



"Live by Design, Not by Default"

Priorities, Roles, and Goals

A Welcome Message From Marc Dickerson



Dear PRG Community,

Last month, we began building our foundation—laying out our Priorities, Roles, and Goals so we could start living with intention. I hope you've started to notice subtle shifts in how you show up—more focused, more present, more aligned.

Now that the groundwork is in place, February invites us into something deeper: **consistency**. The initial spark is powerful, but it's our habits—the day-to-day choices—that shape who we become. This month, we're going to explore what it means to move from inspiration to implementation.

You don't need to do more. You need to do what matters—consistently. And when you do, you'll see how the PRG framework isn't just something you fill out once. It's something you live.

Marc Dickerson

Author of Priorities, Roles, and Goals

Founder of Duke2 Innovations | www.prglife.org

This Month's Theme: Consistency



"Consistency is the soil in which clarity and growth take root."

January lit the fire—February keeps it burning.

This month's theme is about creating repeatable rhythms that support the life you're designing. Whether it's waking up 10 minutes earlier, journaling once a week, or choosing presence over perfection in your relationships—small, repeated actions forge big results.

Key Focus: Start with *one priority*
Identify the roles you play within it
Commit to 1-2 *repeatable* goals

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Do Better,
Be Better.

PRG Pulse

February 2026



PRG Key Insight - Marc Dickerson



- 1. Habits Align with Priorities** The actions you repeat daily are a reflection of your priorities. If you want to shift your life, start by shifting your rhythms.
- 2. Your Roles Require Rituals** Whether you're a parent, coach, friend, or leader—consistency in how you show up builds trust, confidence, and growth.
- 3. Goals Need Reinforcement** The PRG model thrives when goals are reviewed and refined. Use this month to check in: Are your goals truly aligned with what matters most?
- 4. Progress > Excellence** One consistent step is more valuable than ten perfect plans never acted on.

The PRG framework isn't static—it's a cycle of reflection, refinement, and realignment. Let it evolve with you.

You've likely seen this play out in your own life. Maybe you started walking 15 minutes every morning—not a big leap, but enough to create momentum toward better health. That's habit shaping identity. Or consider the parent who commits to a tech-free dinner every night. That simple ritual reinforces their role as a present, connected leader in their family. A young professional might review their weekly goals every Sunday to ensure they're aligned with their top priorities—that's goal reinforcement in action. And think about a high school senior who doesn't ace every test but consistently studies 30 minutes a day—that's progress trumping perfection. These aren't extraordinary actions; they're **ordinary choices made on purpose**. That's the power of PRG in motion.

Upcoming PRG Events



Date:	Event:	Location:
March 7, 2026	Book Signing	Barns and Noble, Salisbury, Maryland
Spring 2026	Mental Health Seminar	Western Sussex County
May 2, 2026	Milton Book Festival	Milton Public Library
July 1, 2026	Author Meet and Greet	Milford Public Library
Fall 2026	Mental Health Seminar	Eastern Sussex County



Spiritual Health - Kelly Willie



Happy Heart Month! February reminds all of us what really matters – LOVE. Go into any grocery store, drug store, or clothing store and you will be bombarded with HEARTS! While Valentine's Day is a day to celebrate romantic love, it's a good time to let all those visible hearts remind us of our spiritual heart. Proverbs4:23 says, “**Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.**” Wow – Everything we do first starts in our hearts! Let that sink in for a moment. The actual biblical Hebrew word for heart is Leb, and it means our inner self, our mind, will, and thoughts. It is the seat of our desire, emotions and passions.

So what can we do to strengthen our inner heart? How can we do a spiritual check up on our heart? The Daily Examen is a good place to get the “pulse” of where you are. Here are a few good questions to reflect on daily as you review your day from the past 24 hours:

- 1 **Gratitude:** What am I especially grateful for over the past 24 hours?
- 2 **Presence:** Where did I experience God's Presence, love or joy in the past 24hours?
- 3 **Highs/Lows:** What were the most life-giving or draining moments of my day?
- 4 **Reflection:** Where did I feel most like myself? Where did I feel distant from God and others? What were my dominant thoughts?
- 5 **Forgiveness:** When did I fall short or fail to love? How might I need to ask forgiveness and make amends to others?
- 6 **Future:** How do I want to align my life to what God wants for me?

