

Introduction

Hey there my name is John Shufeldt and I'll be your guide during the LeadershipYOU online course. Now, before we dive into the course, allow me to give you a bit of background about myself. I'm a practicing emergency medicine physician, attorney, commercial fixed and rotary wing pilot as well as an author, speaker and lifelong entrepreneur. This may sound like a lot, but truth of the matter is, I haven't worked a day in my life.

I made the decision about 30 years ago to return to school every 10 years, and to date, I've kept that promise with myself and am continually reminded that, "A wise man knows he knows nothing."

It may surprise you to know the school does not come easy for me. I did poorly in grade school and graduated near the bottom third of my class in high school. Although I tried hard and played a lot of different sports, I was a mediocre athlete.

It wasn't until college that finally started to believe in myself and believe that I had the ability to rescript my future in any way I chose. Fortunately for me, I knew all along I wanted to be a doctor from a very young age. Looking back, I was born to practice emergency medicine. I always say, most days I do it for free, some days like a tragic day I recently had you can't pay me enough to do it.

Now as I mentioned, I am a serial entrepreneur, and I've always hated it when something doesn't work the way I think it should work. I've been fortunate to be able to use the education and experience I have from all of these different fields to create a number of different businesses where I try to make things work the way I think they should work. Along the way, I've had a few successful businesses and a significant amount of business failures. I've also had a few close calls and one near death experience while flying.

The myriad of these experiences and education have provided me with the building blocks upon which this course is based. All in all, looking back, I wouldn't change a thing.

Okay, so first things first. Let's go over some assumptions and some ground rules:

1. I assume given the fact that you're watching this video that your goal is to have an amazing life.
2. I will also make the assumption that you believe that having an amazing life is within your reach.



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Alright. So now for some ground rules:

1. First, you need to be candid with yourself about your abilities and shortcomings. For example, I was of the taller ones in my high school class and I lived to play basketball. I would play basketball for hours a day, and for years, I'd take 1,000 shots a day, rain or shine, but at some point, I realized that no matter how hard I practiced, it simply was not in my future to be competitive basketball player and although I made the team every year, I would never be a standout. It hurt a little bit to realize that, but it would've hurt more if I not done some honest self-reflection about my ability to gather the traits and skills necessary to excel.
2. Ground rule number two is: remain positive. Although it's easy to say, it's not always easy to do, especially when we allow people around us to get in our ear and in our heads. There are group of people that I'll call "the naysayers" that don't want to spend time improving their own life and consequently don't want anybody to spend time improving their life.

It's incredibly hard to stay positive with the naysayers whispering in your ear. When a naysayer comes into your life, you simply have to distance yourself, so that you remove all temptation of getting caught up believing what they say.

3. Finally, ground rule number three, and probably the most important one, is don't let yourself be a victim. Over 30 years of emergency medicine, I've seen a lot of people who are honestly victims.

Many of them, however, do not look at themselves that way. They don't look at their particular diseases as a cross to bear or a crutch they can use. They simply look at it as part of their life, and they simply endure on. They don't see themselves as a victim, nor do they allow anyone else to take pity on them. When I meet these people, my thought is, "wow". If they're not complaining about their lot in life, how can I ever complain about anything that I am experiencing?"

Now, you don't have to look far or research long to find people who have a far worse than you ever will. In fact, I frequently say my worst day on earth is 10 times better than their best day on earth and I mean that with complete sincerity.



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All right then, now that we have talked about the assumptions and ground rules, lets get started. I am really thankful that we are doing this together and know that I will learn as much from you as a converse. There's a saying I've always used from a book by Richard Bach called *Illusions: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah*, "you teach best what you need to learn most." And, as Michelangelo said at 87 years old, "Ancaro Imparo" Translated, 'I am still learning.'" So, let's learn this together.



Video 1: Defining Self-Leadership

What is self-leadership?

So first off, what is self-leadership?

Self-leadership is becoming the best version of yourself by intentionally plotting your own course. This is achieved by some honest self-reflection in order to analyze the traits you have and then determine the additional ingredients necessary for you to achieve your most amazing future. This allows you to secure and continue to build a very strong foundation and then directs you on to how to evolve through lifelong learning and mentoring.

