



# PROFESSIONAL CHRISTIAN COACHING TODAY

Chris McCluskey & Kim Avery

*The podcast dedicated to Raising the Standard of Coaching...  
and Changing the World*

## Episode 061

### A Revolutionary Approach to Yearly Planning

CHRIS: Our topic today is probably going to be a bit of a stretch for you. Most all of us are very familiar with yearly planning and of course, we're rolling into the end of this year and reflecting back on the year we just came through, and looking toward the year ahead and so we start thinking yearly plans. We buy our new planner if you're a physical calendar person and we start looking ahead to what the various quarters may be and maybe even thinking about vacation time and all that stuff.

We're very used to planning, but one of the things that many of us will admit to is that the best laid plans may submit off and go awry. Many times when we dive into our yearly plans, we find ourselves by February and certainly by March, that wrap up of the first quarter of a new year that some of our yearly plan has just kind of gotten lost on the wind somewhere and it may not revisit us in a painful way until close to the beginning of the fourth quarter where we go, "Oh, I said I was going to do x, y, and z this year and that hasn't happen."

In today's podcast, we are going to offer you a fresh alternative, a truly revolutionary way of looking at your annual plan. This is of course something that can benefit you and then also your clientele depending on what they are interested

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in coaching with you around. Today's topic also has a unique twist in that it is going to serve as the topic for our very first Christian Coaches Café meeting.

If you tuned into our last podcast, you heard Kim and I announced that we're going to begin to meet on a once-a-month basis, first Monday of every month in a live format with video connection and up to 100 of our listeners here can register ahead of time and join us in a thing we're calling Christian Coaches Café and those once-a-month face to face meetings are an opportunity for us to dig deeper on a given topic from that month's series of podcasts. This is our topic for this very first Christian Coaches Café on December 5<sup>th</sup>. We'll tell you more about that at the end of today's broadcast.

**KIM:** In the meantime though in this episode, we are going to remind you of what you probably already know and that's the benefits of planning, help you begin with the end in mind. We're going to suggest you work with a three-month plan instead of an annual plan, and more on that in just a minute, give you specific steps you can create targeted daily and weekly action steps, and we're also going to share tips to help you finish each of your three-month years, as it were, in a really strong manner.

Before we dive too deeply into the specifics, I'd like to credit Brian Moran and Michael Lennington for their fabulous book called *The 12 Week Year*. The subtitle is *Get More Done in 12 Weeks Than Others Do in 12 Months*. Chris and I have both read this book and really enjoyed it, applied the concept. I've used it with a lot of my clients and I found it very, very helpful. A lot of the ideas we're going to talk about today have come from Brian Moran and Michael Lennington. Thank you to both of them.

Let's go ahead though and start with the benefits of planning. Yogi Berra is credited with saying, "If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up somewhere else," and boy have I ever found that to be true. Let's go ahead and lead off with five - at least - benefits of planning.

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1.) It helps organize your thinking. I think writing down a plan brings so much more clarity. It reminds me of when I go to the grocery store and I don't have a weekly menu plan and I don't have a list. I just kind of wander the store, fill my cart with all sorts of arbitrary items, pay a ton of money, and get home and think, "There's nothing to cook for dinner." That can happen in the grocery store and it can happen in life whereas if, for example, that grocery store trip, if I had just taken 5-10 minutes to make a menu plan and write out my list, I would have spent less and ended up with a whole lot more. That's what planning does for us.

2.) Planning really helps us hone our focus, make sure we're doing the right things versus just doing the things right. I have noticed a huge difference in my weeks and the weeks that I plan and I know precisely what daily and weekly action steps I intent to take to meet my goals and other weeks when I think, "Oh, I'm too busy to plan." If an hour comes free in the middle of the day, say a client reschedules or cancels, I just kind of wander around my office like this lost little puppy thinking, "Oh my, I have a whole hour. What should I do with it?" I don't really end up accomplishing anything, but if I have a plan, I can look right to that line item and dig right into the task. It truly helps me focus.

3.) A plan exposes potential flaws. I don't know if you're like me, Chris, but the mental plans that I create can seem so doable until I articulate them or I write them out, and then the gaps are glaring. Better to know then than in the midst of implementation.

4.) A plan establishes important milestones. There's really no way for us to know if the strategies we're using for whatever our goals are are working if we don't measure the outcomes of our actions. We'll talk about that more in a minute but we want to establish milestones so we don't keep repeating behaviors that are benefitting us.

