dad doesn't talk to me. When I am home from school for a vacation, I deliberately get up early so I can sit with him at the breakfast table while he eats his breakfast, in the hopes that he will talk with me and open up to me. But he never talks to me, just eats and reads the paper."

## **Part VI: Send Us Your Photo**

Please include a picture of yourself, either in your homework document, or as a separate attachment. It will help us get to know you!

You're done... congratulations! We're looking forward to delving deeper with you during the Design Your Life Weekend!