1. How is it different from conventional leadership?

Self-leadership involves making changes in your own life and charting your own course and picking your own direction for the betterment of yourself. Much like leadership, you set your priorities, determine your goals and chart a course with defined deliverables and expected outcomes. The difference is that in conventional leadership, you do this collaboratively with a group of people to accomplish a shared outcome. In self-leadership, you simply do it for yourself.

Self-leadership in some respects is more difficult than conventional leadership and in some ways it can actually be easier. Let me give an example of leading a team. It's important to build consensus around a shared vision of what the future can look like. The challenge with this is that by definition, you are forced to rely on the output and the work ethic of others.

If you're lucky enough to have a great team, who share a common work ethic and agree in the desired outcome, conventional leadership is fairly straightforward and rewarding. However, if some of the teammates require extra management and continual encouragement, then conventional leadership can often be draining.

With self-leadership, you are simply relying yourself and although you search out mentors and other people, at the end the day, you own the outcome and your individual work ethic is a barometer of how quickly you achieve results.



2. What happens when a person decides to embrace the concept of self-leadership?

Embracing the concept of self-leadership is invigorating. The moment you realize that you are in complete control of your future is both scary and exhilarating. At that moment, you realize that you have no excuses not to fulfill your dreams or that when you make excuses you are only making them to yourself. Believe me, at the beginning you will catch yourself doing just that. “Well, you know, I could have gotten an A on that test, or received that promotion, or ...” fill in the blank. Once you realize that your inner self knows when you are fooling yourself, making excuses to yourself fades away quickly.

When I was training for a marathon, I had a set schedule to run 5 days a week. During the week, I would run shorter distances at a faster speed. (Now when I say fast, don't for a second think I am Usain Bolt. I once had an 80-year-old nun finish a marathon ahead of me.) Anyway, when I would miss runs during the week, my ability to run my longer weekend distances would certainly diminish in proportion to the distance I would not run during the week.

As I suffered through the longer weekend runs, I would listen to myself make excuses why I did not run per my weekday schedule. Finally, during one run, maybe it was because of the hypoxia, it finally hit me, who was I kidding – its only me, I don't believe myself!

So, here is the bottom line, there will be times when you will catch yourself making excuses to yourself. And, once in a while, it may actually assuage your guilty conscious, but these times of increasingly fleeting as you realize that it is only you that you are impeding.



Video 2: Defining and Measuring Success

I'm occasionally asked where does all my energy come from? For some reason, people seem to think that I have boundless amounts of energy and enthusiasm. That's actually not quite true. I need occasional downtime like everyone else.

At least for myself, I learned a long time ago that if I admitted something to myself, it becomes a reality. Thus, I will rarely will admit that I'm tired or not feeling well or and feeling beaten up or worn out or down, because at least for me, I think once you admit that it becomes your new reality.

This may sound kind of corny or superficial, but over the years have seen people talked themselves into all sorts of amazing accomplishments and through all sorts of pain and discomfort simply by redefining their own perspective. Thus when someone asked how I'm doing my standard response is, "if I was any better I'd be a twin!" Meaning at that moment I feel good enough for two people. It's kind of funny however to watch people's expressions is not exactly sure what that phrase means. (And candidly, I'm not either.)

So my take-home point in this is, you become what you admit. If you say you're tired you'll start feeling tired. If you say you're worn out you'll be worn out. However, when you say, "I'm ready to rock" you will be absolutely ready to go.

Navy SEALs during Hell Week coach themselves through five straight days without sleep while performing incredibly strenuous physical activities. What separate those that make it versus those that don't is simply their attitude and their will to succeed. If they can talk themselves through five days of torture, any of us can talk ourselves through the minor challenges we face during our day-to-day existence.

1. In your opinion, what is success?

Success is easy to define: it simply means that you accomplished what you set out to do. Some people tie this to fame, or wealth or station, but those metrics are simply outcomes of you are trying to achieve. The metric I chose long ago is that when I die, through my own efforts, I leave the world in a better place than the one in which I was born into.

2. How do you measure success?

I measure success by asking myself a simple question: Did I accomplish what I set out to achieve? That's fairly black-and-white the answer however is a little bit deeper. There been many times when that what I initially set out to achieve is far



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from the outcome that ultimately happened. Most if not all these times I can look back and say honestly that I was successful because I learned something along the way or door opened along the way that would not have opened if I had achieved my original goal. Thus, success comes in many different forms.

If you keep your eyes open and look for the gifts they come through adversity you will be amazed at how successful you are when you learn something new from the gift of adversity that but for that diversity you have never known and now you can take what you learned and apply it towards a different or new goal that's achievement is far beyond which originally set out to do.

