

Nikki, Rose, Tamara, Tom, and Xavier. Thank you for your belief, your interest, your ideas, and your support. Thank you also to our blog readers, our social media followers, and our event attendees.

We wish also to formally list and thank our book 'road-testers' who read and worked through early copies of our manuscript and provided us with rich feedback and assisted us to fine-tune our process. We thank our road-testers for their support and for generously providing us with the permission to include excerpts of their responses in our book as helpful case studies for fellow readers. Our heartfelt thanks to: Amanda, Charlie, Faith, Jen, Jo, Jon, Kat, Kim, Lennon, Maddy, Nicole, Paula, Pip, Rosa, Syndi, Tony, and Tunya.

In closing, we wish to formally express our appreciation for one another. Our shared and treasured experience of writing this book together has been a beautiful gift for each of us personally. We have both given and received care, comfort, and inspiration from each other and we hope the warmth and respect of our relationship comes through to our readers.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Do I have to complete every one of the specified exercises?

No.

Of course, we believe there is significant value within each of the twenty-one exercises, as each of them can contribute to you gaining personal insights. If, however, you find a particular exercise unnecessary or unhelpful for you at the present time, please feel free to move on to the next one.

2. What length should my manifesto be?

Great question! Our answer is that this is completely up to you (which we worry you may not think is a helpful answer!).

From our personal work with clients, the 'record' for the shortest manifesto comes in at two words, and the 'record' for the longest manifesto comes in at 547 words! You are most welcome to fit your own manifesto somewhere between these two records, or you are most welcome to set a new record – if you do, please be sure to contact us and let us know.

What do you think the ideal length would be for you? Are you looking to condense your personal insights into one or two memorable sentences that can become something you can memorise and repeat to yourself at specific times? Alternatively, are

you looking to put into words a comprehensive expression of what is important to you and the direction you wish to head? With a longer version, you may choose to refer to a particular phrase or paragraph at certain times across your week or month, or you may choose to re-read it when faced with weighty decisions or when considering future directions.

You can be comforted that you will always have your 'raw material' (pages 219–20) and you can select, combine, integrate, or synthesise this material into a current, unique, personal manifesto whenever you choose.

3. Is there an ideal length of time I should take to work through this book?

While there will be personal preferences, we do think there are optimal time frames within which you complete this unique, 7-step process.

Let's start with the quickest time. If you are feeling the vibe and you have the time and headspace, we have known individuals to work through the seven steps over a concentrated day or a dedicated weekend. So, as long as you feel you aren't rushing your responses or reflections, feel free to simply keep going!

As we consider the slowest optimal time, we do know some well-intentioned clients who lost momentum and found that they had breaks that were too long between steps. For some, pacing the process at one step per month is possible and appropriate, but in general we would recommend a pace of one step per

week, or per fortnight – this allows time for personal reflection amongst your regular week, whilst still ensuring you are experiencing healthy progress.

One recommendation we have is for you to schedule time each week (or each day, or each fortnight ...) where you can prioritise working through this process. It can be as little as fifteen minutes, or as long as a two-hour session. We encourage you to keep moving forward through the book – we trust you will be thrilled, proud, and excited when you arrive at your ‘finished’ manifesto.

4. How long will my manifesto last?

Maybe a year, possibly a decade, and perhaps a lifetime.

We intentionally and regularly refer to your ‘current, unique, personal manifesto’ and the reason we stress ‘current’ – and suggest that you *date* your manifesto – is that you, your life, and our world will continue to evolve and change.

It is our opinion that the wisdom and personal insights you gain from going through the seven steps will be true to who you are at present and will serve you at this age and stage of your life. Quite possibly, some of this wisdom will remain constant throughout your life, and quite possibly with a new chapter in your life, you will choose to complement, modify, or emphasise different insights in your *next* ‘current, unique, personal manifesto’.

For an updated edition of your manifesto, you may wish to work completely through the book and each

of the exercises again. Alternatively, you may simply turn to your ‘raw material’ at the end of Part 2 (pages 219–20), and from this canvas construct a new variation that meets you wherever you are at.

