

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

The Accountability Circle

Your member handbook, monthly structure and the full set of session materials.

Member handbook · \$47 per month

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WELCOME

What you have joined

The Accountability Circle is a monthly structure for people who know what they should be doing and do not reliably do it alone.

The premise is narrow and well-supported by ordinary experience: most people follow through considerably more often when someone is expecting a report. Not because of pressure or shame — those produce short bursts and then avoidance — but because a scheduled point at which you will say out loud what you did changes what you do in the days beforehand.

This membership gives you that point, every month, with a structure around it so the time is not wasted on vague check-ins.

What this is, honestly

This is a structured accountability membership. It is not coaching, therapy, or professional advice of any kind, and nothing in it is tailored to your individual circumstances. It is a framework plus a cadence. If what you need is clinical support, or expert advice on a specific professional, legal, medical or financial question, this is not that and will not substitute for it.

What arrives each month

When	What
Day 1	The month's focus sheet — one page, one theme, three prompts
Day 1	Your commitment card: what you are committing to this month
Weekly	The five-minute check — four questions, same four every week
Final week	The month-end review and next month's commitment

The one rule

Fill in the commitment card in the first three days of the month. Everything else is optional and still useful; this one is load-bearing. A month without a written commitment reliably becomes a month of general intention, and general intention is what you already had before you joined.

SECTION ONE

How the structure works

One commitment per month. Four weekly checks. One review. That is the whole system.

Why monthly

A week is too short for anything meaningful to complete, so weekly goals tend to be either trivial or perpetually rolled over. A quarter is long enough that the first six weeks feel optional. A month is the shortest period in which something real can finish, and short enough that you cannot comfortably lose the first half.

Why one commitment

The temptation each month is to commit to four things. Four commitments produce roughly one completion and three sources of guilt. One commitment produces one completion, which compounds across twelve months into twelve finished things — considerably more than most people manage with a longer list.

What makes a good monthly commitment

- **It finishes.** There is a state in which it is unambiguously done. "Work on the website" does not finish. "Publish the three service pages" does.
- **It is yours to complete.** Nothing where the final step depends on somebody else replying, approving, or turning up.
- **It fits a month that contains your actual life** — not an idealised month with no illness, travel or crises.
- **You would be genuinely pleased to have done it.** If completing it would feel like nothing much, it will not survive week three.

COMMITMENT CARD · MONTH ____

This month I will:

It is done when:

The weekly behaviour that gets me there:

The thing most likely to derail it:

What I will do when that happens:

SECTION TWO

The weekly five-minute check

Four questions. The same four every week. Five minutes, and never longer.

The brevity is deliberate. A long weekly review feels more serious and gets skipped by week three, and a skipped review is worth nothing at all. Four questions can be answered in a car park, which is the point.

1. **Did I do the weekly behaviour?** Yes, no, or partly. No explanation yet.
2. **What is in the way?** One thing. If nothing, say nothing.
3. **Is the commitment still realistic for this month?** Honestly. Adjusting in week two is sensible; adjusting in week four is retrofitting.
4. **What is the one thing next week turns on?** One.

WEEKLY CHECK · MONTH ____

Wk	Did it?	What is in the way	What next week turns on
1			
2			
3			
4			

Answer question one before thinking about it

The useful version of question one is the instant answer, before justification assembles itself. "No" is a perfectly good answer and considerably more useful than a qualified yes. The weeks people learn most from are the honest no weeks.

SECTION THREE

The month-end review

Fifteen minutes in the final week. The review is where a membership becomes cumulative rather than just twelve separate months.

MONTH-END REVIEW · MONTH ____

The commitment was:

Done, partly done, or not done:

Weeks the behaviour happened, out of four:

What actually determined the outcome — be specific, not general:

What I now know about how I work that I did not know last month:

What I am carrying into next month:

If the month did not go well

Some will not. The pattern worth avoiding is the one where a bad month produces an over-corrected next month — a commitment twice the size, to make up for it — which then fails harder and ends the membership.