3. Talk about your definition of Hell and how that has impacted your life.

I saw this quote a long time ago; it's the call the definition of hell. It went something like this: "when on your deathbed, the person you could have become meets the person you are."

Now as you probably recall, I've practiced emergency medicine for nearly 30 years and over the course of this time, sadly, I've seen a number of people literally in their last moments of consciousness before they die.

A few times, I've noticed this look on their face that I started calling the "if only" look. The expression on their face is hard to describe; it seems that they're incredibly sad, or incredibly distraught. And I often wondered what it was that they were thinking. Was it, "if only I had tried harder work harder cared more loved more traveled more..." But whatever it was that caused that look, it was obviously something undone.

I vowed years ago that while lying on my deathbed would never have that look on my face because I will have done everything I've ever wanted to do. I honestly feel that if I died tomorrow I could say I lived enough for two people and maybe that's for my twin analogy comes from, but I really believe it's true.

There's a quote that's attributed to Hunter S. Thompson and it goes something like this, "life's journey is not to arrive at the grave safely and well preserved body but rather to skid in sideways totally worn out yelling worn out yelling holy cow what a ride!" That is how I want to end up.



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Video 3: Understanding What the Path to Success Looks Like

One of the challenges I believe people have today is that when they look at people who they believe are successful, they believe that their path was a straight line that went vertical, they had very few, if any, bumps along the way, and success for them simply materialized out of thin air.

The challenges that the successful people have gone through are not necessarily out on display for everyone to see, but they are buried back along their path. They are simply the cost of doing business on the path to success.

1. What has your path in life been like?

I can honestly say I haven't worked a day in my life. I love what I do and most days I do it for free there are occasional days and emergency department, and I had one of these recently, when a young girl died, that you simply couldn't pay me enough to work there. Fortunately, those days are rare.

Regarding my path, it's been far from a straight line and actually, that's what I love most about it. I love learning new things, exploring new opportunities in meeting fantastic people along the way. Candidly, it's the people that I've met that I love the most people from all walks of life all different disciplines all levels of the socioeconomic spectrum and of all temperaments.

Along the path there are certainly people that I only want to meet once, but as someone once said, "I've never met someone so unenlightened that I can't learn something from them." It's amazing where you can find wisdom if you look hard enough. Even if that wisdom is learning how not to act.

This may sound odd, but I actually want my path to be difficult and the road less traveled. My common catchphrase is, "if it was easy everyone would do it." Thus, the harder it is that fewer competitors you have along the way and when you persevere the more likely your outcome will be a success.

2. What's so harmful about thinking that the path to success is a straight trajectory?

Now there are certainly people out there who are really gifted and consequently often successful make it look very easy. I always think of Michael Jordan who played for the Chicago Bulls. You know, when I was growing up, he would dribble down the court and leap from the free-throw line through the line with a ball over his head and slam it in the basket and it looked incredibly easy for him. However, when



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asked about success he replied, “I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I lost almost 300 games. 26 times I’ve been entrusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I failed over and over again in my life and that’s why I succeed.”

Unless you know the back-story the outward appearance of success for many high achievers seems like a straight line. It’s never a straight line. Knowing that prospectively makes a path much easier, because when you veer off the path or when the path takes a turn you didn’t expect it won’t send you reeling because you will know that like the person you’re emulating, you too do not have a straight path to follow.

Finally, the harder and more torturous the path sweeter and the taste of success, and that’s what you can look forward to.

3. How can you combat that “success is a 45 degree upward trajectory” way of thinking?

I think the best way to combat the perception or the belief that trajectory should be at a 45 or steeper degree angle or steeper, is just do a little bit of reading, because once you read the history or paths of other really great people, you realize that their path is never 45 degrees, and that the 45 degree up sloping path is completely unrealistic. As I mentioned before, for a number of reasons, you actually don’t want your path to be this perpetual upslope of positivity.

You know, I was a resident assistant back when in college, which basically means you are there to help and assist the students who are on your floor. Part of this meant that you got them oriented to college life, which for some this was very easy and very straightforward, but for others it was extraordinarily difficult because they had never lived away from home, not even for a day of their life.

Now some of these kids had helicopter parents meaning that their parents were always hovering around them and never let them fail, and were always there to pick them up the moment they stumbled.