The Valentine's Day heart is charming, joyful, and fun. The spiritual heart is profound, essential, and transformative. One decorates our world; the other shapes our lives. When we hold these two ideas together, we discover a richer understanding of love — one that celebrates affection while also calling us to deeper spiritual growth. This February, the hearts we see around us can be more than decorations; they can be invitations to strengthen the heart that truly guides everything we do.

I hope you have a happy, healthy February and that you take the time to do a spiritual heart “check up”!

Chaplain Kelly, Founder of “Wholey You”



Spotlight: William "Manny" Smack



Choose Your Hard – How William "Manny" Smack Turned Struggle Into Purpose

William “Manny” Smack’s story is not just one of personal redemption — it’s a blueprint for transformation. His journey from the streets of Seaford, Delaware, to becoming a respected entrepreneur and mentor is a powerful reminder that the path to purpose often begins in pain. And through it all, Manny proves that you don’t have to change who you are — you just have to change your direction.

Raised in a modest two-parent home, Manny was the middle child of five. His father was a tireless provider, working multiple jobs — welder by day, mechanic by night — to make ends meet. “At the time, I didn’t understand it,” Manny reflects. “We didn’t have the name-brand shoes or the latest clothes, and I got teased a lot. But now I know — he was building something bigger.”

That sacrifice wasn’t easy to see through the lens of a teenager craving acceptance. Manny began searching for value in the wrong places — the streets. Drawn into drug dealing and hustling, he lost sight of the values he was raised with. Though he was intelligent and tested well in school, the emotional weight of his environment led to behavior problems, academic failure, and eventually expulsion.

“I didn’t care much about myself,” he admits. “But when my daughter was born — everything changed.”

***“I knew I couldn’t
take care of her if I
was in prison.”***

That moment became the pivot point. Manny realized he couldn’t be there for her if he was locked up or worse. So he left the streets behind and turned toward a lifelong skill: cutting hair. What started as a hustle soon became a calling. “It saved my life,” he says. “It was art. And once I got the business side of it, the hustler in me had purpose.”

He began building — barbershops, relationships, and most importantly, himself. Today, Manny mentors aspiring entrepreneurs, helps others navigate the early stages of business, and provides real-life wisdom to young men facing the same pressures he once did.

His perspective is unique — because he doesn’t judge. He understands. “They were me,” he says. “I was the one everyone thought would be in jail or dead. And honestly, they weren’t wrong, based on the path I was on. But something inside me was always different. A different drive. A different vision.”

Manny’s impact on the community is rooted in authenticity. He connects with youth not because he speaks at them — but because he sees them. “I don’t just look at what they’re doing. I look for the why,” he explains. “If we can fix the condition, we can help them redirect their energy. That’s all I did. I never changed who I was. I just changed the direction of who I was. I was always the hustler. I’m still the hustler.”

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Mental Health - Nicole Luther



The Power of Gratitude in Difficult Seasons: A Neuroscience and Faith Perspective

In life's most challenging seasons, gratitude often feels like the last thing on our minds. When we are facing uncertainty, loss, stress, or disappointment, giving thanks can seem unnatural—or even impossible. Yet both science and Scripture point to a profound truth: gratitude is not only a response to goodness, but a powerful tool for transformation in the midst of hardship.

Modern neuroscience has shown that cultivating gratitude can change both our outlook and our brain. When we intentionally **reflect on what we are thankful for**, the brain releases dopamine and serotonin—two neurotransmitters that play a key role in regulating mood, reducing anxiety, and strengthening emotional resilience. Over time, repeated gratitude practices help create new neural pathways that make hope, optimism, and calm more accessible, even when circumstances remain difficult. In a very real sense, gratitude helps retrain the brain to look for light in dark places.