5.) A plan gives us a detailed roadmap to follow. I would never start on a cross country trip without a detailed map to ensure I went the best way, I got there in the

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fastest amount of time while seeing everything that was important to me. If I'm going to put in planning time for a week-long trip, oh my goodness, how much more important for a business and a vocation that is going to be with me for a lifetime. As I tell my clients, if we can't make it work on paper, we're never going to make it work in reality, so let's start with a plan.

CHRIS: Start with a plan indeed. This book that Kim just mentioned, *The 12 Week Year*, by Moran and Lennington, I'm going to read you a brief quote from the premise of their book basically. It says this, "The marketplace only rewards those ideas that get implemented." It makes sense. You can have lots of great ideas but unless you ship, as Seth Godin would say, it's not going to make it into the marketplace where you actually make some money on it." They say, "You can be smart and have access to lots of information and great ideas. You can be well connected, work hard, have lots of natural talent, but in the end, you have to execute. Execution is the single greatest market differentiator."

Now think about that, all the different things that can impact success in the marketplace, execution, in other words, getting it done. They say, "Great companies and successful individuals execute better than their competition." The barrier standing between you and the life you are capable of living is a lack of consistent execution. So that really is kind of an underlying thread of our emphasis on a plan and challenging the way we normally think about an annual plan.

Let me flip the page and read just a little bit more about what they say here in this excellent book, *The 12 Week Year*. It says, "Most people know how to get back in shape - eat better and exercise more - they just don't do it. It's not a knowledge problem. It's an execution problem." It's a great little example. "Our experience has shown that most people have the capacity to double or triple their income just by consistently applying what they already know and despite this, people continue to chase new ideas thinking that the next idea is the one that will magically make it

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all better.” This is about taking your ideas and planning so that you actually execute.

Well as is so often cited, when you’re going to build a plan, you want to begin with the end in mind. We’re going to start first with vision. Let’s pitch our tent here for a little while. The importance of vision cannot be overstated and so for the purposes of how we’ll think through this annual revolutionary approach to planning here, I want to suggest that as you begin working on a long-term vision, I generally don’t recommend a whole lot of focus on more than about the next three years in terms of what you will actually be planning for.

The reason for that is you want to have of course a life vision. You want to have an idea of the legacy that you want your life to leave behind you believe God has called you to and such, but in terms of actually planning, we can’t even really adequately plan for what a year is going to bring, all the surprises and the un-anticipatable kind of things, let alone two years, three years five years, 10 years. You can have a little inkling of some of those things but basically, they are just out there in the ether somewhere, but a three-year vision is usually a pretty good place to start.

For example thinking about launching a business, maybe a coaching business since we’re on a coaching podcast here, I always tell people to think in terms of your first three years. The first year of a launch of pretty much anything, you don’t even know what you don’t know. You’re going to struggle, fumble, and just basically throw everything against the wall and see what sticks kind of a thing. You’ve got to plan but you follow through on it, and gee, some things didn’t work. Other things do, you do more of those. The things that didn’t work, you modify them. Your first year, you’re going to try lots of things and you’re going to be learning, modifying.

Your second year, you begin doing consistently more of those things that are paying off. You’re much more intentional about where you invest your time,

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energy, and money. It's not usually until that third year that you start to feel maybe not a well-oiled machine yet but I'm settling into a groove. Things are really starting to clip along. Well, that's a three-year period. When looking at big vision, pick about a three-year period of time for anything and then we're going to break that down in your specific planning for the year ahead.

Brain science has been teaching us a lot of about the power of our brain and there's a concept in it called neuroplasticity. You've probably heard that by now if you follow the media very much. It's just a fancy word for explaining the principle that we now understand the brain to be a very dynamic organ and that it is very changeable. Neuroplasticity means that your brain can change a lot and it changes in response to the things that we are challenging it to do or in response to the things that we're not challenging it anymore to do. It changes in terms of functioning better and sharper or functioning more poorly simply as a result of repeated actions, choices.

When we engage our prefrontal cortex, that portion of our brain that can do visioning and is very creative, we're able to see the neurons light up as we start to think through possibilities kind of thinking. As those neurons and that prefrontal cortex are lighting up, they begin to kind of lay down new neural pathways that our brain kind of starts to light and the more that we then follow through on that vision casting, that creative idea that we're playing with, the stronger those new neural pathways become; therefore generally, the much more likely it is that we'll actually see realization of those things that we begin to put our minds to.