5. Should I talk to trusted others about some of my responses and thoughts?

We have designed this process for you to work independently through each of the steps as you sit with your thoughts, your hopes, and your wisdom. Having said this, we welcome and even encourage you to discuss any insights that arise for you with others. At any time, if you feel that sharing and discussing your thoughts and/or responses will increase your connection with others, please go for it. Also, if you think that the perspective and awareness of trusted others will add to your understanding, then we encourage you to bring these people into your journey through this book.

6. What should I do if I am feeling stuck and don’t know what to write?

It is quite okay to feel a bit stuck and to simply sit with this feeling for a period of time. We often find that insights will simply arise during the day as you are carrying out routine tasks. Some people have found going for a walk, or a run, or participating in their favourite form of exercise is a helpful way of reflecting, mulling, and possibly unlocking new insights.

The case studies at the end of each chapter are intentionally included for readers to see the breadth and variety of possible responses – these may be helpful to refer to if you are feeling stuck. Another option is to continue

moving forward through the exercises and return to your sticking point at a later date.

We have every confidence that you will discover, or reveal, what feels right for you to write.

7. How can I add some accountability to help me ‘finish’ my manifesto?

We think this is an important consideration for many people. Life is busy and, despite our best intentions, we can start meaningful projects and find they can remain unfinished. While we believe that completing any of the exercises or reading any of the chapters can assist you to gain new wisdom, we are quietly barracking for you to *keep going* and complete the full, current version of your manifesto.

It can be helpful to schedule time each week to spend on your manifesto – book it in like you do for other important appointments or activities.

It can also be helpful to enlist the support of a close friend or family member. Maybe they are working through their copy of the book and you regularly check-in with one another to share personal updates. Possibly, you set times to catch up with one another and agree on what step you will have completed by the time you meet.

Please don’t leave your manifesto incomplete because you don’t think it is ‘perfect.’ That’s why we included parts of Chapter 1 – you are not seeking perfection. Whatever you write will be right for you at this stage of your life, and there will always be

opportunities for you to add or fine-tune your manifesto should you wish to.

You know you would like to see your personal manifesto. What would most help you to proudly arrive at this point by a particular date? Go well!

8. Should my manifesto be more about myself or more about others?

Another really interesting question. Your manifesto will help serve you to live your authentic life. If what you feel you need most at the moment is to release yourself from particular fears or to harness your positive qualities, or to live in accordance with your values, then you may choose to emphasise words and phrases which gently support and nourish you.

For a different person, or for yourself at a different stage of life, you may choose to focus more on the contribution you can make to your loved ones and your community, along with the connections you wish to strengthen with others.

For many, their personal manifesto is a blend of self and others, but we want you to know that whatever blend or focus feels important for you at this time will be right for you!

9. I want to do ‘the work’, but I just never feel in the right mood. What can I do?

We get this! But when you don’t feel in the mood, sometimes – counter-intuitively – sitting down, opening the book, reading a few pages, and pondering an exercise will get you in the mood. It’s worth a try!

Sometimes a particular environment will help you evoke the right mood for you. Maybe it is a quiet reflective place in your home, maybe it is in outside in nature, maybe it is within your favourite café amongst the happy hum of fellow humans, maybe it's your local library. Possibly, you don't need a full environment change – simply getting your cuppa, popping on some music, and picking up your special pen is the set of triggers that readies you for your next productive sitting.

10. Can you (Sue and Justin) coach me to complete my manifesto?

We can! If this is something that appeals to you, please go to our website (mymanifesto.me) for more information.

11. Can I go through the process of completing my manifesto as part of a group of interested people?

You can! If this is something that appeals to you, please go to our website (mymanifesto.me) for more information regarding joining an online cohort or attending one of our retreats.

Appendix 2: The VIA Classification Of Character Strengths

Appreciation of beauty and excellence

Noticing and appreciating beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in various domains of life, from nature to art to mathematics to science to everyday experience.

Bravery

Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain; speaking up for

what's right even if there's opposition; acting on convictions even if unpopular; includes physical bravery but is not limited to it.

Creativity

Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualise and do things; includes artistic achievement but is not limited to it.

Curiosity

Taking an interest in ongoing experience for its own sake; finding subjects and topics fascinating; exploring and discovering.