Now this may sound odd, (and I’m sure my kids did not always appreciate it), but I wanted my kids to struggle and fail occasionally. I wanted them to learn how to deal with adversity, to be able to pick themselves up and dust themselves off, and to know that they always had the capacity to overcome the odds. I had no intention of letting them fail horribly or harm themselves while failing, but I stayed a respectful and respectable distance away and allow them to work through the process on their own without my intervening.



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I learned as a resident assistant, that the kids whose parents approach them in this manner had a much easier transition time in college, or trade school, (and in life) than those who never ventured far from the nest and are always under their parents watchful eye.

Now if you have a parent like this, there are ways to try and break free of this, and there are ways that probably won't work as well, but one way to say is, "Hey, let me try this one on my own. Let me give this a shot, and if it doesn't work out, please step in because I'll probably need you, but let me try it on my own first." So try and give that one a shot.

I think the farther along you on your path without failing, the harder it becomes once you do fail to pick yourself up. I make jokes about this, but failure pretty easy to me came easy mainly because I failed really often. I realized early this failure wasn't all that bad because I always learned something, it was generally funny and I was pretty much always the butt of the joke, I generally had a great story that went along with the failure. Now don't get me wrong failing is not fun, but it is a necessary and essential part of success in that path to self-leadership.

4. What piece of advice would you give to someone wanting to achieve success in their life? (ie: start a business or go after a big dream?)

So looking back what would I now tell myself when I was just starting out? Well, a couple things: first, don't listen to the naysayers. There will be plenty of those around they will do their best to drag you down with them because misery loves company. Distance yourself from them as soon as you realize their MO.

Approach life as a grand adventure. Like all ventures, there will be highs and lows great times and rough times, but in the end it is still an adventure. Be optimistic-even in the face of doubt or danger or seemingly insurmountable odds. Remaining optimistic may be the only chance you have.

Lose the ego. You can be proud of yourself without being egotistical. Large egos don't go outside of their comfort zone for fear of failure, thus you'll never reach your potential with a large ego.

And finally, don't take yourself too seriously. The ability to laugh at yourself before others do makes the grand adventure so much more entertaining.



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Video 4: Goal Setting

Alright, let's talk next about setting goals. Goals are incredibly important, because if you do not have set goals, you won't know where you are on the path of self-leadership. Achieving goals is an important metric to keep track of along the way. First off, it feels awfully good when you hit your goal and spurs you on that the next goal, and then the next, and the next one after that.

If you set up your goals as stepping-stones to achieving the ultimate goal, then you know that when you achieve them, you are moving forward. The successful completion of goals is very self-perpetuating inasmuch that it becomes a positive reinforcement tool and thus a motivating force to keep you moving forward.

1. Is goal setting important in pursuing success?

Goal setting is absolutely important and maybe the most important thing you can do on your path to self-leadership. As I mentioned before, by setting small easily-achievable goals on your way to the accomplishment of a larger goal, you become increasingly motivated because the achievement of the smaller goals is in fact self-motivating.

2. How has goal setting affected your life?

Setting goals has kept me on track. It helps me measure the success of my efforts and gives me some barometer about the progress I'm making. Just writing down the goals helps me clarify and often narrow what the planned objective is. The better defined the goal the easier it is for you to understand and the clearer it becomes. Clear narrow goals help you identify specific steps that need to be achieved in order to achieve the greater goal.

Now, the way I approach this is to write down a five or even 10 year plan. The difference between a five and 10 year plan may be negligible because it's pretty much hard to guess beyond that five-year horizon and it's relatively difficult to see what your life may look like ten years from now, unless it's something like moving to a new town, or relocating, retiring, or completing a degree.

Once you have set your goal, whether it be a five or ten-year goal, start on your goals for a single year. Now, one of the goals should be at least partial completion of the steps necessary to achieve the larger five or ten-year goal. Once identified, the one your goals can be broken down to the individual steps required for the successful completion of that goal.



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Now, you may be able to complete some of these goals in a month, some may take you six months and some may take you all year long. It doesn't matter. they all have individual steps necessary for their completion.

Let me give an example: a number of years ago, I started thinking about what life would look like after emergency medicine. Emergency medicine physicians are kind time-limited inasmuch as it is a physically and mentally demanding profession, and I knew that at some point I need to have a fallback plan on what I could do after really practicing emergency medicine full-time, since I probably, at some point wouldn't be able to do it anymore.

