

THE COMPANION WORKBOOK

THE SOVEREIGN LEADER

BORN TO BE. TRAINED TO LEAD.

*A working field guide to the Ten Truths
of the SOVEREIGNS Path*



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MAJOR D LEADERSHIP

MASTER YOUR SELF. LEAD YOUR TEAM.

The Sovereign Leader — Companion Workbook

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This workbook accompanies The Sovereign Leader: Born to Be. Trained to Lead. The Ten Truths, practices, and frameworks referenced here are developed in full in the book.

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— START HERE

HOW TO WORK THIS BOOK

Ten Truths. Ten weeks. One rule: do the work on paper, where you can't perform for anyone.

This workbook is a field companion, not a summary. The book gives you the Ten Truths; these pages are where they become yours. Work one Truth at a time, in order — each discipline strengthens the next, and Stillness is the foundation the other nine rest on. Read the chapter in the book first. Then come here and do four things: check where you stand, plan the practice into your real week, write honestly in the journal pages, and run the seven-day field exercise before moving on. Ten Truths, ten weeks, if you take it at the intended pace. Two rules from the author: Do not overthink your scores — the goal is not to judge yourself but to locate yourself. And pay closest attention to the chapters that irritate you or slow you down. Those are usually where the real work is waiting. The goal is not perfection. The goal is return.

THE WEEKLY RHYTHM

1. Read the Truth's chapter in the book
2. Score the self-check and plan the practice here
3. Run the seven-day field exercise
4. Journal, review the week, and only then move on

*Existence is a biological fact.
Leadership is a disciplined choice.*

THE GOAL IS NOT PERFECTION. THE GOAL IS RETURN.

THE SOVEREIGN AUDIT

Before Truth 1, locate yourself. Rate each discipline 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Do not overthink it: the goal is not to judge yourself. It is to locate yourself.

S	1. Stillness Embraced	1	2	3	4	5
	Do I create space for restoration and inner clarity, or do I live in constant noise and motion?					
O	2. Overcoming the Five Hindrances	1	2	3	4	5
	Do I recognize the internal forces that cloud my judgment and distort my perception?					
V	3. Value Health and Energy	1	2	3	4	5
	Do I manage my energy with intention and discipline, or do I spend it until I collapse?					
E	4. Exist in the Present	1	2	3	4	5
	Am I fully available to the moment I am in, or is my mind already somewhere else?					
R	5. Rejoice in Every Minute	1	2	3	4	5
	Do I experience my life as I live it, or do I rush through it to reach the next task?					

E

6. Extend Happiness to Others

Does my presence strengthen the people around me, or does it add weight to the room?

1 2 3 4 5

I

7. Incorporate Joy in Small Wins

Do I notice and name daily progress, or do I only measure what has not yet been finished?

1 2 3 4 5

G

8. Gratefulness Practiced

Do I anchor myself in what is already present and working, or am I driven by what is missing?

1 2 3 4 5

N

9. Non-Attachment Mastered

Can I stand whole without rank, title, praise, control, or a guaranteed outcome?

1 2 3 4 5

S

10. Sovereign Responsibility Taken

Do I lead from ownership, or do I react from pressure, blame, and circumstance?

1 2 3 4 5

READING YOUR SCORES

Total the ten scores, then write your three lowest below. The lowest score is not a failure — it is your first point of recalibration, the Truth that is asking for your attention. If several scores cluster low, begin with Stillness Embraced regardless: it is the foundation the other nine rest on.

MY TOTAL _____ / 50

MY FIRST-LOWEST TRUTH

MY SECOND-LOWEST TRUTH

MY THIRD-LOWEST TRUTH

Before you begin Truth 1, answer one question:

What do I want to be true about my leadership — and my life — by the time I finish this workbook?



TRUTH 1 OF 10 · CHAPTER 1 IN THE BOOK

STILLNESS EMBRACED

"Stillness Embraced is not the absence of movement, but the ability to clarify your thinking while the world spins around you." — L. Doxtater

WHAT THIS TRUTH BUILDS

The inner steadiness required to meet pressure without being moved by it.

— FROM THE FIELD

At Fort Polk, when the battery's radio communications collapsed, everyone moved faster — and nothing improved. The turning point was one Sergeant climbing into the M577, pulling the hatch shut, and working the problem in quiet while the scramble continued outside. Stillness is not escape and not hesitation. It is calibration: the discipline of stepping out of the noise long enough to find the real signal, then acting with precision. People do not only respond to a leader's words — they respond to the leader's state. When you focus on clarity instead of adrenaline, your team has something steadier to follow.

SOVEREIGN QUESTIONS

*Where in my leadership am I reacting instead of pausing — and what is the cost?
Am I leading from stillness, or performing a steadiness I no longer feel?*

SELF-CHECK: STILLNESS EMBRACED

Rate each statement 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Locate, don't judge.

When pressure spikes, I pause before I respond — even briefly.

1 2 3 4 5

I have a reliable place or ritual where my thinking clears.

1 2 3 4 5

I can tell the difference between useful action and Visible Velocity
(motion for its own sake).

1 2 3 4 5

My team would describe my presence under stress as steadying,
not escalating.

1 2 3 4 5

I can say no to paths that look successful but pull me out of
alignment.

1 2 3 4 5

MY TOTAL _____ / 25

The statement I scored lowest — and what it is telling me:

THE M577 METHOD

Four pillars. Work each one into your real week — then write how it will actually happen.

