# Upgrade Program Philosophy Plan

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## Introduction

This document is part of a series of upgrade plans for every [area](#) of your life. It's broadly designed for a single, middle-class, 30-something living in a major city in a developed country.

Determining your core philosophical views may be one of the hardest things you ever do. Many people never intentionally do this and instead inherit received views from their society. If you're passionate about living wisely it would make sense for you to undertake this critical process. It may take years (or even your entire life).

Please go to "File" > "Make a copy" and make a copy of it for yourself. Then fill it out section by section according to your particular needs and circumstances. Perhaps add sections or items, delete them, change the order, and so on.

Your aim should be to make the plan as applicable and useful to you as possible. You should not follow the plan blindly–think it through for yourself.

Note that this process might be challenging. You might need to teach yourself things you aren't very knowledgeable about yet. You might feel like you need to do preliminary work in a different life area first. That's okay. Figure out broadly what makes sense for you, operationalize that understanding as specific actions in the [Actions](#) section, and then do them.

If it feels overwhelming, just start with the parts you find most valuable and do what you can. Tackle the rest over time. It may also help to set aside a dedicated [day](#) to work exclusively on this by yourself or with friends. Or you may choose to enlist an [UP Coach](#) to co-design and execute this plan alongside you.

## Epistemic Status

This is an overview of how confident the principal [author](#) is in this plan.

- Generally moderate confidence in plan

## Objectives

Decide what objectives you have with this plan and rank them in order of importance. Below are some sample objectives.

1. Develop your personal philosophy
2. Live by your personal philosophy

## Metrics

Decide what metrics you will use to evaluate the effectiveness of this plan. Also include the frequency in which you'll evaluate those metrics. For example, ad hoc, once, hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually or per decade. Below are some sample metrics.

- Philosophy Rating: How would you rate your personal philosophical foundation, on a 1-10 scale?
- Number of Values
- Number of Principles
- Number of Philosophical Traditions Studied

## Values

List all of your relevant values and rank them in order of importance. Below are some sample values.

1. Truth
2. Wisdom
3. Life congruence

## Value Analysis

List and then analyze all of the costs and benefits of this plan. Potentially also estimate expected value, cost-benefit, return on investment, and/or net present value.

- Time costs: 1 - 50,000 hours
- Financial costs: $0 - $100,000 dollars (e.g., philosophical counselors, events, travels, experts, books, etc.)
- Benefits: $X in potentially extremely large objective and subjective benefits

## Strategies

Decide on your high-level strategies for achieving your objectives. Below are some sample strategies.

*Key People*

- Do the work on your own
- Outsource some or most of the work to experts (e.g., philosophers, philosophical counselors, etc.)
- Outsource some of the work to assistants

*Key Timings*

- Study a little every day until you develop your personal philosophy
- Study over a set period (e.g., one month, six months or one year)
- Study as intensively as you can until you've developed your personal philosophy

## Actions

List the specific actions you will take to achieve your objectives. You should add these tasks to your project management system unless you are choosing to do them now. Below is an example sequence of actions you might take.

1. Describe your [mental model](#) of one's personal philosophy
   a. Create a visual representation from memory without referencing this plan or outside sources of information
   b. Create a new visual representation after thoroughly studying this plan and any relevant sources of information
   c. Pay special attention to the improvements in the second version as incorporating those new insights may be crucial to the success of your plan
2. Finish every section of this plan, including the [assessments](#), [tools](#), and [resources](#) below
3. Write out your core philosophical views
   a. Include your views on metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics
4. Study existing philosophies
   a. Study [History of Philosophies](#)
   b. Study [The Basics of Philosophy](#)
   c. Study [Squashed](#) [Philosophers](#)
   d. Study [1,000 Word Philosophy](#)
   e. Study [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)
   f. Study [Upgradable Theory of Optimal Living](#)
5. Get feedback from trusted peers or experts on your core philosophical views
6. Update as necessary until it feels "right" for you
7. Develop your sense of [self](#)
8. Develop your [purpose](#)
9. Develop your [values](#)
10. Improve your [consciousness](#)
11. Improve your [spiritual life](#)

## Schedule

Decide on which days you will take which actions. You should add these dates to your calendar now.

- [Date]: Finalize plan
- [Dates]: Execute plan
- [Dates]: Review plan's outcomes

## Predictions

Predict how well you will do in achieving your objectives.