Science is also showing that we can strengthen those new neural connections even more by writing them down. There is value even though you're the only one who is necessarily looking at your plan to take the plan out of your brain and put it on black and white. Get it on your computer screen, print out a hard copy of it, work it, tweak it, but have something in writing. I will tell a little personal story on Rachel and I here. We are very much planners. On the Myers-Briggs, our last

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portion either the P or the J, we're both J's. We've got two planners here. We like to get things in black and white.

Rachel and I, through our 30 years of marriage, have drawn out very specific vision casting notions of things like our move to the farm here, the building of our house, the building of my private practice, the building of the institute, Professional Christian Coaching Institute. Multi-paged documents that say, "What's the vision? Here's the vision." You want to step into it, you can just kind of try it on. As you begin thinking about your yearly planning or your next three years, I encourage you to take that same practice and write things out. In fact, write them out in present tense.

Even though it's future vision casting that you're doing, step into it as if you were living it and functioning it now. Write it in the present tense. Not "this business will do this things" but "this business does thus and such. We gain our clients by.... We serve these target niches." Put everything in the present tense as if you were already living it out whatever the area that you're casting vision for. Kim is going to walk us in now to this revolutionary approach to yearly planning that kind of turns some of this on its head, but definitely gives it turbo thrusters to move forward.

KIM: I love that, the turbo thrusters, and couldn't we all use that? As Chris was saying earlier, we tend to think of the New Year as a time for ourselves and for our clients to think about the year ahead. There is certainly nothing wrong with that, but there is some flaws that come along with what we call that annualized thinking or thinking in 12-month increments. We are going to, like the authors of The 12 Week Year suggest to you that planning in three-month increments is much more powerful. Let me just give you three reasons why.

- 1). First of all, Chris, you kind of touched on this a minute ago, 12 months is really too long to predict accurately. From year to year when I've made annual goals and New Year's resolutions in a year, the plan is almost irrelevant by March,

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but for some reason, I don't think, "Oh, I should write a new 12-month plan or a new year plan." I just kind of toss it out the window and think, "I'll do better next year" because life has a way of happening outside of our control and so 12 months is a really long period of time to predict accurately.

2.) Twelve-month periods really don't motivate us midyear. To think about this, I just have to think about my local Gold's Gym. I have learned over the years, Chris, not to go up on January 2, 3, 4, or 5<sup>th</sup>. There is not a free machine in the entire gym. I just get in my car and I go back home. But lo and behold, come mid-February, I can have my choice of any machine in the entire exercise place because people's 12-month goals, "I want to lose 50 lbs or I want to run this race or I want to get healthier this year." December, the time when they were going to celebrate their new and improved self is just so far off. It doesn't motivate them in February, March, April, and May. They always think, "I can pick that up in October and November."

We see corporations do the same thing when they do their annualized planning. Everybody is fast out of the gate in January and February, working hard on the corporation's goals. Midyear, there's a huge lag and people slack off, but then again towards the end of the year, they are like, "Oh my goodness. My boss is going to call me in the office and he is going to ask how my team performed on this measure," and they ramp it back up again. What if we lived at that kind of pace all the time? That's something that's unhealthy but truly motivating. For example, Chris, we're getting ready to go on a week-long vacation next week. This week, I've been very careful about my planning, my checklist, the things that I need to have happen, keeping my email box clean. Now, imagine this if I live every week where the week before vacation. In part, that's what three-month planning can do for us.

3.) The last benefit of three-month planning is when we look at an entire year, most of us are unwilling to make necessary and important tradeoffs. For example, I'll probably make a health goal, a family goal, a spiritual goal, a business goal, a

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physical goal. The list goes on and on and so I've got these beautiful goals in 5-7 areas of my life, but they have shown that our brains really can't juggle that many balls in the air. I can't think and remember all of those different goals and work on them simultaneously. God just didn't wire us with that kind of capacity.

When we work in three-month increments, I'm willing to make tradeoffs to live intentionally in balance in the short term for greater reward and balance in the long term. For example in January-March, I may really want to focus on some relationship in my life that's critical and just give it my full attention, but once that is in a better place, it can be a little less intentional but I know it will run well, I can turn that focus to another relationship or another area of my life entirely.