1 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Step away from the noise. Name your M577 — the door, the vehicle, the ten protected minutes.

My M577 is...

2 BIOLOGICAL REGULATION

When you can't leave the room, go internal: sixty seconds, exhale longer than the inhale.

The moment in my week that most needs this...

3 STRATEGIC OBSERVATION

Stop rehearsing your response. Read the room: who's overloaded, where the real tension lives.

One meeting where I will observe before I speak...

4 CLEAR ACTION

Once the signal is clear, move decisively — without adding noise.

A decision I've been circling that needs calibrated action...

WRITE IT DOWN

Honest ink only. Nobody is grading this — and nobody is watching you perform.

Describe the last time you matched the emotional volume of the environment instead of steadying it. What did it cost — in clarity, in trust, in energy?

Where in your leadership are you performing busyness? What are you afraid would happen if you stopped?

— FIELD JOURNAL · CONTINUED

Write about a leader whose stillness you have felt in a room. What exactly did they do — and not do?

ANYTHING ELSE THIS TRUTH SURFACED

SEVEN DAYS OF THE M577 MOMENT

Once each day, create one intentional moment of stillness — five minutes minimum, no input, no performance, no phone. In that space, ask one question: “Where am I reacting instead of leading?” Track it below. The streak matters less than the return: if you miss a day, notice what stole it.

DAY	DONE	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

WHEN THE DRIFT RETURNS

Relapse is not failure — it is a signal. Check the patterns you saw in yourself this week.

Stillness collapsing into isolation — withdrawing instead of recovering

Matching the volume of the room — talking faster, moving faster, leading through intensity

Long-term growth slipping because survival feels more urgent

Confusing approval with effectiveness

My personal early-warning sign for this Truth:

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The moment this week I returned to center fastest:

What this Truth cost me to practice — and what it gave back:

One sentence I want to remember from this week:

MASTERY IS RETURNING BEFORE THE DRIFT BECOMES YOUR DIRECTION.



TRUTH 2 OF 10 · CHAPTER 2 IN THE BOOK

OVERCOMING THE FIVE HINDRANCES

"The hardest leadership work is internal. It always begins with you." — L. Doxtater

WHAT THIS TRUTH BUILDS

The clarity required to separate what is real from what is reaction.

— FROM THE FIELD

After seventy-two sleepless hours at Fort Riley, the collapse behind an M60 wasn't a failure of capability — it was a collapse of the center. Five recurring forces distort every leader's perception: Craving (the chase for stimulation and validation), Ill Will (resentment dressed as standards), Sloth and Torpor (heaviness and fog), Restlessness and Worry (the spinning mind), and Doubt (paralysis dressed as caution). They are not moral failures. They are predictable distortions — and the moment you can name the one that is active, you create space between distortion and response. Inside that space, sovereignty returns.

SOVEREIGN QUESTIONS

Which of the five appears most often in my leadership under pressure?

What did I mistake it for last time — wisdom, urgency, or standards?

SELF-CHECK: OVERCOMING THE FIVE HINDRANCES

Rate each statement 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Locate, don't judge.

I can name which of the five hindrances is most active in me on a given day.

1 2 3 4 5

I notice when my attention leaves the present and starts fighting ghosts.

1 2 3 4 5

I question urgency before I obey it.

1 2 3 4 5

I make decisions from what is true, not from the commentary running in my head.

1 2 3 4 5

I protect the first minutes of my day from other people's priorities.

1 2 3 4 5

MY TOTAL _____ / 25

The statement I scored lowest — and what it is telling me:

THE COMMANDER'S PAUSE

Three moves that reopen the space between stimulus and response.

1 THE NAMING PROTOCOL

Don't say "I am overwhelmed." Say "Restlessness is present." Separation before command.

The hindrance I most need to name, and my exact sentence for it...

2 THE ANCHOR BREATH

Before the charged email, the tense meeting, the pressured call: inhale, pause, longer exhale.

The recurring trigger I will anchor to...

3 SOVEREIGN TIME

A protected block at the start of the day, before the world claims your attention.

My Sovereign Time — when, where, how long...

WRITE IT DOWN

Honest ink only. Nobody is grading this — and nobody is watching you perform.

Which hindrance runs your worst days? Describe the costume it wears — productivity, standards, caution, opportunity.

Write about a decision that a hindrance made for you before awareness caught up. What would the clear-eyed version have done?

— FIELD JOURNAL · CONTINUED

What does your mind do when you finally stop moving? What is it avoiding?

ANYTHING ELSE THIS TRUTH SURFACED

SEVEN DAYS OF NAMING THE DISTORTION

Each day, catch one hindrance in the act and name it — out loud or on paper — using your Naming Protocol sentence. Then take one responsible action anyway. Log which hindrance appeared and what it was disguised as.

DAY	DONE	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

WHEN THE DRIFT RETURNS

Relapse is not failure — it is a signal. Check the patterns you saw in yourself this week.

Checking too often, chasing stimulation — Craving calling itself opportunity

Sharper conversations, scorekeeping — Ill Will calling itself high standards

Fog, delay, hiding in preparation — Sloth and Torpor calling itself caution

Scattered urgency, imagined futures — Restlessness calling itself productivity

Reopened decisions, endless consulting — Doubt calling itself wisdom

My personal early-warning sign for this Truth:

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The moment this week I returned to center fastest:

What this Truth cost me to practice — and what it gave back:

One sentence I want to remember from this week:

MASTERY IS RETURNING BEFORE THE DRIFT BECOMES YOUR DIRECTION.