Faith has echoed this wisdom for centuries. The Apostle Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIV): “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” This verse does not call us to deny pain or pretend that suffering does not exist. Rather, it invites us to anchor our hearts in God’s faithfulness, even when the storm has not yet passed. Gratitude becomes an act of trust—a declaration that God is still present, still working, and still worthy of praise.

At Life’s Purpose Coaching, we encourage individuals to **embrace gratitude** as both a spiritual discipline and a scientifically supported practice for emotional well-being. One of the simplest and most powerful ways to begin is through a gratitude journal. Writing down three things each day that you are thankful for—no matter how small—helps shift attention away from what is lacking and toward what is sustaining you. Over time, this practice strengthens the brain’s ability to notice goodness, fosters deeper peace, and nurtures a more hopeful perspective.

Gratitude does not remove our trials, but it can transform how we walk through them. It reminds us that growth often comes through difficulty, and that even in the hardest seasons, God is shaping our hearts and renewing our minds.

Start your gratitude journey today. Pick up a journal—or simply a notebook—and commit to daily reflection. Write down three things you are thankful for each day and watch how, little by little, gratitude transforms difficulty into growth and trials into testimonies.

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Aligned Living with PRG



1. Mini Reflection Prompt

"What small change could I repeat this week that aligns with my top priority?"

2. Micro-Challenge Box: "1% Better Weekly Challenge"

Try this: Choose one area (health, relationships, mindset) and commit to a daily 5-minute action toward it for 7 days. Track your consistency, not perfection.

3. Visual Callout: "PRG in Practice"

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Role</u>	<u>Goal</u>
Education What's important to you.	Student Who you are.	A's and B's this semester What do you want to accomplish

4. Scan this code to view my most recent YouTube Video



5. List four important roles (relationships and responsibilities) you currently have

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____

Quote of the Month



"Your life does not get better by chance, it gets better by change."

Jim Rohn

American entrepreneur, author, and motivational speaker

Growth isn't passive. Clarity and direction come when you *choose* to act in alignment with your values

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Facing Adversity - Fred Sayin



This month, Fred Sayin joins us with his first article in the PRG Pulse, focusing on the theme of "Facing Adversity." In this piece, Fred explains what perfectionism is and how to recognize its signs. Perfectionism creates an adverse mindset that leads to chronic self-doubt, fear of failure, and a constant sense of never being "good enough."

What is Perfectionism?

When I searched online, I found eight different websites. The one I liked most was from Anderson University, which said:

-  1. Perfectionism is a self-destructive and addictive belief system that fuels this primary thought: "If I look perfect and act perfectly, I can avoid or minimize the painful feelings of blame, judgment, and shame".
-  2. Perfectionism is an unattainable goal.
-  3. The reason perfectionism is addictive is that when a person experiences shame, judgment, or blame, they tell themselves: "I wasn't perfect enough".

Now that we know what perfectionism is, who does it affect? It can impact children, teenagers, and young adults, and it tends to affect women more than men.

Could this be why some children blame themselves for their parents' divorce, thinking their parents are fighting because of them? Remember, everyone is responsible for their own behavior.

What are some possible signs of perfectionism? I should mention that a therapist once warned me not to diagnose myself online, since it can make me think I have every condition out there.

Here are the signs of perfectionism:

1. All or nothing feeling
2. Being highly critical
3. Feeling pushed by fear
4. Having unrealistic standards
5. Focusing only on results
6. Feeling depressed by unmet goals
7. Fear of failure
8. Procrastination
9. Defensiveness
10. Low self-esteem

If someone notices four or more of these signs in themselves, I think it's a good idea to talk to an adult, like a parent or teacher.

One of the signs listed to the left is fear of failure. To understand this, it's important to know what fear is. Everyone is born with two basic fears: heights and loud noises. Other fears develop from personal experiences. For example, a child might be afraid to take a bath if a parent once drained the water while the child was still in the tub, making the child worry they could go down the drain, not realizing they're too big for that to happen. Other sources of fear can include parents, older relatives, siblings, friends, media, or cultural beliefs. In this case, the fear is about failing.

