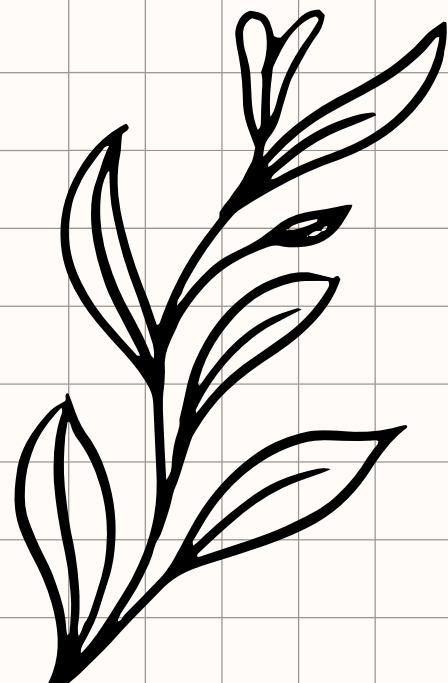


THE DPC METHOD

DPC Digitals



INDEX

This guide is your companion for learning and living the DPC Method, one step at a time. Each part builds on the one before it, helping you create a planning rhythm that supports your goals, your energy, and the life you want to live. Inside, you'll find practical tools, clear examples, and gentle prompts to help you turn ideas into action – all designed with one goal in mind: to make everyday planning feel joyful. Think of it as a framework you can return to anytime you need clarity, motivation, or a fresh start. The index below will guide you to each step so you can easily revisit what matters most whenever you need it.

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The DPC Method

Everyday planning made joyful!

The goal of everything DPC is to help you plan your way and create a life of joy. To help you achieve that, I've created the DPC Method. This is more than a way to organize your days - it's a way to live with clarity, intention, and space for the things that truly matter. The DPC Method is a simple, four-step approach designed to help you plan your way so your system fits your life, not the other way around.

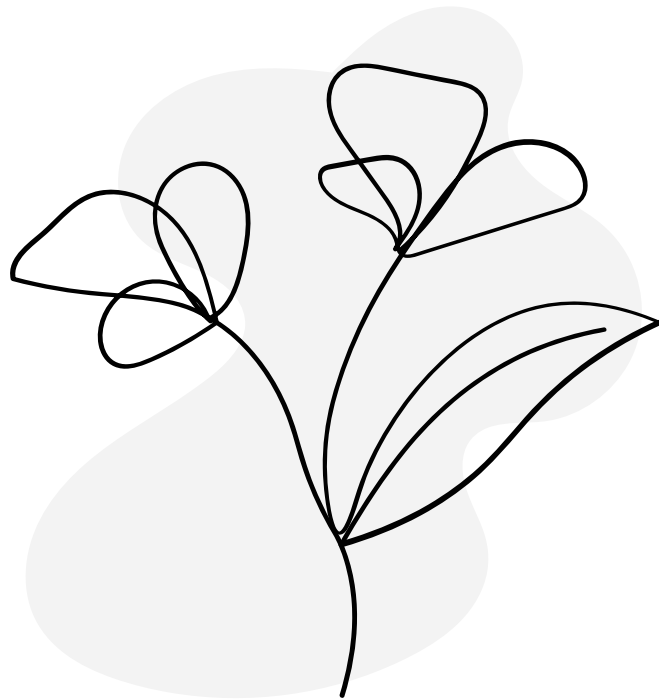
This isn't about chasing perfection or following someone else's "right way." It's about finding a rhythm that matches your energy and your priorities - one that supports your goals, makes room for rest, and leaves space for the joy and spontaneity that makes life richer.

The DPC Method adapts to you. It works in the high-energy seasons when you're ready to take on the world, and it's just as powerful in the slower seasons when keeping the essentials going is enough. You can begin anytime, pause when needed, and pick up right where you left off - no guilt, no getting overwhelmed, just a steady return to what matters most.

Whether you use a planner, a notebook, or a digital tool, the DPC Method gives you a framework that blends structure with flexibility. It's your invitation to create a plan that works for you and a life that feels just as good in reality as it looks on paper.

To help you picture how this works in real life, you'll follow the story of Jordan - someone who, like many of us, juggles work, personal goals, and the unexpected twists of everyday life. After each step in the guide, you'll see how Jordan puts that part of the DPC Method into action, so you can imagine how the same approach might fit into your own life.

So if you're ready, let's get started!



Step 1: Define What Matters

Before you plan your days, set your direction.

There's a big difference between being busy and making progress. Without a clear direction, you can fill your days with a hundred little things and still feel like you haven't gotten anywhere. The DPC Method starts by helping you decide what's worth your energy right now and giving you the focus to follow through.