I've certainly found this to be true with my business coaching clients. If they have ambitious 6-10 goals for their business, they may do one or two things for each one, but it's really disheartening to see the small progress. When they intentionally focus on 1-3 goals at a time and make massive measurable difference, they are energized, they are motivated, they are clear on what's working and what's not working, and then the next three-month period, they can choose entirely different goals if they want to or just double down on the ones they already chose.

CHRIS: This notion of operating as if a year was a 12-week period instead of a 12-month period has, for me, truly been revolutionary. When I heard this book mentioned in the mastermind group that we belong to with Dan Miller and gang, and then you grabbed a copy of the book and started devouring and said, "Oh, this is good." I went out and got a copy of it and I just went, "Wow, yeah."

This is not just kind of a cute little tweak of something. This is revolutionary. What it really does is it keeps always before our conscious awareness the things that we said we were going to do. Are we gaining on them or are we starting to flag and lose ground, and gee, here we are wrapping them up already, a three-month period. I can keep that kind of focus. If I start to lose it in the middle

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month, I'm already past the hump here. I've got only five weeks left and I better start moving.

It makes sense why the authors would suggest that this can increase your ability to execute, the actual result of the fruits of your actions so dramatically because you are in a very concentrated period of time that our minds can hold attention on. In this model, a year, a literal year has become a three-month period, much more concentrated. That means that the 12 months we're normally used to thinking of now equate to 12 weeks much more concentrated period of time and within those what we normally think of as 4.5 weeks or so of a given month, no, that's just the five days of our week.

We're concentrating in daily periods what we used to try to do in a week. We're concentrating in weekly periods what we used to try to do in a month. We're concentrating in three-month periods what we used to try to do in an entire calendar year. It's really focusing. Now, of course that means we're also going to have to adjust the bigness of our goals, but that's good because it dramatically increases the likelihood that we'll actually know them out and then starting a new "year," only 12 weeks later, we can set some new ones and hit it again hard. At the end of that 12-week year, start another set.

We've talked a little bit about the big vision that we normally want to start with. You want to have an idea of where you're trying to get to or as Yogi Berra said, "You might wind up somewhere else." Assuming that you've done some work on that or hey, that's a future podcast. We'll take up vision casting at some future point, we're going to narrow it down now beyond the next element that often is addressed which is your purpose or the why of your vision.

We're going to skip that piece and go right to the objectives or the missions that you have in certain places, specifically, what is it that you want to accomplish in regard to, let's say, your business or in regard to your personal care, or in regard to relationships that are important to you. Concentrating on those objectives or those

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missions, you are going to identify some very specific but still fairly broad objectives. For example, taking the list that I just gave there, if you're trying to identify an objective for the next 12 weeks in regard to your business, you might say, "Well, I want to grow my email list." That's a specific objective. It's not terribly measurable yet. We're going to get to that in a moment but it's a specific objective for something that you're wanting to accomplish in your business.

Let's look at another area of your life, your personal life. Let's say that you have an objective that you want to set for the next 12 weeks to get healthier. That's sufficient. That's a good objective, get healthier. Again, not measurable yet but it's a good objective. I want to get healthier in my business. I want to grow my email list. The third one I mentioned there was relationships. Let's say you're going to pick a specific relationship. I want to improve communication with my teenage daughter. That's an objective in a relational area, not highly measurable yet but it's pretty specific. I want to improve communication with my teenage daughter. Kim, walk us in from those objectives to the specific criteria of measurement for them.

KIM: I love those. You're identifying kind of the end point almost what people want to have happen with that objective at the end of the 12 weeks. I noticed that you set three which is perfect because again, we need to work in conjunction with the fact that we're human beings and we're limited, and our focus can only go so many different directions. With my clients, I definitely recommend 1-3 objectives. Obviously, you're going to do maintenance things and other things in your life, but you're really going to focus on upping your game in 1-3 areas. With those objectives, you also want to establish criteria of measure. It's important to know if you succeeded. You want to know what you're aiming for, when you've achieved it, and I think almost more importantly, if you haven't achieved it, you need to adjust your action steps and try doing it in a different way.

I think as business people, especially entrepreneurs, each of us has a slightly different niche, a different focus, a different environment that we're working in

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and so we know general principles of what works for other people, but what specifically will work for us sometimes is a matter of “try it and see.” It’s an experiment. I will work on this. How will I know if my experiment succeeded? There is a good question. We need criteria of measure. Going back to your examples, Chris, if somebody wants to grow their email list as their objective for this three-month period, they will want to say something more specific such as, “I want 100 new people on my email list by the end of three months.” Now, they are going to know if they have reached that objective or not.