While researching a Scoutmaster's Minute on fear of failure, I learned that in the 1700s, one man's failed idea eventually led to the invention of air conditioning.

How can someone overcome perfectionism? One way is to **replace the word "perfect" with "excellent."** For example, instead of saying, "I will be a perfect student," try saying, "I will be an excellent student." I can't remember where I first heard this idea.



Physical Health - Maci Carter



This past year, my relationship with physical health completely transformed. What started as a simple goal—to be in the best shape of my life for my upcoming wedding this May—turned into a lifestyle shift that changed how I feel every single day. After getting engaged, I decided to truly commit to myself, not realizing just how deeply that commitment would ripple through every part of my life.

I began waking up early before work every weekday to **exercise**. At first, it felt challenging, even uncomfortable. But over time, it became a non-negotiable—something I did not just for how I wanted to look, but for how I wanted to feel. Prioritizing movement improved my appearance, but more importantly, it strengthened my mental health. My mornings became calmer, my focus sharper, and my stress more manageable.

I set a daily goal of 10,000 steps, which encouraged me to move with intention throughout the day. I also completely changed how I fuel my body. I shifted to a whole foods **diet**, prioritized protein, and began counting my macros to ensure I was meeting my daily nutritional needs. This structure gave me freedom, not restriction. I used to struggle constantly with stomach pains and digestive issues, but those problems are now a thing of the past. Feeling good internally made me realize just how much food impacts overall wellbeing.

Sleep became another pillar of my routine. I aim for seven to eight hours each night, which means being asleep by 9 p.m. To make that happen, I put my phone on Do Not Disturb mode and wind down with a book instead of a screen. That quiet time has become something I deeply value—it signals to my body that rest is a priority, not an afterthought.

With these consistent habits in place, I surprised myself by accomplishing something I never thought I would: running my first marathon this December in under four hours. That moment symbolized more than physical endurance—it represented discipline, growth, and belief in myself.

At the end of the day, this journey taught me the power of aligning my priorities with the roles I play and the goals I set for myself. I realized that I cannot show up fully as a professional, a partner, a friend, or a future spouse if I am not first taking care of my health. My goals became clearer when my priorities shifted, and my roles felt lighter because I was more energized and grounded. **Physical health became the foundation that supported everything else I wanted to accomplish.** When priorities are intentional, goals feel achievable, and the roles we carry no longer feel overwhelming—they feel purposeful. This balance is what truly changed my life, and it is what I hope others can discover for themselves as well. As we enter this new year, I challenge you to prioritize your physical health. When you do, you may find—as I did—that the benefits extend far beyond your body and into every part of your wellbeing.

Maci Carter



Dealing with Stress - Marc Dickerson



Feeling overwhelmed by stress is a common experience, especially when demands feel constant and relief feels out of reach. Fortunately, there are effective, evidence-based techniques that can help calm your mind and body. Below are some strategies designed to ease stress and restore emotional balance—many of which can be practiced in just a few minutes a day.

Mind-Body Techniques

★ **Deep Breathing (Box Breathing)**

Inhale for 4 seconds → hold for 4 → exhale for 4 → hold for 4.

Activates the parasympathetic nervous system, calming the body.

★ **Progressive Muscle Relaxation**

Tense and relax muscle groups one at a time, starting from toes to head.

Helps release physical tension you might not even notice.

★ **Mindfulness Meditation**

Try guided meditations via apps like *Insight Timer*, *Headspace*, or *Smiling Mind*.

Even 5 minutes a day can reduce stress and improve emotional regulation.

Cognitive Reframing

★ **Challenge Automatic Thoughts**

Ask: *"Is this thought 100% true? What's another way I can see this?"*

★ **Self-Compassion Phrases**

"I'm doing the best I can with what I have."