When you start your planning cycle, whether it's yearly, seasonally, monthly, or weekly, look at it from two angles:

1. The Big Picture: Main & Supporting Focus

These are the priorities that give your time period direction and purpose. They make sure you're putting intentional focus into the areas that will move the needle for you, instead of letting the little things take over.



Main Focus

Your single biggest priority for this time period. The thing that will make you feel accomplished, even if nothing else gets done.



Support Focus

A smaller but meaningful priority that supports your Main Focus or improves your quality of life.

Example Work Focus:

- Main Focus: Complete the quarterly sales report by the 20th.
- Supporting Focus: Organize my email inbox to make finding important information easier.

Example Personal Development:

- Main Focus: Read one personal growth book this month.
- Supporting Focus: Spend 10 minutes journaling each morning.

You'll choose one of each of these every time you reset your planner (yearly, seasonally, monthly, or weekly), so you're always making intentional progress.



Why This Works

Productivity research shows that when you limit your active priorities, you make faster progress and keep your energy higher. Instead of splitting your focus across too many things, you concentrate on the 20% of actions that create 80% of your results (Pareto Principle).

2. The Must-Do's & Non-Negotiables

These are the important deadlines, events, and ongoing responsibilities that must happen, whether or not they tie directly to your goals. They keep your life running smoothly, and knowing them up front helps you plan realistically.

Examples:

- Work deadline: Submit quarterly report by the 15th.
- Home: Pay property taxes by the 30th.
- Family: Attend school open house on the 12th.

When you write these down, include the date (when it makes sense) so you can see how much of your schedule is already spoken for before you start adding anything else.

Why This Works

Life doesn't stop for your goals. By acknowledging your non-negotiables up front, you plan with real life in mind, so you avoid overloading your schedule, forgetting key commitments, or feeling blindsided later in the month.

How to Use Your Setup & Brainstorm Page

Your Setup & Brainstorm page is where you capture it all before anything hits your planner spreads. This is your "dump it all out" space - you can be messy here. Once you've captured everything, you'll transfer only the chosen items into your monthly and weekly planner pages.

Think of it as your planning warm-up: you get all your ideas, priorities, and obligations out of your head and onto paper so you can clearly see what matters most. Once everything is in front of you, it's time to turn that messy brainstorm into a realistic, intentional plan.

Put it in Action

(You can use these for your Yearly, Seasonal, Monthly, or Weekly Setup)

- **Write your Main Focus** - the top priority for this time period (include a target date if it has one).
- **Write your Supporting Focus** - something smaller that supports your Main Focus or boosts your quality of life (include a target date if it has one).
- **List your Must-Do's** - deadlines, events, appointments, and recurring tasks that must happen this period. Add the date for each one.
- **Optional:** List "Would Be Nice" goals/projects you'd love to complete if time allows.
- **Review both lists** and transfer the dated items to your monthly calendar.
- **Block time** in your weekly spreads for your Main and Supporting Focus before adding other tasks.

See It In Action

To help you see how the DPC Method can work in everyday life, we'll follow the journey of Jordan - someone who, like many of us, juggles work, personal goals, and the unexpected twists of life. As you read, imagine how you might adapt each step to your own priorities, schedule, and style

Meet Jordan.

Jordan works a busy job they enjoy, and loves spending weekends on creative hobbies. They've tried planning before, but often found themselves getting caught up in urgent tasks while the things that mattered most sat unfinished. This month, they're ready to use the DPC Method to create a plan that balances their big goals with everyday life - and still leaves space for joy.



It's the first Saturday of the month, and Jordan sets aside an hour with their Joyful Life Planner, a cup of coffee, and their favorite playlist. Instead of diving into a to-do list, Jordan starts with the Setup & Brainstorm page - their "catch-all" space before anything hits the main planner spreads.

For this month, Jordan's Main Focus is clear: finish drafting their first online course. It's been on their mind for months, and completing it would be a huge personal and professional win. For their Supporting Focus, they chose to work on improving their morning routine to start the day with more energy.

Next come the Must-Do's - the fixed responsibilities that need space on the calendar:

- Submit a presentation by the 18th.
- Take the car in for maintenance on the 10th.
- Attend their niece's birthday party on the 24th.

Finally, Jordan jots down a few "Would Be Nice" ideas: reorganizing the kitchen pantry, starting a new art project, and planting flowers in the backyard.

Once everything is captured, Jordan transfers the dated items into the monthly calendar. They block out two Saturday mornings for focused course writing and carve out small windows for adjusting their morning routine. For the first time in a while, the month ahead feels intentional instead of chaotic.



Step 2: Plan with Purpose

Turn your priorities into a plan that fits your life.

Now that you know your Main Focus, Supporting Focus, and Must-Do's, it's time to give them a home in your planner. This is where you move from "I know what's important" to "I know when and how it's going to happen."