For their personal example, they may say, “I want to lose 15 lbs by the end of three months.” With the relationship example, that’s a bit tougher, but when you’re working on something like a relationship with a teenager, maybe you just want to see them start to initiate conversations with you or at least not run out of the room every time you walk into it. If you can set some sort of measures, you can tell if what you’re doing is working. That’s really going to benefit you when we get to these next steps.

CHRIS: So you’ve planned the work, now it’s time to work the plan. That’s what they used to tell me in scuba diving classes all the time. Plan the dive and then dive the plan. Of course scuba diving, you can easily mess yourself up and wind up in a life threatening situation. Well, all of life is not so different from that. If we don’t plan our work and then work the plan, we can wind up messing ourselves up pretty badly and the things that really matter most to us wind up not actually becoming a reality. We can’t control all things but boy, we can sure control a whole lot more than we often actually do because of poor planning and/or often poor execution on those plans.

This is how your life would look on a weekly basis if we’re working this 12-week year. You’re going to begin each week and kind of prime your brain. Remember, we’re trying to set those new neural pathways there. We’re trying to teach the brain a new way to function and to think so it really gets its attention on something and stays on it and follows through on it. You want to prime your brain at the

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beginning of the week by reviewing first that big overall three-year vision, kind of, “What is it I’m all about here?” Keep that always very accessible to you and then you’re going to review your three-month objectives. Those 1-3 specific things that you’ve said, “Okay, this 12-week year is the 12-week year of [blank]” and just 1-3 main objectives, main missions, main things you really want to see happen during this concentrated time.

Let me give an example from this past weekend. It was a gorgeous weekend here. It’s fall and I was out on the farm pretty much worked from the time I ate breakfast until dark. I didn’t even stop for lunch. I just worked straight through out in the yards having a wonderful time because I’m nurturing this little piece of Eden that God has allowed me to be Adam over, I guess. I was enjoying the farm but that’s because I have very specific plans for the farm and this 12-week period has been very focused on our home and property. That has been one of my primary objectives. Having invested myself heavily over this gorgeous weekend in some very specific measurable kinds of outcomes, when the day is over and I have finally eaten again, had a full belly, and enjoyed some time with the family, I went out at about 10 PM.

The kids were already winding down and being gotten into bed. I put on my coat because it’s cold now. It was a beautiful full moon. I walked the property, several acres here that I had been doing various kinds of work on, I walked and I was praying. I was drinking in the beauty of it in the full moonlight and I was rehearsing in my brain that long-term vision of what I have for these areas of the house and the farm that I’m concentrating on, much of it we want to have wrapped up here for Thanksgiving and for Christmas. I was checking it, I was soaking it, but I was also rehearsing the things that are yet to be done and planning out where can those fit in. That’s the idea is that each week with this 12-week period, you are starting the week out by reviewing the overall three-year vision and then specifically reviewing your 1-3 three-month objectives, and then comes...

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KIM: The daily or weekly actions that you're going to set. You described that beautifully. It's a beautiful visual of you walking the property and seeing what you've accomplished and you were able to celebrate that I think in part because you had a plan and you could measure where you were with the plan. What you've just described is what I call personally my Monday morning meeting with God. First thing Monday morning after devotions, I just open my planner. It's actually part of my devotional routine because this is not my business. This is God's business and I'm His steward.

I look down and say, "What is the vision He has given me for this business? What are my objectives that I feel He has really laid on my heart for this 12-week or three-month period? I rewrite them so I can rewire those neural pathways to premap that road to success and then it's time for me to say, "Hmm, this week, what action steps am I going to be taking to make that happen?" It's just a matter, I think, of reverse engineering those objectives and putting them into small steps. I think most coaches listening to the call are familiar with the acronym SMART goals – Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, Time limited. That's what we're working with here. Notice that they are tied into the larger vision. They are tied into that shorter term objective and now these actions we set are really going to move the needle in what we have going on.

Thinking back to some of the examples we've tossed out a minute ago, Chris, with your business, if you wanted to add 100 people to your email newsletter list, your action steps might be, "I'm going to personally invite five people every day from my LinkedIn connections to become a part of the newsletter list. Perfect. I'm going to spend three hours this week working on a new free offer for the website or I'm going to write three bloggers each week in my niche and offer to write a guest post.