TRUTH 3 OF 10 · CHAPTER 3 IN THE BOOK

VALUE HEALTH AND ENERGY

“A leader can survive exhaustion for a season. But eventually the body collects the debt the mind keeps postponing.” — L. Doxtater

WHAT THIS TRUTH BUILDS

The physical and mental reserves that make sustained leadership possible.

— FROM THE FIELD

The chest pressure that sent one leader to the ER wasn't a heart attack — but the pattern behind it was a slow one. Exhaustion had become identity: pushing harder felt like strength, depletion felt like dedication. The truth is biological. Output can stay high long after restoration has failed — the brownout, where the lights stay on but the voltage goes unstable. The body keeps the ledger: sleep, pain, patience, and judgment all report the debt. Strength is not how much strain you can tolerate. It is how long you can sustain clarity and regulated presence while carrying responsibility. The leader is an instrument, and instruments require maintenance.

SOVEREIGN QUESTIONS

*What is my current capacity — and what does responsible stewardship require right now?
What would it look like to treat my health as part of the mission, not separate from it?*

SELF-CHECK: VALUE HEALTH AND ENERGY

Rate each statement 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Locate, don't judge.

I treat sleep, movement, and recovery as operational requirements, not rewards.

1 2 3 4 5

I know my personal red line — and the signals that tell me I'm approaching it.

1 2 3 4 5

I don't make major decisions from a depleted state.

1 2 3 4 5

I can rest without guilt.

1 2 3 4 5

My worth is not measured by how much I can endure.

1 2 3 4 5

MY TOTAL _____ / 25

The statement I scored lowest — and what it is telling me:

THE LITURGY OF THE VESSEL

Three daily disciplines that protect the instrument carrying the mission.

1 THE STRATEGIC INVENTORY

Morning vessel check: How did I sleep? Where am I holding stress? What fatigue am I ignoring?

When and how I will run the morning check...

2 THE RED-LINE RULE

Know your threshold. Near it, deploy a Protected Pause before decisions or tense meetings.

My red-line signals (body, mood, behavior)...

3 THE TACTICAL RESET

Recovery on the calendar with mission-level seriousness. Evening Release: close the loop, down-regulate.

My evening release routine will be...

WRITE IT DOWN

Honest ink only. Nobody is grading this — and nobody is watching you perform.

Where are you confusing exhaustion with dedication right now? What has it already cost you?

What warning signs has your body been sending that you have minimized, ignored, or explained away?

— FIELD JOURNAL · CONTINUED

Write the honest answer: what would you have to believe about your worth in order to rest without guilt?

ANYTHING ELSE THIS TRUTH SURFACED

SEVEN DAYS OF READING THE LEDGER

Each morning, run the Strategic Inventory (sleep / stress / ignored fatigue) and score your capacity 1–5. Each evening, run the Release. Note one act of stewardship you performed — or the moment you crossed your red line.

DAY	DONE	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

WHEN THE DRIFT RETURNS

Relapse is not failure — it is a signal. Check the patterns you saw in yourself this week.

Boundaries weakening, sleep shortening — 'push harder, rest later' returning

Irritability becoming personality, fog becoming routine

Glorifying the grind — treating depletion as proof of loyalty

Skipping recovery because output still looks fine

My personal early-warning sign for this Truth:

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The moment this week I returned to center fastest:

What this Truth cost me to practice — and what it gave back:

One sentence I want to remember from this week:

MASTERY IS RETURNING BEFORE THE DRIFT BECOMES YOUR DIRECTION.



TRUTH 4 OF 10 · CHAPTER 4 IN THE BOOK

EXIST IN THE PRESENT

“The past is a place of reference. The future is a place of possibility. But command belongs to the present.” – L. Doxtater

WHAT THIS TRUTH BUILDS

The quality of attention required to fully serve the moment in front of you.

— FROM THE FIELD

In Korea, the readiness pressure produced a leader who lay awake fighting battles that hadn't happened — present in body, absent in every way that mattered. The field discipline that answers it is the folded map: you do not walk every future mile in your mind; you fold the map to the section you are moving through. Attention divided becomes leadership diluted. The introvert drifts backward into replay; the extrovert drifts forward into anticipation — different directions, same destination: absence. Presence is trust architecture. People know when they are half-heard, and they know when a leader is fully in the room.

SOVEREIGN QUESTIONS

*Where has my attention been living — the past, the future, or the moment in front of me?
Who deserves my full weight today?*

SELF-CHECK: EXIST IN THE PRESENT

Rate each statement 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Locate, don't judge.

In conversations, I listen fully instead of preparing my response.

1 2 3 4 5

I can close the loop on a hard day instead of replaying it all night.

1 2 3 4 5

The people closest to me would say they get my full presence, not my leftovers.

1 2 3 4 5

I catch my attention drifting and bring it back without shame.

1 2 3 4 5

I plan the future without living there.

1 2 3 4 5

MY TOTAL _____ / 25

The statement I scored lowest – and what it is telling me:

THE DISCIPLINE OF RETURN

Presence is not perfect attention — it is noticing the drift and coming back.

1 THE INTERRUPTION PAUSE

Before significant conversations: Am I carrying the last call? Rehearsing the next? Available to this person?