"This is a moment of stress; I'm not alone in this."

Creative Expression

★ **Journaling**

Free-write your thoughts or use prompts like:

"What am I feeling right now, and where do I feel it in my body?"

★ **Art-Based Expression**

Draw, paint, or collage how stress feels vs. how calm looks.

This is especially effective if you use expressive arts in your practice.

Trauma-Informed Somatic Strategies

★ **Grounding Techniques**

Use the 5-4-3-2-1 method:

Name 5 things you see, 4 you can touch, 3 you hear, 2 you smell, 1 you taste.

★ **Orienting**

Look around the room slowly. Let your eyes land on objects, shapes, or colors. This helps the nervous system feel safe.

★ **Shake It Out**

Literally: shake your arms, legs, shoulders.

Inspired by somatic experiencing—helps release stored stress in the body.



Spotlight: William "Manny" Smack

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Spiritually grounded, Manny speaks often about purpose. "If you're not walking in your purpose, you're failing. It's like swimming against the tide," he says. **"I don't chase money — I chase purpose.** And when you chase purpose, wealth and success chase you."

To the next generation, his message is both sobering and empowering: **"Everything in life is hard. Choose your hard."** Whether it's the danger and stress of street life or the grind of building something legitimate, both paths come with pain. "But only one pays off," he adds. "Only one lets you sleep at night and leaves something for your children."

William "Manny" Smack stands as proof that your past does not define you. What matters is the direction you choose — and your willingness to walk in your purpose, even when it's hard.



PRG Products and Services



PRG Life offers practical services like group classes, workshops, and keynote speeches to help individuals and teams live with clarity and purpose. Each service is designed to align your values with meaningful action through the PRG framework. Visit www.prglife.org for more information.

<u>Products</u>	<u>Services</u>	<u>Events</u>	<u>Social Media</u>
"Priorities, Roles, and Goals: The Program" Book	Individual and Group Classes	Author Meet and Greets	 https://www.youtube.com/@MarcDickersonPRG
The PRG Power Plan	Team Speeches	Book Signings	 https://www.facebook.com/myprgprogram/
The Free PRG Program Summary	Seminars	Community Events	 https://www.linkedin.com/in/marc-dickerson-84b0272ab/
The PRG Workbook	Workshops		 https://x.com/Duke2Innovation
	Keynote Speaker		
	Professional Development		
	Institutional Partnerships		

PRG Pulse

February 2026



Key Takeaways for This Month:



- **Consistency is the foundation of growth.**
- **Gratitude transforms adversity into growth.**
- **Perfectionism is not the goal—progress is.**
- **Physical health fuels every role you play.**
- **Stress is manageable with intentional tools.**

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If you are interested in placing an ad in
The PRG Pulse Newsletter or website,
email: marc.dickerson@prglife.org

Call to Action



This Month's PRG Challenge: Live One Aligned Day

Choose one priority. Identify one role connected to it. Take one intentional step toward your goal—today.

Repeat it tomorrow. Consistency is built one choice at a time.

"We want to hear your wins! Snap a photo or share a quote about how you're living your PRG this month. Tag us @myPRGprogram or email marc.dickerson@prglife.org with #AlignedLiving."

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When you pause to reflect, realign, and re-center, you begin to design your life on purpose. Growth starts with knowing who you are, what you value, and where you're going. Direction follows clarity. And clarity starts now.

The PRG Framework is more than a model—it's a mindset.

- ▷ Your **Priorities** define what matters most.
- ▷ Your **Roles** show where you make the greatest impact.
- ▷ Your **Goals** translate intention into action.

When all three align, life doesn't just feel full—it feels fulfilled.

Start small. Choose one priority this week. Clarify one role. Take one step toward a meaningful goal. The momentum will follow.

“The life you want isn't found in more—it's found in meaning.”

Marc



Thank you for reading the Priorities, Roles, and Goals Newsletter. I appreciate any questions or comments you may have. E-mail me at marc.dickerson@prglife.org.