Notice that each of them started with a verb. I know exactly what I want to do. In the block of time I have scheduled or when free time comes up, I can just look and think, "I can invite those five people from my LinkedIn connections to my

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newsletter list. I have a minute here. I know exactly what I have going on.” If your objective were to get healthier by losing those 15 lbs, your action steps might be something like limit your calorie intake to 1,200 a day and keep track with your Lose It app every time you eat something or do 20 minutes of cardio three times a week or drink eight glasses of water.

For the relationship example, we were talking about improving communication with your teenage daughter. It’s a little bit tougher but I think maybe take her on one daddy-daughter date a week would be a good action step or ask one open-ended question a day and then put your hand over your mouth metaphorically speaking and don’t follow it up with any parental advice.

CHRIS: Even the good stuff.

KIM: You want to write those action steps on your daily, weekly list wherever you keep track of those. It’s going to save your brain of thinking in the moment and you want to be very specific.

It’s time wherever you keep record of these things and if you do come to our Christian Coaches Café, we’re actually going to give you a form to help you with all of these, but it’s time to write these daily, weekly actions down in a list in a form that you keep in front of you. Note a frequency – how often you’re going to do it exactly what you’re going to do beginning with an action step and then a due date. Maybe due by the end of the week and maybe something that is not truly complete until the end of the three months, yet, you know what you want done by the end of each and every week.

CHRIS: Let’s go back and scoop up one of the points that you touched on there, Kim, and just underscore the importance of scheduling these things blocked out in your calendar. There’s a great quote from Stephen Covey. He says, “The key is not to prioritize what’s on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities.” I love that. Don’t just prioritize what’s on your schedule. Schedule your priorities.

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When you look in the calendar, there it is blocked. You have a date with yourself. You've got an appointment with who? You on that specific thing because that's what we're focusing on. Remember, we're trying to train our brains again and in a much more concentrated fashion, we are likely to, as the author suggested again, then double or even triple our output, the degree to which we actually execute because we're concentrating on very specific things and we're scheduling them. They are our priorities, for these 12 weeks anyway, and we've got them blocked out in our calendar.

There was a study done by Eric Horvitz. He's with Microsoft Research and he found that each time a typical Microsoft executive was distracted from serious mental tasks by things like emails or instant messaging, a text coming through or something, it took them an average of 15 minutes to get back on track. That's kind of another point to put in here. When we actually have these priorities scheduled in our time blocks and you see "Okay, it's 2 PM. That means I'm doing x" and whatever the verb is, whatever the action is there that's in line with our overall objectives, then we're diving into it. You want to be sure that you block out distractions. You've got the time blocked out. Did you block out the distractions?

When I am really digging into tasks here in my business, in my office up on the third floor where I've got the rest of the family who are all down there doing their schooling and whatever their stuff is, I'm away from them and I not only unplug my laptop and move away from my desk over there. I get to a comfortable seat where I've got good reading light and I just stretch out so I can do work on my laptop, I put foam earplugs in my ears. I turn off my pings. This is a time that I'm fully concentrated. I blocked it out and so just like if I was on a phone call that was an appointment with so and so and my phone rings, I'm not going to say "Can you excuse me? I need to go take that phone call." No, I'm on a phone meeting here. This meeting is with Chris. It's with me and I've shut out as much as the other distractions including even the little bit of noise that might be drifting up from downstairs. Just put those foam earplugs and I hit it hard.

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People often ask especially with my illness, “How do you get so much done?” Well, there’s one of the reasons. I’ve blocked it out on my calendar and when that time comes, I’m doing it and all of the distractions are as attended to as they can be, borrowing the house is on fire or an animal is stuck and needs help or something like that. I’m game on. Be sure that you’ve prioritized those times in your calendar and then finally, when it comes to the end of your day, before you shut it all down and do whatever it is you’ve got planned for the evening, review what you have accomplished and what leaves yet to be done.

Remember, Friday is coming. That used to mean the end of a week. No, now it means the end of the month because we’re working on a week-long month. Friday is coming. How far are you? What are you going to need to hit first thing tomorrow morning? Make that review so when you come in tomorrow morning, you’re ready to hit the ground running again on that very concentrated task.