The daily transition where I most need this pause...

2 TACTICAL NARROWING

Fold the map: one conversation, one decision, one next action. Full-weight listening.

Where my map is unfolded too far right now...

3 THE BOUNDARY REFLECTION

End of day: What did I learn? What needs action later? What no longer needs carrying tonight?

When and where I will run the evening reflection...

WRITE IT DOWN

Honest ink only. Nobody is grading this — and nobody is watching you perform.

Which direction is your drift — backward into replay, or forward into rehearsal? What triggers it most reliably?

Who has been receiving only partial presence from you? Write what full presence with them would look like this week.

— FIELD JOURNAL · CONTINUED

Describe a moment someone gave you their complete attention. What did it change?

ANYTHING ELSE THIS TRUTH SURFACED

SEVEN DAYS OF FULL WEIGHT

Each day, choose one interaction in advance and be fully in it — no phone, no forecasting, no internal rehearsal. Log who it was and what you noticed that you would normally have missed.

DAY	DONE	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

WHEN THE DRIFT RETURNS

Relapse is not failure — it is a signal. Check the patterns you saw in yourself this week.

Conversations turning transactional, listening turning impatient

Replaying interactions long after they end

Mentally rehearsing futures while someone is speaking

Feeling 'responsible' for thinking that is actually just absence

My personal early-warning sign for this Truth:

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The moment this week I returned to center fastest:

What this Truth cost me to practice — and what it gave back:

One sentence I want to remember from this week:

MASTERY IS RETURNING BEFORE THE DRIFT BECOMES YOUR DIRECTION.



TRUTH 5 OF 10 · CHAPTER 5 IN THE BOOK

REJOICE IN EVERY MINUTE

“Some leaders become so focused on building the future that they forget to experience the life unfolding around them.” – L. Doxtater

WHAT THIS TRUTH BUILDS

The capacity to move through leadership with meaning instead of merely enduring it.

— FROM THE FIELD

Basic training, 1980: swapped boots, punishment laps with an M16 overhead — pure misery. The shift came on the armory floor afterward, when the absurdity broke through and the whole platoon ended up laughing while cleaning rifles. The conditions never changed; the meaning did. Every responsibility carries two costs: the work, and the emotional resistance attached to it — the Friction Tax, often more exhausting than the work itself. Watch for the Destination Trap (fulfillment postponed to a 'later' that keeps moving) and the Martyr Trap (heaviness worn as proof of caring). Joy is not a reward waiting at the finish line. It is fuel carried into the journey itself.

SOVEREIGN QUESTIONS

*Where am I treating responsibility as burden rather than meaningful engagement?
What has living for the finish line already cost me?*

SELF-CHECK: REJOICE IN EVERY MINUTE

Rate each statement 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Locate, don't judge.

I can find meaning — even humor — inside difficulty without denying it.

1 2 3 4 5

I don't postpone satisfaction until the next milestone.

1 2 3 4 5

My seriousness has not hardened into permanent heaviness.

1 2 3 4 5

I experience ordinary moments instead of rushing through them.

1 2 3 4 5

The people around me would say my presence lightens the work, not weights it.

1 2 3 4 5

MY TOTAL _____ / 25

The statement I scored lowest — and what it is telling me:

THE LITURGY OF PERSPECTIVE

Three daily shifts that retrain the lens without faking positivity.

1 INTENTIONAL PRIMING

Before the day defines you: What do I get to experience today? What can I meet with curiosity?

My morning priming question, in my own words...

2 THE CURIOSITY SHIFT

Swap 'Why is this happening to me?' for 'What is this moment trying to teach me?'

The current problem I will re-frame as a puzzle...

3 THE PROPORTION RESET

At day's end, name what went well — and say it: this hard moment is part of the life I hoped to build.

Where I will record the day's one good thing...

WRITE IT DOWN

Honest ink only. Nobody is grading this — and nobody is watching you perform.

Where has the Martyr Trap taken hold — visible strain as proof you care? What would the same standard look like without the heaviness?

What finish line have you been postponing your life until? What happens when you reach it?

— FIELD JOURNAL · CONTINUED

Describe one storm you are in right now. Find the absurdity, the humanity, or the growth inside it.

ANYTHING ELSE THIS TRUTH SURFACED

SEVEN DAYS AGAINST THE FRICTION TAX

Each day, catch one task you are dreading and measure the resistance you've attached to it. Then engage it with one deliberate perspective shift — curiosity, humor, or meaning — and note whether the load changed. The task stays the same. The weight doesn't have to.

DAY	DONE	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

WHEN THE DRIFT RETURNS

Relapse is not failure — it is a signal. Check the patterns you saw in yourself this week.

Chronic seriousness — humor disappearing from your rooms

Ordinary moments not registering anymore

Resenting the middle — rushing processes, conversations, people

Believing joy must wait until the season ends

My personal early-warning sign for this Truth:

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The moment this week I returned to center fastest:

What this Truth cost me to practice — and what it gave back:

One sentence I want to remember from this week:

MASTERY IS RETURNING BEFORE THE DRIFT BECOMES YOUR DIRECTION.



TRUTH 6 OF 10 · CHAPTER 6 IN THE BOOK

EXTEND HAPPINESS TO OTHERS

“The strongest leaders are not remembered for how much power they kept, but for how much strength they awakened in others.” – L. Doxtater

WHAT THIS TRUTH BUILDS

A leadership presence that strengthens the people around you rather than depleting them.

