



When you faithfully become a student and follower of the principles outlined in this book, you will be changed for life. It will be the “gift that keeps on giving” and the coach that never leaves you because this guidance is still inside and available to you.

It will be your compass to guide you through the thrill of new victories and the painful failures part of a well lived life. It will be the game plan of a winner and a tried and true teammate who will never let you down when the game of life is on the line.

I have positioned these 8 lessons in a format that will be easy to refer to and remember and provide you with a toolbox in your mind that is always within your reach. It is called the “acrostic poem format.” Each play is organized by letters in the word FOOTBALL.

It makes change and achievement as simple as following the white markers of a gridiron.

Although the football field is 100 yards long, its real arena (after kickoff) is the middle 80 yards, where most of the real action begins. Hence, the importance of the number 8.<sup>[1]</sup>

This book is for football players, ex-football players and “non-football players” who want to become great in both the game that we all love so much and also greatness in a “life.”

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[1] The number **8** is very significant, such that it is used 73 times in the **Bible**. It is the symbol of Resurrection and Regeneration. In **Bible** numerology, **8** means a new beginning; it denotes “a new order or creation, and man's true 'born again' event when he is resurrected from the dead into eternal life.”

Most of all these lessons will teach you the magic and miracles performed by the principles of HABIT.

**You must form good habits and become their slave.**

And how will you accomplish this difficult feat? Through these lessons it will be done, for each play and exercise contains a principle which will drive a bad habit from your life and replace it with one which will bring you closer to your goals and closer to success.

**FOOTBALL Acronym:**

Play 1: **F Ferocity**

Play 2: **O Opportunity**

Play 3: **O Order**

Play 4: **T Talent**

Play 5: **B Beauty**

Play 6: **A Audacity**

Play 7: **L Leadership**

Play 8: **L Love**

Use this PLAYBOOK over the summer before the Fall training camp.

Read the words out loud each morning and before you go to sleep at night, one lesson a week, for 8 weeks.

Remember the magic of “How do I...?” These three words have incredible power. When you go to bed at night write “How do I\_\_\_\_\_.” (i.e. Become a better athlete, get better grades or be a better family member, etc.)

And in the morning, write out 8 sentences that are answers to your questions.

Do this and the sky's the limit. Let this marinate in your sleep like a juicy steak. In the morning, let your mind loose and write out whatever 8 answers you get...and then go do them with massive action!

Stay with the playbook and program. it has never let me down.

Do not get overwhelmed by these words and exercises! Football is a game of inches. If you get one idea or one new habit, it may translate into victory on the field during a tight game.

As Aristotle once said, “Good character occurs when you turn virtue into habits.” Develop a thirst for good habits. Soon they will become an “effortless ritual” that you crave as much as your next meal.

Develop a mindset and preoccupation with self-improvement. Constantly, ask yourself, “what is my next level of excellence?” Continually raise the bar. Make small improvements to your Divine Obsession and constant goal. Give more than expected and deliver more than what is asked for. If you are asked to do 100 push-ups deliver 110. If you are asked to run one lap, run two. This is the mindset of the great ones. “Extra” creates “Excellence.”

Life is a process not an event, a journey not a destination. And so, experience your movement and not just the goal. It will be like pushing a car down a steep hill. At first you can barely move it, but soon you can barely keep up with it. Celebrate this momentum! Make it your passion!

It will be like fuel for your engine... A map to greatness and a path to everything you want to be.

These pages have been my “Football Bible” for over 50 years.

But most of all, make it fun. Life is short for all of us. Remember that football, first and foremost, is a GAME. Don't waste a second and remember how precious life is.

Do this and you will become the stuff that true Legends are made of.

Always know...win lose or draw...I am with you on this glorious journey. Begin your journey with a joyous resolve.

Note that the words “Listen”, and “Silence” have the same letters in them. And so, daily “Silence your mind and Listen to your heart.”

It will be the gift that keeps on giving.” You will hear the whispers of God.

And you will be unstoppable

Remember these words of inspiration:

“Your beliefs become your thoughts,  
Your thoughts become your words, your words become your actions, your  
actions become your habits, your habits become your values,  
Your values become your destiny.” -Gandhi

**Let the game begin...today!**

Your loving Coach and Mentor,

Duffy **F = Ferocity**

**Dictionary Definition:**

fe·roc·i·ty  
/fəˈræsədē/ *Noun*

1. *extreme or intense. relentless, stormy, strong.*

**Life Definition:**

*I know God’s love is conscious, volitional, and tender. But it is ferocious. It is unstoppable.*

**- Elizabeth Lesser**

**Bible Definition:**

*Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out the people buying and selling animals for sacrifices. He knocked over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves, and he stopped everyone from using the Temple as a marketplace.*

**- Matthew 21:12-17**

The training:

(read the following aloud both morning and night for eight days)

Today I will demonstrate ferocity in my life.