KIM: Beautiful stuff. Lastly, we just want to help people understand how to finish strong and that is at the end of that three-month period, of course I do it weekly also but then in a meta view, at the end of the three-month year, it’s time to measure our progress, to stop and see what’s happened. Remember the experimental mindset that we’ve brought into it whether it’s the weight loss, the relationship with your daughter, or growing your email list. We’re trying strategies. We’re giving them enough time to see if they are working and if they have worked well and if they are, we can rinse and repeat and just do it again or we can stop and tweak and adjust.

All too often, studies have found when people are getting the results they want, they change the objective, the goal instead of just tweaking their strategies. Much wiser to keep the goal that you’ve prayed about that God has laid on your heart and realize, “Okay, those weren’t the most effective, say, grow my email list strategies. What other strategies can I use or maybe I need to invite 10 people a day on LinkedIn or, or, or. Evaluate what has gone well, what hasn’t, and whatever you do, stop and celebrate. It’s so important.

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God has made our brain so it likes to do what's rewarding and it likes to avoid what's painful. Don't make this painful for your brain. He's not going to want to do it again. We want to celebrate that we've played full out. We've given it our all and whatever our results, we've been committed to the plan and done the best we can. Celebrate that and then certainly, any milestones you've met. Bring in some of your Christian coaching community and let us celebrate that with you too.

I do just want to point out this one verse, Chris, that comes to mind as we talk about all this. It's Galatians 6:9. It says, "Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time, we will reap if we do not grow weary." I wish that all of the change that we want in life were an instantaneous process and God does perform miracles thankfully, but generally, He has woven into the fabric of our universe the law of the harvest. We reap what we sow and we never, or at least in nature, reap in the same season we sow. It's always in a different season.

Let's focus on being faithful stewards on sowing, doing the best we can. The end of every three-month period of time, prayerfully thank your God for what He has allowed you to do, pick yourself up and do it again, and you'll be shocked at how the end of a literal 12-month year the number of things that have changed in a positive direction.

CHRIS: We both hope that this topic of revolutionary approach to your annual planning has been a stretch. We wanted it to be a challenge. We would also anticipate that it's probably been a little bit confusing perhaps because of the redefining of certain terms and all, and perhaps even frustrating. It may have generated some, "Yeah, I want that but..." and there's a very pregnant hesitation there that may result in you not actually acting on this.

Well, I said at the beginning of the broadcast that we were going to be using this very topic as our first area of focus for our first Christian Coaches Café. Let's give you some information on how you could actually engage with other Christian coaches all around the world live via video bridge with Kim and myself on

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December 5<sup>th</sup> to dig into this thing a whole lot more. If you go to the website at [ProfessionalChristianCoachingToday.com/Cafe](http://ProfessionalChristianCoachingToday.com/Cafe) or you can simply go to the website and click on the icon there that says, “Christian Coaches Café” and that will take you to a place where you will be able to register for that video conference call.

In fact, even if you can’t attend it live, you’ll at least be able to gain access to the playback, otherwise, you will not be able to attend. You will not be able to access unless you formally register. Again, this is a live video conference, specific time period. All the details will be on there, but you do have to preregister and then the bridge will only accept up to 100 people. You probably want to call in just a little bit early on the day of that. The bridge will automatically lock out if we do cap over 100. We have no idea actually what to expect on this being in the middle of the work day on a Monday. We’ll just kind of see. As we’ve said on our last broadcast, we’re going to experiment here.

When you register then, you will also be able to download a two-page worksheet that Kim has put together called The 331 Action Plan. It actually addresses on the front of it this three-year vision that we talked about in eight different specific areas of life. Your vision in general for those areas and then on page 2, the three-month objectives, so those 1-3 areas that you’re going to concentrate on for that three-month period and then finally, daily and weekly actions. Measurable actions that you are wanting to plan out for yourself in each of those areas of objective or focused concentration during the three months.

KIM: I’m so excited about this. Again, the URL is [ProfessionalChristianCoachingToday.com/Cafe](http://ProfessionalChristianCoachingToday.com/Cafe). I really hope to see you there. Bring your cup of coffee, tea, hot cocoa, whatever it is that helps you settle in, roll up your sleeves, get out a pen or pencil, connect with your fellow Christian coaches and really move forward on the things that are most important to you.

CHRIS: Until next time, keep raising the standard of coaching and changing the world.

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KIM: God's richest blessings to you.