Fairness

Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice; not letting feelings bias decisions about others; giving everyone a fair chance.

Forgiveness

Forgiving those who have done wrong; accepting others' shortcomings; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful.

Gratitude

Being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks.

Honesty

Speaking the truth but more broadly presenting oneself in a genuine way and acting in a sincere way; being without pretence; taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions.

Hope

Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it; believing that a good future is something that can be brought about.

Humility

Letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves; not regarding oneself as more special than one is.

Humour

Liking to laugh and tease; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side; making (not necessarily telling) jokes.

Judgement

Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly.

Kindness

Doing favours and good deeds for others; helping them; taking care of them.

Leadership

Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the same time maintain good relations within the group; organising group activities and seeing that they happen.

Love

Valuing close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated; being close to people.

Love of learning

Mastering new skills, topics, and bodies of knowledge, whether on one's own or formally; related to the strength of curiosity but goes beyond it to describe the tendency to add systematically to what one knows.

Perseverance

Finishing what one starts; persevering in a course of action in spite of

obstacles; 'getting it out the door'; taking pleasure in completing tasks.

Perspective

Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that make sense to oneself and others.

Prudence

Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted.

Self-regulation

Regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined; controlling one's appetites and emotions.

Social intelligence

Being aware of the motives and feelings of others and oneself; knowing what to do to fit into different social situations; knowing what makes other people tick.

Spirituality

Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe; knowing where one fits within the larger scheme; having beliefs about the meaning of life that shape conduct and provide comfort.

Teamwork

Working well as a member of a group or team; being loyal to the group; doing one's share.

Zest

Approaching life with excitement and energy; not doing things halfway or half-heartedly; living life as an adventure; feeling alive and activated.

Appendix 3: An Overview Of Ten Key Positive Emotions

Joy

Joy derives from the child within us; it is the unfettered rush of good feelings that promises to burst forth at any moment in spontaneous laughter.

Gratitude

Gratitude is warmth of the heart: it arises from an awareness that something good has happened because of a quality we may possess, an action from another, or a tick from the universe.

Contentment

Contentment, or serenity, is a state of being enough, of being happy within oneself and one's circumstances.

Curiosity

Curiosity is the insatiable desire to know, to explore, to question, and is therefore the spark for new learning.

Hope

Hope is the polar opposite of despair; it is the little flame within that refuses to be extinguished.

Pride

Pride is the swelling of the chest that follows achievement: I did that!

Amusement

Amusement is the sense of the absurdity of so much of our behaviour and circumstance; to feel it is to have a degree of unattachment.

Inspiration

Inspiration is the intake of breath when witnessing nobility of sentiment or deed; to glimpse greatness.

Awe

Awe accompanies an awareness of things beyond our imaginings; *this is possible?*

Love

Love is the apotheosis of good feelings; it fills, it generates, it radiates.

Appendix 4: Character Strengths 360 Exercise

Dear _____,

Could I please ask you a favour? It will take you about five minutes to complete. I am currently working through a book that describes a 7-Step guide to creating a personal manifesto. One of the topics covered within this book is raising the awareness of my Character Strengths.

As part of my 'homework', I am encouraged to complete a Character Strengths 360 exercise, where we ask family, friends, and colleagues representing different aspects of my life to provide feedback on the Character Strengths you recognise in me. It feels a bit awkward randomly asking you to give me feedback on my highest Character Strengths, but it is greatly appreciated!

Below are twenty-four Character Strengths, with a brief description of each. Could you please suggest **five** of these Character Strengths which you feel **most strongly** describes me as a person and how I operate in your life? Or, in other words, the five Character Strengths you **most clearly** see in me.

Creativity: Ingenuity; sees and does things in new or unique ways; original and adaptive ideas.

Curiosity: Novelty-seeker; takes an interest; open to different experiences; asks questions.

Judgment: Critical thinker; analytical; logical; thinks things through.

Love of learning: Masters new skills and topics; passionate about knowledge and learning.

Perspective: Wise; provides wise counsel; sees the big picture; integrates others' views.

Bravery: Valorous; does not shrink from fear; speaks up for what's right.

Perseverance: Persistent; industrious; overcomes obstacles; finishes what is started.

Honesty: Integrity; truthful; authentic.