— FROM THE FIELD

A Company Commander sits down with an NCO whose drinking problem could have been processed and papered. Instead he sees the man behind the mistake — and years later the phone rings: career saved, family intact, life changed. Most leaders enter a room asking 'How am I being perceived?' The Sovereign Leader asks 'How can I help the people in this room leave stronger than they entered?' Watch the two temperament traps: the Validation Void (real appreciation that never gets spoken) and the Spotlight Drift (energy that accidentally makes you the main character of every story). Influence multiplies when it is shared. Truth without care creates fear; care without truth creates weakness. Hold both.

SOVEREIGN QUESTIONS

*Who has been carrying significant effort while feeling unseen — and what changes that today?
Am I withholding encouragement because I am depleted — and what does that transmit?*

SELF-CHECK: EXTEND HAPPINESS TO OTHERS

Rate each statement 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Locate, don't judge.

I express appreciation out loud instead of assuming people know.

1 2 3 4 5

I redirect recognition outward — the searchlight, not the spotlight.

1 2 3 4 5

People bring me problems early because it is safe to do so.

1 2 3 4 5

I can deliver hard truth in a way that proves I want the person to succeed.

1 2 3 4 5

I invest in someone's growth most days, in ways that don't benefit me.

1 2 3 4 5

MY TOTAL _____ / 25

The statement I scored lowest — and what it is telling me:

THE LITURGY OF GENEROSITY

Make generosity structural, so it survives pressure.

1 THE SEARCHLIGHT AUDIT

Daily: find one quiet contributor and acknowledge one specific action they did well.

Three people whose quiet work I've been noticing but not naming...

2 THE SERVICE-FIRST ENTRY

Before each room: 'How can I help these people leave stronger than they entered?'

The recurring meeting where I will use this entry question...

3 THE FIVE-MINUTE FAVOR

One small daily act of service with no direct return: an introduction, shared credit, a solved snag.

My first three five-minute favors this week...

WRITE IT DOWN

Honest ink only. Nobody is grading this — and nobody is watching you perform.

Recall a leader who made you feel genuinely seen. What did they do — and what did it change in how you worked?

Where has your appreciation been living only in your head? Write the exact words you should have said, to whom.

— FIELD JOURNAL · CONTINUED

Where might you be absorbing the emotional oxygen of the room without meaning to?

ANYTHING ELSE THIS TRUTH SURFACED

SEVEN DAYS OF THE SEARCHLIGHT

Each day, deliver one specific, sincere acknowledgment — spoken or written, to one person, expecting nothing back. Log who, what you named, and what happened. Specific beats grand. Quiet beats ceremonial.

DAY	DONE	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

WHEN THE DRIFT RETURNS

Relapse is not failure — it is a signal. Check the patterns you saw in yourself this week.

Recognition becoming rare, listening becoming shorter — the Scarcity Spiral

'Too busy right now' — encouragement postponed until things settle

Irritation at other people's needs

Difficulty celebrating team success

My personal early-warning sign for this Truth:

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The moment this week I returned to center fastest:

What this Truth cost me to practice — and what it gave back:

One sentence I want to remember from this week:

MASTERY IS RETURNING BEFORE THE DRIFT BECOMES YOUR DIRECTION.



TRUTH 7 OF 10 · CHAPTER 7 IN THE BOOK

INCORPORATE JOY IN SMALL WINS

“Most people quit not because they are incapable of greatness, but because they never learned to respect the power of small victories.” — L. Doxtater

WHAT THIS TRUTH BUILDS

The momentum required to carry people through the distance between start and finish.

— FROM THE FIELD

A Friday-afternoon motor pool: vehicles reported ready, released Soldiers, a failed inspection. The correction went to the NCOs — an ownership lesson, not a troop punishment — and two hours later the platoon had something real to recognize: a corrected standard that never slipped again. That is the small win. Beware the Magnitude Trap: when only the summit counts, daily reps lose meaning and motivation collapses under unfinished greatness. The nervous system runs on evidence of movement — the Dopamine Drip of named progress. And remember the culture rule: what gets noticed gets repeated. Correction without recognition becomes weight. Pair them: 'This still needs work — and we are better than we were.'

SOVEREIGN QUESTIONS

*Which small wins have I been dismissing — and what has that silence cost the people beside me?
What is the next meaningful inch directly in front of me?*

SELF-CHECK: INCORPORATE JOY IN SMALL WINS

Rate each statement 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Locate, don't judge.

I notice and name progress before the outcome arrives.

1 2 3 4 5

I count corrected mistakes as wins, because the standard got clearer.

1 2 3 4 5

My team hears what is improving, not only what is broken.

1 2 3 4 5

I can feel satisfaction in partial progress without lowering the standard.

1 2 3 4 5

When overwhelmed, I narrow to the next meaningful inch instead of carrying every unfinished mile.

1 2 3 4 5

MY TOTAL _____ / 25

The statement I scored lowest — and what it is telling me:

THE LITURGY OF MOMENTUM

Progress recognition as ritual, not accident.

1 THE PROGRESS ANCHOR

After each block of work: one specific thing that moved forward. Write it down.

Where I will keep my progress record...

2 TEAM INCH RECOGNITION

Name small behavioral victories while the mission is still unfolding. Precision over ceremony.

One inch my team gained this week that deserves naming...