I will adopt this mindset with my heart, mind, and soul.

For it embodies the Spartan war cry, "**molon labe**" "Come and take it."

Today, I will not just live life, I will engage it with fierceness, integrity, and love.

I will stand guard in the doorway of my own mind. And I will diligently inspect all the thoughts, feelings and words that seek entry.

And nothing or no one will enter who does not serve me and my life vision.

For I am the mother and father of my hopes, dreams, and visions... and I will protect them like a Lioness protects her cubs.

**Today I demonstrated ferocity in my life.**

**My** life is my castle.

I will decide who and what enters my castle. For the world does not own my castle. I do.

It is my life's work and my grand obsession.

For it is this castle which will be my legacy. And one day, I will give this most valuable possession away...for free.

It will be my gift to the world.

However, first I must finish my castle, for it is always "a work in progress." And building it will be my life's work.

It is my divine passion and holy demonstration.

I am building it one brick at a time. I will stand on the strongest of foundations...my connection and faith in God.

The bricks and mortar will only be from the best of sources, and all chosen only by me and my Creator.

**Today I demonstrated ferocity in my life.**

I will recognize the demons of doubt and "naysayers of doom" who hate what I am building, because they fear building one of their own.

I will protect this “gift to world” with the sword and shield of my persistent vision.

One day my castle, after all my building, will no longer intimidate. It will inspire.

It will “show the way” rather than “close its doors.” And I reveal the only real occupant of my fortress and home... God’s love.

**It will change me. It will change my comrades; I will change the world.**

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Notes: How do I incorporate these principals into my daily life?

List three:

**O = Opportunity**

**Dictionary Definition:**

op·por·tu·ni·ty

/ˌɒpərˈt(y)ʊnədē/ *noun*

**1. a set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something.**

**Life Definition:**

*“A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds.”*

- Francis Bacon

**Bible Definition:**

*“And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.”*

- Acts 22:16

**(read the following aloud both morning and night for eight days)**

**Today I am looking for an opportunity in my life.**

I will no longer be a spectator. I am a player on the field.

Spectators buy tickets to watch. I buy tickets to enter the arena and compete.

Avoiding the arena is for the weak and the worried. For they are always the first to abandon and retreat during times of trial and tribulation.

For I know that I am a creator and not a reactor. Both words have the same letters. Yet, each are worlds apart. A creator "makes plays!" A reactor "sits on his heels" and lets players make them.

However, when I do watch...it is only to learn.

And I will learn from the great ones who have already made their demonstration. I will learn their mindset and beliefs and copy their techniques and tactics.

Most of all I will study my life and look for opportunities for greatness.

For improvement is my grand obsession.

I am comforted by the truth that I need only to get better 1% each day. And these "ones will become wins" in every aspect of my life.

For when I climb the highest mountains, it is only one step at a time.

I know that it doesn't matter where I am... as much as it matters what direction I am going. And I choose the direction of greatness.

**Today I am looking for an opportunity in my life.**

Here are my commitments as I start and finish each day.

If I am not in the game, I will look for opportunities to get in. And when I get in, I will find opportunities to become great.

After I become great, I will look for opportunities to teach and share my path to greatness with others.

However, I know that mere words are cheap and the currency of losers.

For I know, in my heart of hearts that words are not the end, they are the beginning.

My path is not fixed on the memories of the past, it fixes my divine obsession with the future.

And (after much planning) I will start and finish each day with massive action. I will always do more than expected and give more than I receive.

Action is the true key to the kingdom and the price of admission.

And I know that if I don't consistently climb, I can't move higher than I already am.

If I can't run, I will walk. If I can't walk, I will crawl. And if I can't crawl, I will still move in the direction of greatness.

Most importantly, I will teach the world through my demonstrations. This investment will always return "heaped up, pressed down and overflowing."

My actions are my footprint for others to follow. Today I am looking for an opportunity in my life.

And I will win!

**Notes: How do I incorporate these principals into my daily life?**

**List three:**

O = Order and Chaos

Dictionary Definition:

or·der

/ˈôrdər/ **noun**

1. the arrangement or disposition of people or things in relation to each other

according to a particular sequence, pattern, or method.