The beauty of the DPC Method is that it works with your life, not against it. Some weeks you may need a simple overview. Other weeks you'll want more detailed pages. If you are using the DPC Joyful Life Planner system, it is designed to adapt - whether you're using the All-In-One, Flex, or Anything version, you'll find a rhythm that fits your season.

Why This Works

A plan isn't just about filling up your calendar. It's about protecting space for what matters. Without structure, the urgent often shoves out the important. By assigning time to your priorities before adding everything else, you prevent your most meaningful work and experiences from getting crowded out.

Monthly Planning: The Big Picture

Your month is the container for your goals. This is where you block out time for what matters most before other things fill it.

Tasks to Do Here:

1

Transfer your Main Focus, Supporting Focus, and dated Must-Do's from your Setup & Brainstorm page.

Why: Keeps you anchored to your priorities and ensures the non-negotiables are visible before you add anything else.

2

Block time for your Main and Supporting Focus first.

Why: If you don't reserve time early, these priorities will get pushed aside by less important demands.

3

Add major deadlines and milestones.

Why: Gives you a visual timeline so you can pace yourself instead of scrambling at the last minute.

For example, if your Main Focus is “Improve my personal well-being,” you might:

- Block two Saturdays for hiking or nature walks.
- Add a mid-month check-in to review your mood and energy levels.
- Mark one weekend as “unplugged” for rest and reflection.



Pro Tip: Treat your monthly calendar like prime real estate – the most important things go in first. Everything else works around them.

Weekly Planning: Turning Goals into Action

Weekly planning is where big goals break down into manageable steps, and where you remove as much decision-making from your week as possible.

When you plan your week ahead of time, you spend less mental energy each day wondering “What should I work on?” and more time actually getting things done. Your schedule might shift, but the mental load is lighter because you’ve already done the thinking in advance.

If you’re using the DPC Joyful Life Planner:

- **All-In-One Users:** Your weekly layout is pre-set based on the version you selected, so you already have a structure in place. Simply fill it in with your schedule, tasks, and key priorities for the week. If you’re in a heavier season, add extra daily or project pages to support the extra load.
- **Flex & Anything Users:** Choose a weekly layout that matches your current needs – minimal for lighter weeks, more detailed for busier ones. You can swap layouts anytime, giving you full flexibility.

Tasks to Do Here:



Choose the weekly layout (or style) that fits your workload.

Why: Matching your layout to your week ensures you have the right amount of structure without overcomplicating things.



Break your Main Focus into small, specific action steps.

Why: You’re less likely to procrastinate when you know exactly what needs to be done next.



3

Schedule deep work sessions for high-priority tasks.

Why: Setting aside uninterrupted time protects your energy for the work that matters most.

4

Leave space for the unexpected.

Why: Life will throw curveballs. Leaving open blocks each week gives you room to handle “something came up” moments without derailing your entire plan.

Example (Light Week):

- Main Focus: Organize home office.
- Weekly Actions: Order storage bins, sort one drawer a day, set up label maker.

Example (Heavy Week):

- Main Focus: Prepare for big work presentation.
- Weekly Actions: Block 2 mornings for deep work, batch admin tasks into one afternoon, track prep progress in a project planner page.



Pro Tip: Batch similar tasks together (emails, errands, phone calls) to reduce context switching and save energy.

Daily Planning: Where the Plan Meets Real Life

Your daily pages keep you grounded in what matters most *today*.

This is where you choose your Top 3 tasks for the day, and at least one should connect to your Main Focus. The Top 3 method works because it keeps you from overloading your day and helps you feel accomplished even if you don't finish everything else.



Tasks to Do Here:

- 1 Choose your Top 3 daily tasks.**
Why: It's easier to focus when you're only committing to the most important actions.
- 2 Add a joy or self-care activity.**
Why: Protecting your energy prevents burnout and keeps motivation high.
- 3 Use habit stacking to build new habits.**
What it means: Link a new habit to something you already do automatically so it's easier to remember. Example: "After I brush my teeth, I'll stretch for two minutes."
- 4 Block 1–2 hours for deep focus time.**
Why: This ensures your highest-impact work gets done before distractions creep in.

Example:

- Main Focus: Improve fitness.
- Top 3: Go for a 20-min walk, prep a healthy lunch, send work proposal.
- Habit Stack: Do 10 squats right after starting the coffee maker.



Pro Tip: Even on busy days, completing one Main Focus task helps keep your momentum going.

See It In Action

Now that Jordan has defined their priorities, it's time to turn those intentions into a workable plan. With their month's direction set, Jordan zooms in to make the plan more actionable...

On the monthly calendar, they've already marked the two Saturday writing sessions and the mid-month check-in for course progress. They also block an hour each Sunday to review the week and reset.