3 THE NEXT MARKER RESET

When overwhelm rises: one task, one hour, one problem, one next step.

The oversized goal I will fold down to its next marker...

WRITE IT DOWN

Honest ink only. Nobody is grading this — and nobody is watching you perform.

List five real inches gained in your world in the last two weeks. If it feels like nothing counts — that is the Magnitude Trap talking.

Where does your language default to what is wrong, missing, or late? What is that teaching your people?

— FIELD JOURNAL · CONTINUED

Write about a time small, repeated disciplines quietly built something big. What kept you going through the middle?

ANYTHING ELSE THIS TRUTH SURFACED

SEVEN DAYS OF NAMING THE INCH

Each day: record one personal progress anchor AND name one small win out loud to someone else — before the work is finished. Log both. Watch what the naming does to the room.

DAY	DONE	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

WHEN THE DRIFT RETURNS

Relapse is not failure — it is a signal. Check the patterns you saw in yourself this week.

The mission becoming only a list of unfinished tasks

Silence where a word of progress used to be

One more revision before anything can count — diligence disguising stagnation

Celebrations going brief, loud, and shallow — then straight to the next demand

My personal early-warning sign for this Truth:

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The moment this week I returned to center fastest:

What this Truth cost me to practice — and what it gave back:

One sentence I want to remember from this week:

MASTERY IS RETURNING BEFORE THE DRIFT BECOMES YOUR DIRECTION.



TRUTH 8 OF 10 · CHAPTER 8 IN THE BOOK

GRATEFULNESS PRACTICED

"Gratefulness is not a reaction to good fortune; it is the sovereign lens through which we transform every challenge into a bridge for growth." — L. Doxtater

WHAT THIS TRUTH BUILDS

The discipline of seeing sufficiency in the middle of difficulty.

— FROM THE FIELD

A Korean valley seals shut under an inversion layer: smoke so dense the terrain, the vehicles, even the sense of direction disappear. 'CEASE SMOKE' — then silence. No references. No certainty. What remained: training, experience, disciplined Soldiers, a choice. Hands out in the dark, vehicle by vehicle, until the engines fell silent and the valley gave back its sight. Scarcity narrows vision until you count only what is missing; the body reads lack as threat and pays the Scarcity Tax — tighter judgment, shorter patience, degraded listening. Gratefulness is not optimism. It is the practiced decision to see what remains: naming the gap without being governed by it.

SOVEREIGN QUESTIONS

Where am I operating from the lens of scarcity right now?

What would leading from sufficiency look like today — without pretending the difficulty away?

SELF-CHECK: GRATEFULNESS PRACTICED

Rate each statement 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Locate, don't judge.

Under pressure, I can name what is still present and working.

1 2 3 4 5

I catch resentment and comparison early, before they become my lens.

1 2 3 4 5

I acknowledge effort even when recognition from above is missing.

1 2 3 4 5

My ambition doesn't blind me to what has already been earned.

1 2 3 4 5

I do not pass my disappointment down to the people I'm responsible for protecting.

1 2 3 4 5

MY TOTAL _____ / 25

The statement I scored lowest – and what it is telling me:

THE SUFFICIENCY SCAN

Sixty seconds, three questions — before the high-stakes meeting, after the hard feedback.

1 WHAT IS STILL PRESENT?

Reverse the reactive focus: one resource, one relationship, one skill actively available now.

In my hardest current situation, what is still present...

2 WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN EARNED?

Scarcity says you're starting from zero. Name the progress, trust, and experience you carry in.

What I have already earned that I keep forgetting...

3 WHAT CHOICE IS STILL MINE?

Recover agency: the single next action taken from steadiness rather than reaction.

The choice still in my hands this week...

WRITE IT DOWN

Honest ink only. Nobody is grading this — and nobody is watching you perform.

Where has comparison been draining you? Whose recognition or momentum are you measuring against — and what is it blinding you to?

Write about your own 'valley sealed shut' — a season when everything familiar disappeared. What remained? What did it teach?

— FIELD JOURNAL · CONTINUED

What in your current season will you one day look back on with gratitude that you cannot feel yet? Write to that future view.

ANYTHING ELSE THIS TRUTH SURFACED

SEVEN DAYS OF THE SUFFICIENCY SCAN

Each day, deploy the sixty-second Scan on one pressured moment: still present / already earned / still mine. Log the moment and which of the three questions changed the most.

DAY	DONE	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

WHEN THE DRIFT RETURNS

Relapse is not failure — it is a signal. Check the patterns you saw in yourself this week.

Noticing what is missing before what is present

A delay feeling personal; a correction feeling like rejection

Comparison — measuring sideways instead of forward

Praise going rare; people feeling managed rather than valued

My personal early-warning sign for this Truth:

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The moment this week I returned to center fastest:

What this Truth cost me to practice — and what it gave back:

One sentence I want to remember from this week:

MASTERY IS RETURNING BEFORE THE DRIFT BECOMES YOUR DIRECTION.



TRUTH 9 OF 10 · CHAPTER 9 IN THE BOOK

NON-ATTACHMENT MASTERED

“Hold the mission with fierce commitment. Hold the outcome with an open hand.”
— L. Doxtater

WHAT THIS TRUTH BUILDS

The freedom to give full effort without requiring a specific outcome to feel whole.