**Life Definition:**

*The battlefield is a scene of constant chaos. The winner will be the one who controls that chaos, both his own and the enemies.*

- **Napoleon Bonaparte**

**Bible Definition:**

*God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.*

- Genesis 1:5

(read the following aloud both morning and night):

Today I will embrace both “order and chaos” in life.

For they are but different sides of the same coin. Both are needed.

We live in a world of opposites. The sun rises and then it sets. The rain starts and then it stops. Life begins with birth and ends in death. Today, I embrace both.

In my heart of hearts, I know that there is nothing to fear, except illusions of my mind.

Fear is not real. It is easily disassembled as “False Evidence Appearing Real.”

And today I refuse to be fear’s, “Lap Dog.” I will be fear’s trainer. And I will train this creature to serve my need for greatness and the task of inspiring others.

“Order” is a safe harbor and respite from the stormy seas of the ocean.

It is easier to stay in the calm waters of life. However, I know that it is the storm that shows a captain's real skill and courage.

And so, as I step into today, I will embrace both. Order and chaos.

When calm is here in my life, I will relax and rest. However, when the storms of chaos summon me, I will heed the call and embrace the challenge.

When I win, I celebrate with humility. When I lose, I will learn with passion.

**Today I will embrace the "order and chaos" in my life.**

For any man can be comfortable in the stale and windless path of life. Leave that to timid people who fear disruption and conflict.

I choose to embrace the pain and darkness of life, not run from it.

I chose a life that tests my limits and shows my potential. And if my ship sinks, I will know that I fought the storm to my death.

**Today I will embrace the "order and chaos" in life.**

I will know that I was the captain of my destiny and steward of my soul.

If necessary, I will go down with my ship and know for certain, I didn't just live life... I embraced it. I entered the arena of greatness. I went face to face with my limits and confronted my demons. I did my best.

I left it all on the field.

As much as possible, today I will be on good terms with all people. And when I am able, I will turn enemies and obstacles into comrades and teammates with my focus and intention.

**Today I will embrace the "order and chaos" in life.**

And I will win!

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**Notes: How do I incorporate these principals into my daily life?**

**List three:**

## T = Talent

### Dictionary Definition:

**tal-ent**

*/ˈtælənt/* noun

1. natural aptitude or skill.

### Life Definition:

*“The person born with a talent they are meant to use will find their greatest happiness in using it.”*

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

### Bible Definition:

*“Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that are in the house. Let your light shine so before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”*

-King James Bible, 1611, Matthew, 5:15 and 5:16.

## (read the following aloud both morning and night)

**Today I will awaken and appreciate my talents.**

For I know that I have gifts that beg to be discovered and powers that “cry out” to hear.

They are like wrapped gifts, waiting to be opened and admired. Today is my day of “opening.”

For my talent is God's gift to me. What I do with this talent is my expression of thanks and appreciation to God.

Once discovered, I will use my gifts like logs on a bonfire. And they will ignite with power and strength. As their flames stretch into the darkened sky, I will celebrate their power and embrace their potential.

I know that gifts are only of value if you use them. And so today, I vow to use my talents and gifts to the fullest.

I will regularly look inside myself and take inventory. Talents are often hidden by doubt and fear.

I will regularly ask myself. "What is easy for me that is hard for others?" And when I awaken these sleeping giants and I will give them all the time and attention they need.

For on this path, I will also discover greatness.

And this is the stuff that miracles and legends are made of.

I know I cannot be "all things to all people."

And so, I will focus on my special gifts and point them like a bow and arrow at my chosen targets.

I will also help others do the same. For the path of a great leader is to enable others to find their own God-given talents. And as I encourage others, I encourage myself. When I teach others, God teaches me.

### **Today I will awaken my talents.**

I know that the formation of a winning team is like the discovery of how cogs in a machine fit together. This machine (or team) then becomes greater and more powerful than the sum of its parts.

**And when these parts are correctly assembled, there are no limits. Each piece will perform beyond its abilities and expectations.**

It is God's greatest gift. It is the mathematics of miracles.

Rockets can fly to the moon and back. Submarines can dive to the bottom of the deepest oceans on earth.

As Jesus demonstrated, even "the dead can rise from their sleep."

However, none of this can happen until I empower the pieces that make up the whole.

### **Today I will awaken my talents.**

I will see this power in others, even if they do not see it in themselves.