Looking at the first week, Jordan knows it's going to be busy - the presentation deadline is looming, and their niece's birthday party is on the weekend. They choose a more detailed weekly layout to capture all the moving parts. They schedule deep work sessions for course writing on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, batch smaller admin tasks into Wednesday afternoon, and leave a couple of open blocks for unexpected needs.

On their daily pages, Jordan starts each morning by listing a Top 3:

1. One task tied to their Main Focus (course draft).
2. One task tied to their Supporting Focus (morning routine improvement).
3. One general responsibility.

They also try habit stacking: after brewing their morning coffee, they spend 10 minutes refining a lesson in their course outline. By the end of the week, the course draft is already a few pages longer, and the new routine feels like it might actually stick.



Step 3: Check In with Yourself

Stay connected to your progress, your energy, and your joy.

Life isn't just about checking off tasks. It's about noticing what's working, what's not, and how you feel along the way. Checking in with yourself keeps your plans alive and adaptable, so you're not just "getting through" your days, you're shaping them in ways that feel good and move you forward.

The DPC Method uses check-ins to make sure your planner isn't just a record of what you did, but a tool that helps you live better. This means keeping an eye on your habits, reflecting on your experiences, and adjusting when needed.

Why This Works

Without regular check-ins, it's easy to drift off course. You might keep busy but slowly lose touch with your bigger goals, or burn out without realizing it.

Research in productivity and behavioral psychology shows that people who reflect regularly make faster progress toward their goals and maintain higher motivation over time. When you track your habits, moods, and progress, you create a feedback loop - your brain connects your actions with your results. This not only helps you spot what's working, it reinforces the behaviors that lead to success.

By carving out time to notice what's working, how you feel, and what might need adjusting, both in your schedule and your energy, you empower yourself to make small but meaningful changes before challenges pile up.

The Weekly Reset

Your weekly reset is your chance to hit pause, check in, and set the tone for the week ahead. It's more than just looking back. It's a bridge between where you've been and where you're going. Think of it as clearing the mental clutter, making small course corrections, and stepping into the new week with clarity and intention.

This doesn't have to be a long process. Even 15–20 minutes is enough to reset your focus and prepare your planner. The key is to do it consistently so you stay aligned with what matters most.

Step 1: Reflect on the Week That's Ending

Before you jump into planning the next week, take a moment to learn from the one you just lived.

- **What went well?** Celebrate the wins – big or small.
- **What could be improved?** Identify patterns or habits that didn't work so you can adjust.
- **Did I follow through on my Main & Supporting Focus?** If not, was it due to overplanning, shifting priorities, or unexpected events?
- **How did I feel overall?** Look for energy highs and lows. They're clues to what supports or drains you.

Why this matters: Reflection turns experience into insight. Without it, you risk repeating the same patterns without noticing what needs to change.

Step 2: Refresh & Prepare for the Week Ahead

Now it's time to set yourself up for success. This is where you create a clean slate and make space for the week you want to have.

- **Clear the decks.** Move unfinished tasks to the coming week or cross them off if they're no longer important.
- **Revisit your Main & Supporting Focus.** Decide if they stay the same or shift for the new week.
- **Add your Must-Do's.** Write down all fixed events, deadlines, and appointments.
- **Block time for priorities.** Reserve time for your Main & Supporting Focus before filling the rest of your schedule.
- **Plan for the unexpected.** Leave open space for last-minute needs so surprises don't derail you.
- **Add something joyful.** Give yourself at least one thing to look forward to – a coffee date, a walk in the park, a craft night.

Why this matters: Reflection turns experience into insight. Without it, you risk repeating the same patterns without noticing what needs to change.

Other Check-In Tools

Your weekly reset is the anchor of Step 3, but you can also use other tools in your Joyful Life Planner to check in with yourself regularly:

- **Habit Trackers** – See at a glance what habits are sticking and which need adjusting.
- **Mood or Energy Logs** – Spot patterns in how your lifestyle impacts your wellbeing.
- **Gratitude Pages** – Keep your focus on what’s going right, even in busy seasons.
- **Joy Lists** – A running reminder of simple things that make life better – perfect to pull from when you need a lift.

Put It in Action

- ✓ Schedule your weekly reset. Try to make it the same day and time each week for consistency.
- ✓ Use the reflection prompts to close out the week with insight.
- ✓ Prepare the week ahead by filling in your planner’s monthly, weekly, and daily pages with your updated focus, Must-Do’s, and joy activities.
- ✓ Keep your check-in tools visible so they become part of your routine.

Step 3 for Different Lifestyles

Example 1: A Working Parent

At your Sunday reset, you review your Main Focus – creating a weekly meal plan – and see that it’s been going smoothly. However, your Supporting Focus of prepping lunches the night before keeps slipping through the cracks. You decide to set a gentle phone reminder at 8 PM each evening. By the end of the week, the reminder has turned a forgotten task into an easy win.