— FROM THE FIELD

The hardest release wasn't chosen. A body that could no longer repay the cost of beloved work drew a boundary discipline could not cross — and revealed the grip: attachment not just to a role but to a version of the self. Non-Attachment is not caring less; it is caring cleanly. The dividing line is ancient: your preparation, effort, character, and response are inside your power. Opinions, timing, recognition, and outcomes are not. Watch the grip's three warning signs — defensiveness, control, emotional dependency — and know the steadiness by name: equanimity, emotional discipline rather than numbness. The leader who needs the outcome least often performs best, because they are free enough to see reality as it is. And remember: the role is not the purpose. The command may end. The leader remains.

SOVEREIGN QUESTIONS

Is this commitment — or captivity?

What would full effort with an open hand look like here?

SELF-CHECK: NON-ATTACHMENT MASTERED

Rate each statement 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Locate, don't judge.

I can receive feedback about my work without hearing a verdict on my worth.

1 2 3 4 5

Changed plans don't feel like personal rejection.

1 2 3 4 5

Praise doesn't lift me too high; criticism doesn't drop me too low.

1 2 3 4 5

I can release an approach I built when a better one appears.

1 2 3 4 5

I know who I am without my title, role, or current season.

1 2 3 4 5

MY TOTAL _____ / 25

The statement I scored lowest – and what it is telling me:

THE OPEN HAND EXERCISE

A daily triad for command posture without captivity.

1 IDENTIFY THE GRIP

When anxiety or defensiveness rises: What am I holding too tightly right now? Name it.

What I am gripping hardest right now...

2 SEPARATE THE STEWARDSHIP

Inputs are yours: preparation, effort, character, response. The horizon is not.

In my highest-stakes situation — what is actually mine...

3 EXECUTE THE RELEASE

'I will give my best effort to this mission — and I will not surrender my peace to the result.'

My release declaration, in my own words...

WRITE IT DOWN

Honest ink only. Nobody is grading this — and nobody is watching you perform.

What are you holding so tightly it has begun holding you? Is it commitment or captivity — and how do you know?

Write about a release you did not choose. What did the grip cost before you opened your hand? What survived the release?

— FIELD JOURNAL · CONTINUED

Which identity are you still performing because you're afraid of who you'd be without it?

ANYTHING ELSE THIS TRUTH SURFACED

SEVEN DAYS OF THE OPEN HAND

Each day, before one decision or conversation you cannot fully control, run the triad silently: grip / stewardship / release. Log the situation and what changed in how you entered it.

DAY	DONE	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

WHEN THE DRIFT RETURNS

Relapse is not failure — it is a signal. Check the patterns you saw in yourself this week.

Feedback feeling personal — protecting ego instead of receiving information

Everything routing through your hands 'to be done correctly'

Praise and criticism swinging your center

Anxiety wearing the uniform of excellence

My personal early-warning sign for this Truth:

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The moment this week I returned to center fastest:

What this Truth cost me to practice — and what it gave back:

One sentence I want to remember from this week:

MASTERY IS RETURNING BEFORE THE DRIFT BECOMES YOUR DIRECTION.



TRUTH 10 OF 10 · CHAPTER 10 IN THE BOOK

SOVEREIGN RESPONSIBILITY TAKEN

“The ultimate discipline of leadership is knowing the difference between a role you perform and a life you align.” — L. Doxtater

WHAT THIS TRUTH BUILDS

The ownership required to stop reacting to life and start governing it.

— FROM THE FIELD

A young E-5, ordered to the Staff Sergeant board, stands in the Sergeant Major's office and declines the path everyone calls success — because a newspaper ad asking 'Can you make decisions and lead people under pressure?' named a different calling, and two quiet years of night classes had prepared for it. The question every leader eventually faces: Am I building a life from alignment, or performing a role that earns approval? Responsibility is not carrying more. It is carrying yourself well — owning your choices, boundaries, habits, energy, and attention. Blame scatters energy like sparks with nowhere to land. Ownership makes the energy clean. Separate the weather from the wheel: circumstances keep arriving uninvited; responsibility begins when you stop narrating the weather and take the wheel.

SOVEREIGN QUESTIONS

What part of this pattern belongs to me?

What remains mine to govern — right now, today?

SELF-CHECK: SOVEREIGN RESPONSIBILITY TAKEN

Rate each statement 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Locate, don't judge.

I ask 'What is mine to govern?' before 'Who caused this?'

1 2 3 4 5

I acknowledge my limits as information to manage, not failures to hide.

1 2 3 4 5

I say no to approved paths that aren't aligned paths.

1 2 3 4 5

I own the atmosphere I bring into every room.

1 2 3 4 5

I make one deliberate act of ownership daily instead of waiting for transformation.

1 2 3 4 5

MY TOTAL _____ / 25

The statement I scored lowest – and what it is telling me:

THE OWNERSHIP AUDIT

Three filters, run nightly. Reclaim self-command one decision at a time.

1 WHERE DID I LEAD MYSELF WELL?

Name the boundary held, the energy protected, the intentional response chosen. Reinforce the wins.

Today's win in self-command...

2 WHERE DID I ABANDON SELF-COMMAND?

Strip external blame. Isolate the portion that belonged to your choices and regulation.

Today's drift, honestly located...

3 WHAT IS ONE ADJUSTMENT FOR TOMORROW?

Not transformation. One clearer boundary, one declined commitment, one hard conversation.

Tomorrow's one adjustment...

WRITE IT DOWN

Honest ink only. Nobody is grading this — and nobody is watching you perform.