**And eventually, they will join me on this path to Grace and Greatness.**

Today, I will create a culture of discovery, praise and acknowledgement that will inspire all to be their best.

With all my thoughts, words, and actions, I will encourage talents to come forward, like a baby learning to walk.

What will unfold is a life that has no limits.

And I shall awaken from my sleep.

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**Notes: How do I incorporate these principals into my daily life?**

**List three:**

## **B = Beauty**

### **Dictionary Definition:**

beau·ty

*/'byōdē/ noun*

1. a combination of qualities, such as shape, color, or form, that pleases the aesthetic senses, especially the sight.

### **Life Definition:**

*When I admire the wonders of a sunset or the beauty of the moon, my soul expands in the worship of the creator.*

- **Mahatma Gandhi**

### **Bible Definition:**

*Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.*

Bible 1 Peter 3:3-4

## **(read aloud both morning and night)**

**Today I will enjoy the beauty of life.**

I know that I cannot fully understand anyone or anything until I can understand its beauty and magic. For it exists in all things and it is my job to find it.

And so, today I will step back and enjoy the beauty in everything around me.

**Today, I will find beauty in both the big things and the small things.**

I will see beauty in the morning sun as well as the grass it feeds with its infinite light.

I will see beauty in rain that drips on my windows and the rivers that water the wilderness.

I will see the beauty in my pain and my pleasure. Each has special lessons for me to learn and then to teach.

I will see beauty in both victory and defeat. Both have much to teach. Both are part of God's plan.

### **Today I will enjoy the beauty in life**

And when I see beauty in the ordinary it lights up my ceiling like a spotlight in a dark room.

For I know that beauty is "in the eye of the beholder." And I will behold God's grace and miracles in all people and all things. For that is where my focus is.

I will see beauty when I fly and when I fall. I will see beauty in the storm and in the sunshine. I will see beauty in my love and in my hate. For I know that hatred can be a broom that sweeps all my bad habits out the door that can be locked.

And I will lock this door and throw away the key.

Today, I will also see everything like it was the last time. Because someday the last click of the clock will occur.

And after either victory or defeat, I will know this:

**I learned how to be strong.**

**I learned how to love.**

**I learned how to win**

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**Notes: How do I incorporate these principals into my daily life?**

**List three:**

## **A = Audacity**

### **Dictionary Definition:**

au·dac·i·ty

/ô'dasədē/ *noun*

1. a willingness to take bold risks.

### **Life Definition:**

*"Success is the child of audacity."*

- **Benjamin Disraeli**

### **Bible Definition**

As Jesus said, "Everything is possible for one who believes."

- Mark 9:23

## **(read aloud both morning and night)**

**Today I will live with Divine Audacity.**

I will wear it like a sacred robe, eat it like a blessed meal and feel it like the beats of my heart.

For I only find God when I go inside and connect with this divine energy.

I now realize my oneness with God and my teammates.

And if I have wounds, I will tend to them and know that they are only cracks in my armor where new light can shine through.

For God has appointed me as the caretaker and teacher of these great ideas and I will heed his calling.

And when I tap into this power, I can never lose.

As I walk through the crooked paths of darkness, I will know that I am not alone.

For God is ever present, ever available, and ever filling my soul with strength.

**I will live today with Divine Audacity.**

If I am asked to pick one out of two, I will choose BOTH.

When I look for miracles, they will find me.

I will quit asking “why me” and I will begin asking “why not me?”

And the answers will flow through the river of my mind and through depths my heart. For audacity is not my chance, it is my choice.

I will follow Divine Audacity because it is the path my God. It is a path to my greatness and my good. I shall conquer darkness and find the light.

I will follow that star to a baby named Jesus. And I will kneel in the presence of the energies and miracles of life. And it will change my world and change the world.

**All because I heard the message in my heart and heeded the call.**

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**Notes: How do I incorporate these principals into my daily life?**

**List three:**

## **L = Leadership**

Dictionary Definition:

lead·er·ship

*/ˈlɛdə,ʃɪp/ noun*

1. the action of leading a group of people or an organization.

Life Definition:

*First, they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.*

- Mahatma Gandhi

Bible Definition:

*Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. - James 1:12*

**(read aloud both morning and night)**

Today I embrace leadership. For true leaders are not born they are made.

**I choose to lead. It is my calling.**

It whispers to me in my darkest moments. It calls me during times of trial and terror. I will gladly hear its voice and embrace its responsibilities.