Fortunately, I haven't reach that time yet, but a number of years ago, I started a plan for what life would look like after emergency medicine, and I decided that law would be a good idea.

I figured that with my medical background, the addition of law degree would allow me to represent physicians and nurses in front of their respective medical boards, for example. My goal was a successful completion of the bar exam in order to actually practice law. To be able to sit for the bar I had a graduate from an accredited law school.

So, step one: research accredited law schools. I initially thought that I could attend law school online, however, none of the online schools I researched, at least at that time, had a program that was truly accredited by the American Bar Association. After learning this I tried to find a part-time law school located in Arizona. Unfortunately, there were none. Both of the Arizona law schools require you to do your first year full-time.

Knowing this, I had a plan ahead so that my schedule would not be an undue burden on my colleagues or partners nor on myself. I had to make sure that I could schedule myself to work in the Emergency Department on weekends and for the late afternoon and evening shifts.

Once I was sure that my schedule would allow me to work full-time, I needed to go over the steps required to gain admission to law school.

First I need to take the LSAT which is a law school admissions test and I knew to do that I knew I needed to take a practice course. To do that I had the research what were the best practice courses that were given during times that I could attend. Next I need to get all my transcripts together and write a personal statement that somehow made a convincing argument that I would be a good admission to the law



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school. I also needed to make sure that my family was okay me with the additional time required for school and studying.

And then finally I need to be accepted by a law school that I could afford. Now that I had all the steps figured out I set up at smaller steps in place to ensure they stayed along the path and completed the larger in a time efficient manner.

So now you get the idea: large goals and smaller goals both have the requisite steps necessary to complete them and the steps should be time-sensitive not nebulous. Along the way I have check in with myself on Monday and go over what I was trying to accomplish for that week and then again I check in with myself on Friday to see what I accomplished to see if it matched up with Monday.

Once I got in law school and started classes I had a whole new set of goals and smaller steps there not absolutely necessary for myself to keep up with the demands of school my life, my personal life, and my professional life. Without goal setting I would have absolutely been sunk.

3. What have you learned about goal setting from the hundreds of outlier interviews you've done?

Over the years, I've met a lot of amazing people and I started to try to synthesize what it was that made them amazing. And really, it was a number of characteristics that I've tried to synthesize in a number of books called The Outlier Series, because all these people shared some common traits.

To a person when asked about how they've accomplished all they've accomplished, they have all discussing setting goals. You have to be intentional about what you're trying to accomplish if in fact your goal is to accomplish anything remarkable. Rarely, if ever, do things happen for the better without being intentional. This process does not have to be formal; you don't have to do what my idea is, which is write goals down in a spreadsheet, but your goals should be written down somewhere.

Now maybe you're one of those people that can keep it internal list and keep track of everything. Sadly, I am not one of those people; I have to write things down. In fact, I type them out in an Excel spreadsheet. I am all about keeping checklists whether for use while flying, while cooking in medicine or in life I live by the checklist and interestingly enough, so did most of the outliers I interviewed.

4. What elements of goal setting are important in order to achieve the goals you create?



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Let's first go over an acronym for goal setting. I like to use the acronym SMART. "S" stands for specific. "M" stands for measurable. "A" stands for attainable. "R" for realistic, and "T" for timed.

So this is one of my previous goals: I wanted to run a marathon in under four hours within the next six months.

Now, this looks good on the surface, but let's see if it's actually a SMART goal.

"S" - was it specific? It seemed very specific to me. It was very well- defined and there was no ambiguity in what I wanted to do, so it seemed like it checked off the "S" box.

"M" or measurable- the successful completion of this was easily measured with a stopwatch so yes it was measurable.

"A" or attainable – now people can certainly run a sub 4 hour marathon. And although I am no speed demon, I think even Oprah ran a sub 4 ½ hour marathon so I thought, yeah. It's attainable.

So "R" or realistic -while I never been much of a runner and when I started running just a half-mile left me panting like I was about to have a heart attack, so I'm not sure at least at the outset that it was realistic but I knew I'd give it a helluva try.

And finally "T" or timed. I gave myself six months so there is no ambiguity in the amount of time allotted myself to complete it so yes, it was timed.

Once you've determined that your goals fit the SMART criteria, make sure you have the ability to break them down into individual steps. Goals are much easier to accomplish no matter their size when they can be accomplished in little bite-sized chunks.

