

Your Backstory

You've got history, and we need to dig into it! Your "backstory" takes a look at where you've been – as a person and as a business/brand. In order to have clarity on how to get where you want to be, we need to know where you're coming from. It's hard to give you directions to any destination if we don't know your starting location!

Throughout this worksheet, be as honest as possible, avoid censoring yourself, and remember that ultimately we're looking for themes that point to your Essential Why. In fact, part of this worksheet is an excerpt from my Essential Why training – that's how important it is! Let's begin...

Part One – Your History

Think back on your life. Not just your business, but your whole, entire life. Take a moment and list a few of what you would call your "defining moments". These aren't necessarily good moments – they quite often can be pretty tragic in nature (but they don't have to be). These are the moments where you made a decision (either to act or NOT act), and something happened that forever changed the direction of your life.

Maybe your family moved as a kid, or some other event "beyond your control" happened to create that defining moment. You can write those down, too. The idea here is to capture as many of those moments that created far-reaching changes in your life. Maybe it was attending a particular school. Maybe it was a bully at that school. Everyone has these moments. It's not about the level of drama attached to each moment. It's about how deeply those moments affected the direction of your life.

Please take about 10-15 minutes and jot down as many of those moments as you can remember. Do not edit your responses. Use additional paper if needed.

What made these events significant?

Select 2-3 of the stand-out moments from this exercise and go into some detail. What happened that made them so impactful? What did you learn, or who did you meet? What changed in your life? What new decisions or beliefs were installed in you because of these moments? Simply put, why did these particular events register in your mind as your particular defining moments? Take 15-20 minutes to write without editing your responses.

Part Two – Your Support Team

Again, looking at your life and work, who are the people you'd count as your biggest supporters (either now or in the past)? Who clearly did NOT support you, yet you were able to either win them over or prove them wrong?

Please take about 10-15 minutes and jot down as many of those moments as you can remember. Do not edit your responses. Use additional paper if needed.

What made these people significant?

Select 2-3 of the more memorable/impactful supporters from this exercise and go into some detail. What happened that made them so impactful? What did you learn, or who did you meet? What changed in your life? What new decisions or beliefs were installed in you because of these people? Take 15-20 minutes to write without editing your responses.

Part Three – Your Company Now

Suppose you were meeting with colleagues for lunch and they asked you what's going on in your business? How would you describe your business to them? What is currently going on and where are you headed? Is it where you want to be headed? If not, explain where you want to go with your business (and your life as it relates to your business).

Do not edit your responses. Use additional paper if needed.

Finding Themes

Now that you've got a list of defining moments, scan the list and see if any themes come up for you. Jot them down here. We'll revisit these themes later.