Leadership is not a burden or even a duty. It is a choice. And though many are called, few choose to answer.

**Today is my day to move forward.**

I will proudly wear this opportunity like an armor of anointed power.

Now, fully dressed. I will step up in front of the masses and deliver words of inspiration.

I will teach what I have learned. I will show rather than tell. I will inspire rather than control.

**As Gandhi says, "I will be the change I wish to see in the world."**

Most of all, through both my words and my actions, I will teach others how to be leaders.

For my mission is not personal glory, it is to find the personal glory in my teammates.

Most of all I will do the following:

**I will speak the truth.**

**I will act the truth.**

**I will make a difference.**

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**Notes: How do I incorporate these principals into my daily life?**

**List three:**

## **L = Love**

Dictionary Definition:

love

/ləv/ noun

1. an intense feeling of deep affection.

Life Definition:

*“Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment.”*

**- Mahatma Gandhi**

Bible Definition:

*“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”*

— 1 Corinthians 13:13

## **(read aloud both morning and night**

**Today my day will be filled with the energy of infinite love.**

**Love** is the most powerful force in the Universe. It is the eternal source of everything that is good.

Accordingly, I will see love in everything and everyone I meet.

It will be my “walk of gratitude” that I perform during my journey each day.

No source says it better than the Bible.

“Love is always patient and kind. It is never jealous. Love is never boastful or conceited. It is never rude or selfish. It does not take offense and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people’s sins but delights in the truth. It is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.”

**Today my day will be filled with the energy of infinite love.**

And so today, this passage quoted will be my teacher, my leader and loyal companion.

For I know that there are two powerful lions inside, me fighting for control.

One represents light, the other darkness.

One represents love, the other represents hate.

One represents forgiveness, the other represents grievances.

I know that the one who will win today is the one that I choose to feed.

And so, today I chose light. I will bring this radiant energy to anyone and everyone I meet.

No matter how mean, bitter, or obnoxious they are... they are still a child of God.

Accordingly, I will silently bless them with my thoughts and hold up an invisible mirror of God's love and grace.

And they will see themselves in a new and different way. They are also God's favorite children.

I will bring light into every room I enter, with a sincere smile and a desire to help.

I will bring light to every sinner because I know that I am far from perfect.

I will love enemies and they will become friends.

I will love my challenges and they will make me strong.

I will love losses for the wisdom they share.

Today my day will be filled with the energy of infinite love.

And I seize this day... knowing that God is always with me.

For the game is on and the clock is still ticking.

And I am now ready.

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**Notes: How do I incorporate these principals into my daily life?**

**List three:**

**Life lessons football teaches:**

Discipline  
How to compete  
How to set goals  
Motivation  
Teamwork  
Embracing different backgrounds  
Accountability  
Handling Adversity  
Teamwork  
The importance of working hard in time management  
Pride in the team and yourself  
Humility  
Taking care of their mind and body.  
Effectively communicating  
Living with high expectations  
Handling both success and failure

A final note from Duffy: (as envisioned by our authors)

**Dear Readers,**

During my long and challenging career at MSU, I was known as an “average” coach but “one hell of a storyteller.” (I think it was really my plan to distract the press and avoid their annoying questions.)

In any case, I will leave you with one of my favorite yarns.

*“There is an old story that explains the difference between heaven and hell.*

*Both places had a huge banquet hall with the tastiest food and drink God ever created.*

*Except each guest had these huge spoons and forks attached permanently to their arms and hands. And in hell everyone was cursing and swearing, because they couldn’t get the food to their mouths.*

*They could look, but never eat. And they constantly fought and blamed each other.”*

*“And heaven?”*

*“They had the exact same food and the exact same problem. However, the room was always filled with joy and laughter. Everyone got their fill. And you know why?”*

*“Why?”*

*“The folks in heaven did one thing different. They didn’t feed themselves. They fed each other.”*

Here is what I want to leave you with in this final page. I have been blessed to coach lots of the Hall of Famers and win lots of games.

It is perhaps the most important thing I learned through many trials and tribulations.

Life is short. Don’t fight... feed each other! Feed each other with the content of these pages. Feed each other with a kind word or a pat on the back. Remember that the difference between good and great is a little extra effort. You all deserve to live a National Championship Life... No matter who you are or what you do for a living. And remember. Be disruptive. Think “out of the box.” When you can’t decide between two... take both! See you on the Spartan Stadium sidelines. I haven’t missed a game yet. Go green!

**Love,**

**Coach Duffy**