Example 2: A Professional with a Demanding Job

Mid-month, you check in on your Main Focus - completing the quarterly report - and realize you're making steady progress. But your Supporting Focus of spending 15 minutes a day clearing your inbox hasn't been sticking. You shift this task to the mornings, when your energy is highest, and immediately notice how much smoother the rest of your day feels.

Example 3: Personal Growth Focus

During a weekly reflection, you see that your Main Focus of reading a book each week is on track, but your Supporting Focus - daily journaling - hasn't been happening. To make it easier, you link journaling to something you already do every night: enjoying a cup of tea. By stacking the two habits, journaling becomes a natural part of your evening routine.

See It In Action

Two weeks later, Jordan has been living their plan and it's time for a weekly reset. This is where they look at what's working, what isn't, and make quick adjustments so their next week flows more smoothly. It's Sunday afternoon, and Jordan opens their planner for their weekly reset.

First, they reflect on the week that's ending:

- **Wins:** Completed two course lessons and delivered the work presentation on time.
- **Challenges:** Struggled with waking up early enough to fit in a morning walk.
- **Energy:** Felt more focused on days when they avoided checking email first thing.

Next, they refresh for the week ahead:

- Clear the decks by moving a small admin task they didn't finish into Monday's plan.
- Keep the Main Focus the same - finishing the course draft - but adjust the Supporting Focus from "morning routine improvement" to "consistent early bedtime" as the root fix for morning struggles.
- Block course writing sessions for Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings.
- Add a mid-week lunch with a friend to keep the week balanced.
- Leave Friday afternoon open for any unexpected tasks or catch-up.

Jordan closes the planner feeling lighter - like they've cleaned mental clutter as well as physical tasks - and are ready to step into the week with focus.



Step 4: Celebrate & Adjust

End each month with gratitude and a fresh start.

This final step is where everything comes together. You pause, look back at the month you've just lived – the progress you've made, the lessons you've learned, and the challenges you've faced – and then decide what comes next.

Celebrating your wins builds motivation. Adjusting your approach keeps the DPC Method fresh and relevant to your life. Even small acknowledgments matter. This step is your moment to say, "Look at what I've done" and "Here's how I'm going to make next month even better."

Why This Works

Your brain is wired for reward loops – every time you acknowledge a win, you strengthen the mental connection between effort and reward. This boosts motivation and makes it more likely you'll repeat the behavior that got you there.

On the flip side, taking time to reflect on challenges creates what psychologists call a feedback loop – you use your past experiences as data to make better decisions moving forward. This is how you avoid repeating the same mistakes and refine your approach over time.

How to Celebrate & Adjust

① Monthly Wrap-Up

- List your wins – include small or unexpected successes, not just the big ones.
- Capture your favorite memories – these can be photos, journal notes, or a short list of moments worth keeping.
- Reflect on what you learned about yourself – skills you improved, habits that worked, and ways you surprised yourself.

Why this matters: You're building a record of your growth, which is both motivating now and inspiring to look back on later.



2 Keep, Adjust, Drop

- **Keep:** Which habits, routines, or approaches worked so well you want to carry them forward?
- **Adjust:** What's worth keeping but needs tweaking to be more effective?
- **Drop:** What's no longer serving you or doesn't align with your priorities right now?

Why this matters: This framework prevents you from holding onto routines just because they're familiar. You make intentional choices instead of letting habits run on autopilot.

3 Choose Next Month's Focuses

- Pick your new Main Focus and Supporting Focus.
- Keep one or both the same if they still matter - there's no rule that they have to change every month.

Why this matters: Resetting your focus monthly keeps your planning intentional and ensures you're always working on what matters most right now.

Put It in Action

- ✓ Review your month - celebrate wins, record favorite moments, and note lessons learned.
- ✓ Use the Keep, Adjust, Drop method to decide what stays, changes, or goes.
- ✓ Select your Main and Supporting Focus for the new month.
- ✓ Transfer your new focuses and Must-Do's to your monthly planner pages.

Step 4 for Different Lifestyles

Example 1: A Working Parent

You've kept up your meal plan system (Main Focus) all month and it now feels natural — you "graduate" it to a habit you no longer need to track. Your Supporting Focus of prepping lunches at night still needs attention, so you carry it forward into next month.

Example 2: A Professional with a Demanding Job

Your quarterly report (Main Focus) is complete and went smoothly thanks to consistent inbox management (Supporting Focus). Next month, you shift your Main Focus to training a new team member and set a Supporting Focus of blocking time for deep work twice a week.

Example 3: Personal Growth Focus

You finished one book and got halfway through another (Main Focus) while journaling 80% of the time (Supporting Focus). Next month, you promote journaling to your Main Focus and add a Supporting Focus of one weekly nature walk to boost creativity.