After a missed month, the correct move is a smaller commitment, not a larger one. You are rebuilding the evidence that you finish what you commit to, and that evidence is built with completions rather than with ambition.

Three missed months in a row

That is a signal worth taking seriously, and it usually means one of three things: the commitments are consistently too large, the monthly cadence does not suit you, or this is a season of your life with no spare capacity. All three are legitimate. The third in particular is not a failure — it is a fact about your circumstances, and the honest response may be to pause the membership and return when conditions change.

SECTION FOUR

Twelve monthly themes

Each month has a theme and three prompts. Use them to choose your commitment, or ignore them and set your own — the structure matters more than the theme.

Month	Theme	The question it asks
1	Finish something	What have I been ninety per cent done with for too long?
2	Remove something	What am I doing that produces nothing?
3	The uncomfortable conversation	What am I not saying, and to whom?
4	Build the floor	What daily minimum would change the most if it never broke?
5	The deferred decision	What have I been avoiding deciding?
6	Half-year honesty	Is the year going where I said it would in January?
7	Ask for something	What would I have if I simply asked?
8	Repair something	What has quietly degraded while I was busy?
9	Learn one thing properly	What skill would change the next three years?
10	Reduce the load	What have I taken on that is not mine to carry?
11	Prepare the ground	What would make next year easier if I did it now?
12	Close the year	What is finished, and what am I formally abandoning?

Using a theme

Read the question, write whatever comes up without filtering, then pick the one item from your list that would most change things. That becomes the month's commitment. The whole process takes ten minutes.

THEME WORKING · MONTH ____

The theme question:

Everything that comes up, unfiltered:

The one that would most change things:

SECTION FIVE

Running a circle with other people

Optional, and it roughly doubles the effect. If you have two or three people who would do this alongside you, the structure below is what makes it work rather than drift into a chat.

The format

Three to five people. Thirty minutes a month, same slot. Each person gets five minutes and the others do not interrupt. Five minutes at the end for anything collective.

The five minutes covers three things, in order: what I committed to, what actually happened, what I am committing to next month. Not an update on everything happening in their life — that is what makes these groups collapse into an hour of pleasant conversation with no accountability in it.

Four rules that keep it useful

- **No advice unless asked.** Unsolicited advice converts a report into a discussion and consumes everyone's time. If someone wants input they will ask.
- **No rescuing.** When someone says they did not do it, the group's job is to hear it, not to reassure them it was understandable. The discomfort of saying it is the mechanism working.
- **Start on time, end on time.** A session that runs long once will run long always, and then gets skipped.
- **Missing a month does not mean leaving.** Make that explicit at the start. Most groups lose people who missed one session and felt unable to return.

CIRCLE SET-UP

Who is in it:

When we meet, and where:

Who keeps time:

If you do not have a group

One other person is enough, and a single person who expects your report produces most of the benefit. If you have nobody, write your commitment somewhere dated and visible, and send your month-end review to yourself by email. It is weaker than another person but considerably stronger than holding it in your head.

APPENDIX

Twelve-month log

One row per month. After a year, this page is the most useful thing in the membership — it is an accurate record of what you actually complete, which almost nobody has.

Mo	Commitment	Done?	What I learned
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

Spare commitment cards

COMMITMENT CARD · MONTH ____

This month I will:

It is done when:

Weekly behaviour:

Most likely derailment, and my response:

COMMITMENT CARD · MONTH ____

This month I will:

It is done when:

Weekly behaviour:

Most likely derailment, and my response:

COMMITMENT CARD · MONTH ____

This month I will:

It is done when:

Weekly behaviour:

Most likely derailment, and my response:

The one-page summary

One commitment a month, written down in the first three days, with a clear finished state and a weekly behaviour attached. Four questions a week, five minutes, answered before you have time to justify. Fifteen minutes at month end to record what actually determined the outcome. After a missed month, commit smaller rather than larger. Twelve completions a year beats a long list and nothing finished.

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