Zest: Enthusiastic; energetic; vital; feels alive and activated.

Love: Gives and accepts love; genuine; values close relations with others.

Kindness: Generous; nurturing; caring; compassionate; altruistic; nice.

Teamwork: A team player; community-focused; socially responsible; loyal.

Fairness: Just; does not allow feelings to bias decisions about others.

Leadership: Organises group activities; encourages and leads groups to get things done.

Forgiveness: Merciful; accepts others' shortcomings; gives people a second chance.

Humility: Modest; lets accomplishments speak for themselves; focuses on others.

Prudence: Careful; wisely cautious; thinks before speaking; does not take undue risks.

Self-regulation: Self-controlled; disciplined; manages impulses and emotions.

Appreciation of beauty and excellence: Awe; wonder; marvels at beauty and greatness.

Spirituality: Religious and/or spiritual; practices a faith; purpose- and meaning-driven.

Gratitude: Thankful for the good; expresses thanks; feels blessed.

Hope: Optimistic; future-minded; has a positive outlook.

Humour: Playful; enjoys joking and bringing smiles to others; light-hearted.

Social intelligence: Aware of the motives and feelings of oneself and others; knows what makes other people tick.

If possible, simply write down the names of the five Character Strengths and provide a brief rationale or example of how you have seen me display this strength.

Many thanks,

P.S. Please let me know if you would like me to return the favour and share with you the Character Strengths that I see in you!

Appendix 5: 50+ Authentic Living Books That We Love

Mike Bayer, *Best Self*
 Tal Ben-Shahar, *Being Happy, Happiness Studies*
 Warren Berger, *A More Beautiful Question*
 Susan Biggar, *The Upside of Down*
 Richard Boyatzis, Melvin Smith, Ellen Van Oosten, *Helping People Change*
 Brene Brown, *Rising Strong, Daring to Lead, Atlas of the Heart*
 Michael Bungay Stanier, *The Coaching Habit*
 Oliver Burkeman, *The Antidote*
 James Clear, *Atomic Habits*
 Ayelet Fishbach, *Get It Done*
 Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning, Yes to Life*
 Robert Fulghum, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*
 Maureen Gaffney, *Flourishing*
 Elizabeth Gilbert, *Big Magic*
 Seth Godin, *The Dip*
 Russ Harris, *The Happiness Trap*
 Donna Hicks, *Dignity*
 Ryan Holiday, *The Daily Stoic, The Obstacle is the Way, Courage is Calling*
 Kerry Howells, *Untangling You*
 Gerald Jampolsky, *Love is Letting go of Fear*
 Matthew Johnstone, *The Big Little Book of Resilience*
 Stephen Joseph, *What Doesn't Kill Us*
 Austin Kleon, *Steal Like an Artist*
 Roman Krznaric, *The Good Ancestor*
 William Macaskill, *Doing Good Better*

Hugh Mackay, *The Inner Self, Australia Reimagined*
 Chris Mackey, *The Positive Psychology of Synchronicity*
 Robert Maurer, *One Small Step Can Change Your Life*
 Wayne McCashen, *The Strengths Approach*
 Kellie McGonigal, *The Upside of Stress, The Joy of Exercise*
 Mark McKergow, *The Next Generation of Solution Focused Practice*
 Adam Morgan & Mark Barden, *A beautiful constraint*
 Kristin Neff, *Self-compassion, Fierce Self-compassion*
 Kristi Nelson, *Wake Up Grateful*
 Ryan Niemiec, *Mindfulness and Character Strengths*
 Chris Peterson, *Pursuing the Good Life*
 Dan Pink, *Drive, The Power of Regret*
 Ken Robinson, *Finding Your Element*
 Martin Seligman, *Flourish*
 Maria Sirois, *A Short Course in Happiness After Loss*
 Bronnie Ware, *The Top Five Regrets of the Dying*
 John Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance*
 Brianna Wiest, *The Mountain is You*
 Rosamund and Benjamin Zander, *The Art of Possibility*

Appendix 6: Some Inspirational Words

As you are refining your words and making your manifesto sing, consider whether any of these listed words would inspire and lift you. Sometimes you may know what you want to say but haven't quite found the best word to say it. Could it be one of these words?