- [Name]: I predict with [X]% confidence that I will [Y] by [Z].
- [Team Member's Name]: I predict with [X]% confidence that [Name] will [Y] by [Z].
- [Team Member's Name]: I predict with [X]% confidence that [Name] will [Y] by [Z].

- Combined: We predict with an average [X]% confidence that [Name] will [Y] by [Z].

## Outcomes

Objectively record how well you achieved your objectives.

- [Date #1]: [Outcomes]
- [Date #2]: [Outcomes]
- [Date #3]: [Outcomes]
- [Date #4]: [Outcomes]
- [Date #5]: [Outcomes]
- [Date #6]: [Outcomes]
- [Date #7]: [Outcomes]
- [Date #8]: [Outcomes]
- [Date #9]: [Outcomes]
- [Date #10]: [Outcomes]

## Assessments

List all of the assessments you might take to understand how you're doing compared to your objectives. Below are a few sample assessments.

- [Belief in a Just World (BJW)](): an assessment to measure the extent to which individuals believe in a just world, where a world is fair and where people get what they deserve
- [Fair Market Ideology (FMI)](): an assessment to measure the extent of individuals' belief that the existing free-market system is fair, ethical, and legitimate
- [Government Budget and Economics Study](): a test to assess an individual's model for a government budget
- [Ideological Turing Test (ITT)](): a test designed to determine whether people have an accurate understanding of the arguments of their ideological and political adversaries
- [Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ)](): a 10-item questionnaire to measure two dimensions of meaning in life: presence and search (UP Top Pick)
- [Moral Authority Scale — Revised (MAS-R)](): an assessment about how individuals make moral decisions and to what sources they attribute influence
- [Moral Dilemma Survey](): a test to see how you would act when confronted with difficult decisions
- [Moral Foundations Questionnaire — Revised](): a survey that gives you a broad overview of how you construct moral judgements (UP Top Pick)
- [PERMA-Profiler Questionnaire](): a questionnaire to measure flourishing through the five elements (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Achievement) developed by Martin Seligman that account for what makes up the "good life"–authentic and sustained happiness and well-being
- [Philosophical Health Check (PHC)](): an assessment to identify tensions or contradictions (a Tension Quotient) between various beliefs that you have
- [Primals Inventory](): a survey that examines what sort of world you think exists (UP Top Pick)
- [Primals Inventory — Abridged](): a survey that examines what sort of world you think exists
- [Primals Inventory — Micro](): a survey that examines what sort of world you think exists
- [Self-Concept Clarity (SCC)](): a questionnaire to assess self-concept clarity, the extent to which self-beliefs are clearly and confidently defined, internally consistent, and stable (UP Top Pick)
- [The Newcomb's Paradox](): a thought experiment involving a game between two players, one of whom is able to predict the future
- [Theories of Morality](): a survey that explores views on morality (UP Top Pick)
- [The Trolley Problem — Should You Kill the Backpacker?](): a series of thought experiments in ethics and psychology, involving stylized ethical dilemmas of whether to sacrifice one person to save a larger number
- [The Trolley Problem — Should You Kill the Fat Man?](): a series of thought experiments in ethics and psychology, involving stylized ethical dilemmas of whether to sacrifice one person to save a larger number.

## Tools

List all of the tools you might use to achieve your objectives. Below are some sample tools.

- [MyPrimals](#)
- [Optimize by Heroic](#)
- [UP Actions](#)
- [UP Assessments](#)
- [UP Curriculum](#)
- [UP Theory of Optimal Living](#)
- [UP Tools](#)

## Resources

List all of the resources you might use to achieve your objectives. Here are some sample resources.

- [1,000 Word Philosophy: An Introductory Anthology](#)
- [An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics](#)
- [An Introduction to Decision Theory (Cambridge Introductions to Philosophy)](#)
- [Effective altruism](#)
- [Ethics Bites](#) (UP Pick)
- [History of Philosophies](#)
- [Life philosophy](#)
- [PhilPapers](#)
- [Philosophy Bites](#) (UP Pick)
- [Squashed Philosophers](#) / [old](#)
- [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)
- [The Basics of Philosophy](#)

## Notes

Add any random thoughts, questions, uncertainties, etc.

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