See It In Action

At the end of the month, Jordan takes one last look back before starting fresh. This is their moment to celebrate wins, reflect on lessons learned, and make smart choices about what to keep, adjust, or drop. So as it's the last weekend of the month, Jordan settles into their favorite chair for a monthly wrap-up.

They start with wins:

- Finished the course draft, even with a couple of last-minute hiccups.
- Improved their sleep schedule enough to feel more rested.
- Maintained steady energy through most workdays.

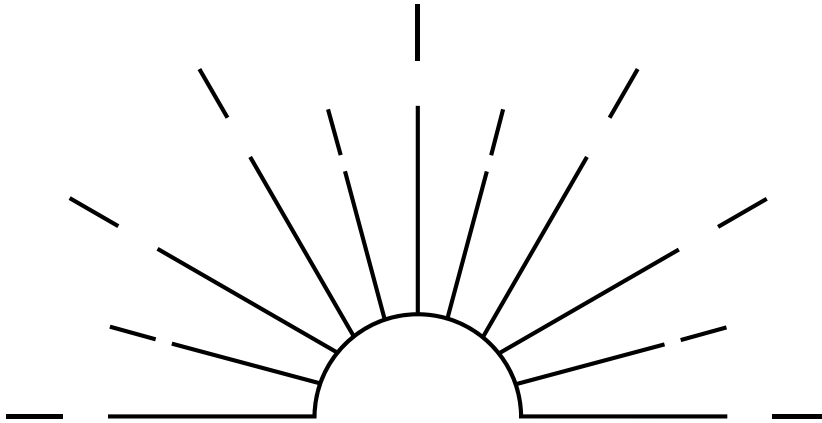
Next, they record favorite memories: their niece's birthday party, the mid-week lunch with a friend, and the first flowers blooming in the backyard.

Then comes Keep, Adjust, Drop:

- **Keep:** Writing sessions on Saturday mornings - they've become a creative highlight.
- **Adjust:** Move daily email checks to late morning instead of first thing.
- **Drop:** Overly rigid morning routines that feel forced - focus on sleep quality first.

For the new month, Jordan chooses a Main Focus of preparing their course launch and a Supporting Focus of taking a 30-minute walk three times a week. They transfer these into their monthly planner, block out launch prep days, and even add a sticky note to remind themselves: Progress feels better when it's balanced with rest and joy.

Jordan closes the planner with a sense of pride - not because every plan went perfectly, but because each step built on the last, turning intentions into real results.



Bringing It All Together

You've now seen the DPC Method in action - from setting your direction, to planning with purpose, checking in along the way, and finally celebrating and adjusting for the future.

Each step works on its own, but together they create a rhythm that keeps you moving toward what matters most without burning out. The beauty of this method is that it's not rigid - it's built to adapt to your seasons, your energy, and your priorities.

Your planner is more than a place to track tasks - it's a space to design the life you want, one step at a time. Every page you fill is a record of growth, a reminder of what you've accomplished, and a map for where you're going next.

And remember: planning isn't about perfection. Some weeks will be messy. Some months will surprise you. But if you keep showing up, checking in, and making space for both your goals and your joy, you'll always be moving forward.

So grab your pen, open your planner, and start your own journey.

Plan your way and create a life of joy.



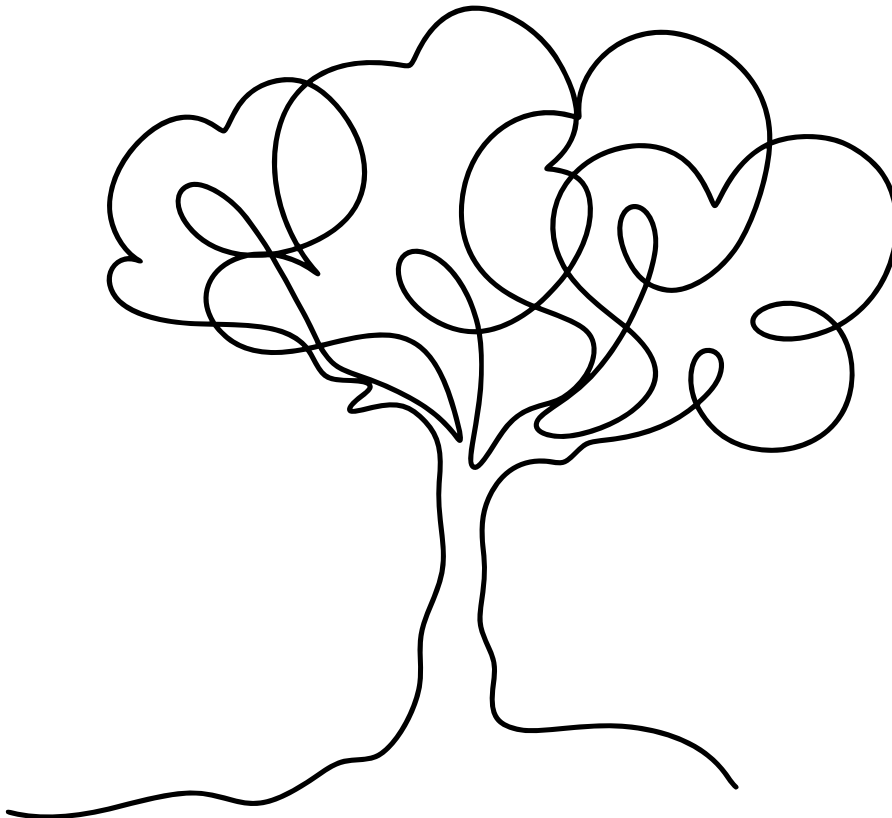
Start Your Journey!