Abundance
 Adventure/
 adventurous
 Aesthetic
 Agency
 Aligning
 Anchored
 Appreciative/
 appreciate
 Aspire/aspiration
 Authenticity/
 authentic
 Awakens/awake
 Awe
 Beauty
 Belonging
 Benefit
 Blessing
 Bounty/bounteous
 Capabilities
 Captivates
 Catalyst
 Chaos
 Character
 Cherish
 Cherished
 Collaborator
 Colourful
 Compassion/self-
 compassion
 Competency
 Complement
 Complexity
 Connectedness
 Connection/
 connectedness
 Consideration
 Continuous
 Continuum
 Contributing/
 contribution
 Convergence/
 converging
 Courage/
 courageously
 Creative
 Crucible
 Cultivate
 Curious
 Distinctive
 Duality
 Earthing
 Emanate
 Embodies
 Embrace
 Empathic/empathy
 Enables
 Encounter
 Endeavour
 Endless
 Energising
 Enlivened
 Enrichment

Ethical
 Ever-present
 Exceptional
 Extension
 Facilitate
 Facilitating/
 facilitation
 Flourish
 Foster
 Foundation
 Fragile
 Fulfilled/fulfilment
 Fun-loving
 Generous/
 generosity
 Gifter/gifting
 Goodness
 Govern
 Grace
 Grant
 Growth
 Harmony
 Healing
 Heart-centre
 Honourable
 Humanity
 Humility
 Immerse
 Imperatives
 Incandescent
 Ineffable/ineffability
 Innate
 Innovation/
 innovative
 Inquisitive
 Insatiable
 Integral

Integrate/ integration	Precious	Unafraid
Integrity	Prevails	Unconditional
Intent/intention	Pristine	Understanding
Intentional/ intentionally/ intentionality	Protection/ protectiveness	Unfold/unfolding
Interact/interaction	Purpose/purposeful	Unique/ uniqueness
Interaction/actions	Quell	Values-driven
Intuition/intuitively	Radiant	Vision
Judicious	Realignment	Vital
Levity	Refined/refine	Voracious/ voraciously
Liberation/liberated	Reflect/reflection	Vulnerability/ vulnerable
Life-long	Rekindle	Well-adjusted
Lightly	Reliant	Wellspring
Limitless/unlimited	Resolve	Wondrous/ wonder/ wonderful/ wonderment
Lodestar	Responsible	Wordsmith
Mantle	Revelations	Zest-filled
Measure/measured	Ripple	
Metaphor	Safeguard	
Microcosm/ macrocosm	Savour	
Mystery	Sensorial/senses	
Nurtures/nurturing	Sentient	
Oneness	Service	
Open-hearted/ wholehearted	Shelter	
Opportunities	Solace	
Paradox	Spiritual	
Paramount	Steadfast	
Passionate	Stretch	
Perforce	Surety	
Perspectives	Talents	
Philosophy	Tangible	
Planetary/planet	Temper/ temperance	
Platform	Traits	
Playfully	Transcendence/ transcends	
Possibilities	Transform/ transformative/ transformational	

Sue's Current Manifesto



I replenish myself and navigate all that life presents with love, including self-love.

I deeply value authenticity in all my interactions and seek the bravery I need to live in integrity.

I allow myself the right to construct the meanings by which I live.

I aim to continue to grow spiritually and to contribute my ideas to the world.

I am a human being with all the complexity and flaws of every other human being; I release myself from trying to be more.

My hoped-for role is of a leader, who has lived a full life and is prepared to share the benefits of what I have learned.

I wish to create a community of care throughout my immediate family, my community, and the society of which I am one.

Justin's Current Manifesto



I actively seek to live a balanced life – where I am present, hands-on, supportive, and loving towards my wife, my children, my family, and my close friends.

And, where I am highly engaged in creating experiences for many others that enable them to be well and to live into their authentic lives.

My Signature Strengths of perseverance and kindness, energise me to show up with compassion and care for people and for projects.

I strive to cultivate courage, expressing myself clearly and bravely standing up for others.

I wish to show respect, humility, generosity, and grace to all. I love to grow, and I welcome adventure into my life.