Where in your life are you performing a role that earns approval instead of building a life from alignment? When did you stop asking?

What have you been explaining instead of deciding? Write the explanation you keep giving — then write the decision that replaces it.

— FIELD JOURNAL · CONTINUED

The hardest person you will ever lead is in the mirror. What does that person need from you this season?

ANYTHING ELSE THIS TRUTH SURFACED

SEVEN NIGHTS OF THE OWNERSHIP AUDIT

Every night this week, run the three filters in writing: led well / abandoned command / one adjustment. Log the one adjustment each night — then check the next night whether you made it.

DAY	DONE	WHAT I NOTICED
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

WHEN THE DRIFT RETURNS

Relapse is not failure — it is a signal. Check the patterns you saw in yourself this week.

Resentment — believing everyone else creates the pressure

Overcommitment — yes faster than the cost is counted

Self-neglect — sleep optional, recovery delayed, reflection gone

Narrating the weather instead of taking the wheel

My personal early-warning sign for this Truth:

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The moment this week I returned to center fastest:

What this Truth cost me to practice — and what it gave back:

One sentence I want to remember from this week:

MASTERY IS RETURNING BEFORE THE DRIFT BECOMES YOUR DIRECTION.

THE FINAL SOVEREIGN AUDIT

Score yourself again — for awareness, ownership, and practice, not perfection. Then set the scores side by side with your baseline.

S	1. Stillness Embraced	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Do I create space for restoration and inner clarity, or do I live in constant noise and motion?</i>					
O	2. Overcoming the Five Hindrances	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Do I recognize the internal forces that cloud my judgment and distort my perception?</i>					
V	3. Value Health and Energy	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Do I manage my energy with intention and discipline, or do I spend it until I collapse?</i>					
E	4. Exist in the Present	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Am I fully available to the moment I am in, or is my mind already somewhere else?</i>					
R	5. Rejoice in Every Minute	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Do I experience my life as I live it, or do I rush through it to reach the next task?</i>					

E

6. Extend Happiness to Others

Does my presence strengthen the people around me, or does it add weight to the room?

1 2 3 4 5

I

7. Incorporate Joy in Small Wins

Do I notice and name daily progress, or do I only measure what has not yet been finished?

1 2 3 4 5

G

8. Gratefulness Practiced

Do I anchor myself in what is already present and working, or am I driven by what is missing?

1 2 3 4 5

N

9. Non-Attachment Mastered

Can I stand whole without rank, title, praise, control, or a guaranteed outcome?

1 2 3 4 5

S

10. Sovereign Responsibility Taken

Do I lead from ownership, or do I react from pressure, blame, and circumstance?

1 2 3 4 5

MEASURING THE SHIFT

Copy your baseline scores from the front of the workbook beside today's scores. Read the deltas as a compass, not a verdict — where a score dropped, you may simply be seeing yourself honestly for the first time. That is progress wearing a disguise.

TRUTH	BASELINE	TODAY	CHANGE
S · Stillness Embraced	_____	_____	_____
O · Overcoming the Five Hindrances	_____	_____	_____
V · Value Health and Energy	_____	_____	_____
E · Exist in the Present	_____	_____	_____
R · Rejoice in Every Minute	_____	_____	_____
E · Extend Happiness to Others	_____	_____	_____
I · Incorporate Joy in Small Wins	_____	_____	_____
G · Gratefulness Practiced	_____	_____	_____
N · Non-Attachment Mastered	_____	_____	_____
S · Sovereign Responsibility Taken	_____	_____	_____

Where did your language change? Where do you now recognize a pattern you could not name before?

MY 30-DAY SOVEREIGN ACTION PLAN

Choose your three lowest-scoring Truths from the Final Audit. For each: one practical action. Not a theory. Not an intention. An action you can commit to practicing for thirty days.

1

FOCUS TRUTH 1

My committed action:

2

FOCUS TRUTH 2

My committed action:

3

FOCUS TRUTH 3

My committed action:

THE FIVE ANCHORS

The daily rails your thirty days run on. One line each.

One practice I will repeat for thirty days:

One boundary I will protect:

One leadership reaction I will watch for:

One small win I will notice daily:

One way I will measure progress:

DAY 30 COMMITMENT

Retake the Final Sovereign Audit, compare against this plan, and identify the next point of recalibration. The Middle Way is not built in a single breakthrough. It is built through repeated acts of recalibration.

SIGNATURE

DATE

THE 30-DAY PRACTICE LOG

One row per day. P = did the practice. W = noticed a small win. R = returned after a drift.

DAY	P	W	R	NOTE TO SELF
01				
02				
03				
04				
05				
06				
07				
08				
09				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				

— PRACTICE LOG · DAYS 16 – 30

DAY	P	W	R	NOTE TO SELF
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				
24				
25				
26				
27				
28				
29				
30				

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LARRY DOXTATER

Army veteran, former Department of the Army civilian instructor and writer, and leadership educator. Larry served 27 years in the United States Army — rising from the enlisted ranks to a commission and retiring as a Major — followed by 14 years developing leaders as a DoD civilian. He is a Certified John C. Maxwell Coach, a Certified True Colors® Instructor, and a certified EQ-i 2.0® and EQ 360® facilitator.

If this workbook added value to your leadership journey, an honest review of The Sovereign Leader on Amazon is the greatest gift you can give an independent author.

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