If you're ready to put the DPC Method into action, the DPC Joyful Life Planners are designed to work beautifully with this system. You can visit the DPC website to explore details about each format and layout or head to the DPC Etsy Shop when you're ready to get your planner. You'll find links for both below.

And because I want you to have all the tools you need to make everyday planning joyful, I've included a collection of extra resources in the appendix – from quick-reference guides and checklists to inspiration lists and planning tips. You can turn to these anytime you want an extra boost of clarity, motivation, or joy in your planning.

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How to Choose Your Focuses

Your Main and Supporting Focuses are the compass points for your month (or week, or season). They give you direction, protect your energy, and help you avoid scattering your efforts across too many things. When chosen well, they make planning easier - and your progress more visible.

Think of your Main Focus as your north star - the single biggest priority that will make you feel accomplished even if you get nothing else done. Your Supporting Focus is like the tailwind that helps you get there - a smaller, secondary priority that either supports your Main Focus or simply makes your life easier and more enjoyable this month.

Step 1: Identify What Matters Right Now

Start by picking 2 - 4 categories that feel most important to you right now. This is not about what should matter - it's about what will make the most difference in your life at this moment. Your priorities will change with the seasons, and that's a good thing.

Here are some focus areas to spark ideas - along with quick, real-life examples:

- **Work & Career:** Launch a project, update your portfolio, network with three new contacts.
- **Health & Wellness:** Drink more water, start a walking routine, improve your sleep schedule.
- **Home & Environment:** Declutter the kitchen, refresh your office, create a cleaning rhythm.
- **Relationships:** Schedule date nights, call family weekly, plan a trip with friends.
- **Creativity & Fun:** Paint, try photography, start writing again, bake a new recipe each week.
- **Learning & Growth:** Take a class, learn a skill, read 15 minutes a day.
- **Finances:** Create a budget, save for something specific, track your spending.
- **Community:** Volunteer, host a gathering, join a local club or group.
- **Self-Care & Mindset:** Meditate, journal daily, attend therapy, use affirmations.
- **Organization & Habits:** Create a morning routine, set up a digital system, batch errands.

Step 2: Choose Your Main Focus

Ask yourself: If I only accomplished one thing this month, what would make me feel proud and at peace? That's your Main Focus.

- Be specific enough that you'll know when it's done.
- Make sure it fits into the time and energy you realistically have this month.
- Choose something that excites or motivates you - even if it also feels a little challenging.

Step 3: Choose Your Supporting Focus

Your Supporting Focus is either:

- A smaller action or habit that helps your Main Focus stick, or
- Something that makes your life easier, calmer, or more enjoyable this month.

Step 4: Make It Visible

Once you've chosen your Main and Supporting Focuses:

- Write them in your planner so you see them every day.
- Keep them visible in your Monthly Overview and Weekly spreads.
- Check in weekly to make sure you're giving them enough space in your schedule.

Real-Life Examples

Example #1: A Busy Working Parent

- Main Focus: Create a meal plan system to save time.
- Supporting Focus: Prep work lunches the night before.

Why this works: The Main Focus solves a constant pain point, and the Supporting Focus is an easy win that makes the bigger goal easier to maintain.

Example #2: A Professional with a Demanding Job

- Main Focus: Complete the quarterly sales report by the 20th.
- Supporting Focus: Organize the email inbox to quickly find important information.

Why this works: The Supporting Focus reduces daily stress and frees up mental energy to focus on the Main Focus.

Example #3: A Personal Growth Season

- Main Focus: Read one personal development book this month.
- Supporting Focus: Spend 10 minutes journaling each morning.

Why this works: The Supporting Focus deepens the reflection and application of what's being read, turning knowledge into action.

Common Mistakes When Choosing Your Focuses

Even the best planning system can stumble if your Main and Supporting Focuses aren't set up for success. Here are a few pitfalls to watch for – and how to avoid them:

Choosing Too Many at Once

- Picking five or six “priorities” is tempting, but it spreads your energy too thin.
- Try this instead: Commit to one Main Focus and one Supporting Focus. You can always add smaller “would be nice” projects if you have extra time.

Making Them Too Vague

- “Get healthier” or “work on my business” sound good, but they're too broad to act on.
- Try this instead: Make them specific and measurable, like “Walk 30 minutes a day” or “Launch my new website by the 15th.”

Ignoring Your Current Season of Life

- Choosing a huge goal during a busy or stressful month can lead to frustration.
- Try this instead: Match your focuses to the time and energy you realistically have right now. Big pushes are great in high-energy seasons, but in slower ones, choose gentler goals.

Picking Something You “Should” Do Instead of Wanting to Do

- If you feel no personal connection, you’ll likely procrastinate.
- Try this instead: Choose something that matters to you - something you’ll feel good about making progress on, even on a tough day.

Forgetting to Connect the Two Focuses

- If your Main and Supporting Focuses are unrelated, they can compete for your attention.
- Try this instead: Whenever possible, make your Supporting Focus something that directly makes your Main Focus easier, faster, or more enjoyable.



Common Planning Pitfalls (and How to Avoid Them)

Even with the best system, it's easy to fall into habits that make planning less effective - or even add to your stress. Here are some of the most common traps, plus simple ways to sidestep them so your plans stay realistic, motivating, and doable.

Overloading Your To-Do List

The Pitfall: Packing your day with more than you can reasonably do leaves you feeling behind before you even start.

Avoid It By: Choosing your Top 3 daily tasks and making the rest optional. This keeps your focus on what matters most while still leaving room for wins beyond those priorities.

Skipping the Review

The Pitfall: Jumping from one week or month to the next without reflecting means you repeat mistakes and miss chances to celebrate progress.

Avoid It By: Building in a weekly reset and a monthly wrap-up. Even five minutes can give you valuable insight into what's working and what needs to change.

Planning Without Buffer Time

The Pitfall: Scheduling every minute leaves no room for life's curveballs, so one unexpected event throws off your whole day.

Avoid It By: Leaving open blocks of time each week to handle the unplanned - this keeps your plans flexible and your stress lower.

Ignoring Your Current Season of Life

The Pitfall: Choosing overly ambitious goals during a busy or low-energy period leads to burnout and frustration.

Avoid It By: Matching your Main & Supporting Focuses to the time and energy you actually have. Save big pushes for high-energy seasons and give yourself grace during slower ones.

Treating Self-Care as “Optional”

The Pitfall: Filling your schedule with only work and obligations leads to exhaustion and resentment.

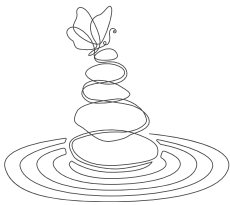
Avoid It By: Adding joy and rest into your planner before it fills with everything else. Your energy is the fuel for every other goal.



Joy & Self-Care Menu

Because your energy, happiness, and well-being are worth scheduling.

Your planner isn't just for deadlines and responsibilities - it's also a home for the moments that make life lighter and richer. Use this menu as inspiration to add small joys and acts of self-care into your weeks. Whether you have five minutes or a whole afternoon, there's something here to refill your cup.



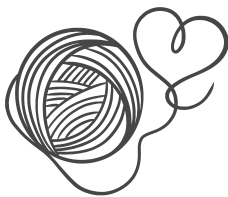
Mind & Mood

- Journal about what's going well in your life right now.
- Listen to a playlist that always makes you smile.
- Try a short meditation or guided visualization.
- Read poetry or an inspiring article.
- Write a letter to your future self.



Body & Energy

- Take a long, relaxing bath or shower.
- Go for a walk somewhere beautiful.
- Dance to your favorite upbeat song.
- Do a gentle yoga flow or stretch session.
- Drink a big glass of water with fresh lemon.



Creativity & Fun

- Work on a craft or hobby just for fun.
- Try a new recipe you've been curious about.
- Doodle, paint, or make something with your hands.
- Rearrange a small space for a fresh feel.
- Watch a movie or show that makes you laugh.





Connection & Community

- Call or text someone you've meant to reach out to.
- Plan a coffee or lunch date with a friend.
- Send a "thinking of you" card or note.
- Join or attend a local group or meetup.
- Share something kind or encouraging online.



Calm & Comfort

- Light a candle or use essential oils you love.
- Wrap up in a cozy blanket with tea or cocoa.
- Sit quietly outside and listen to nature.
- Tidy a space slowly and mindfully.
- Take a few minutes to simply do nothing.

