

# SYLLABUS FOR *DESIGN YOUR LIFE FOR SUCCESS*



*"I created this workshop because I believe we all need to spend more time reflecting on how to find more purpose, meaning, and passion in our lives, and focusing on what really matters to us."*

## Design Your Life for Success

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Chris's website is [www.ChrisPalmerOnline.com](http://www.ChrisPalmerOnline.com)

This three-part workshop is sponsored by the Bethesda Metro Area Village and by the Connie Morella Library.

It is designed and led by **Chris Palmer**, a passionate advocate of personal growth. Chris loves helping people find meaning, success, and fulfillment.

In addition to being a former professor, he is an author, film producer, speaker, father, and grandfather.

The workshop is open to the public, and *it is free*. By all means bring a friend!

Please register on line ([Click here to register.](#))

### Three sessions

- *Developing a vision for your stage of life*
- *Making your vision operational*
- *Taking action and raising your productivity*

All classes are at the **Connie Morella (Bethesda) Library at 7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, MD 20814**. *Come to all three sessions if you can. Or the classes may be held by Zoom.*

The workshop is free, but **registration is required**. Please [click here to register](#). If you have any trouble registering, please email or call Chris Palmer.

Bethesda Metro Area Village is a nonprofit working to help you stay in your home as you age – safely, independently, and in the community you love. We offer volunteer-provided services and robust social programs to enrich the social lives of our members. If you are interested in learning more about membership or how to volunteer, check us out at [www.bmavillage.org](http://www.bmavillage.org) or email [director@bmavillage.org](mailto:director@bmavillage.org).

## **Workshop Description**

The workshop will explore the goals, strategies, and tactics necessary to live a successful, fulfilled, and productive life. We will reflect on our lives, discuss what really matters to us, consider how we find purpose and meaning in our lives, explore our life goals, think about our values, produce personal mission statements, examine how to take better care of ourselves, and learn effective time management skills.

The workshop will focus on the following types of questions:

1. What are my goals? How can I bring more purpose, focus, and meaning to my life? What is the best way for me to shape the person I want to become so I can contribute in a meaningful way to society and helping other people?
2. Is there a dissonance between how I spend my time and what is most important to me?
3. How can I take better care of myself (physically, mentally, spiritually, socially, and emotionally)?
4. What is the best way to draft a powerful and inspiring personal mission statement, so that I can begin to see my life in a fresh, focused, and revitalized way?
5. What do the words success, happiness, and fulfillment mean? How are they distinct?
6. What are the best ways of integrating the vision I have for my life, the plan I need to achieve it, and the actions to make things happen?
7. What are the benefits of taking more risks and getting outside my comfort zone?

This workshop is about actively designing our lives rather than simply drifting forward reacting to what happens to us. It is important to periodically sit back, quietly reflect, and ask if our lives are headed in the right direction. It is healthy to look at the person we have become and ask if this is really who we want to be. We should proactively shape our character, decide our future, and create a rewarding life of meaning and purpose.

We want to behave in ways that are true to our most honorable, generous, and best selves. This workshop gives you the chance to design and shape the kind of person you want to be and to articulate the goals you want to achieve in your life, both professionally and personally.

## **Delivery**

This workshop consists of three two-hour discussion sessions on three consecutive Wednesday evenings. We will strive for class sessions that are interactive, lively, engaging, creative, and fun.

The workshop will be discussion-based and often involve working on your own quietly

thinking and writing, or working in pairs or small groups.

### **Workshop Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the workshop, you will be able to:

1. Formulate what really matters to you and what values are important to you.
2. Create and develop a personal mission statement that reflects the best possible life you want to lead, a life that is passionate, honorable, focused, purposeful, and meaningful.
3. Include in your personal mission statements changes you plan to make to your life to bring it into closer alignment with your life goals.
4. Apply essential time management skills to your life.

### **How the Workshop is Taught**

I will encourage an active learning environment. Please bring a notebook to class, so you can write and take notes. The room we are using does not contain desks or tables to write on.

For homework, the class may read excerpts from books by Tara Mohr, Jane McGonigal, Edith Hall, Carol Dweck, Julia Cameron, Martin Seligman, Laura Roser, Irvin Yalom, Emily Esfahani Smith, Stephen Covey, Marie Kondo, David Allen, Ben Franklin, and Victor Frankl.

### **Instructor's Bio**

Chris Palmer is an author, speaker, wildlife filmmaker, and retired professor. He serves on the Board of Montgomery Hospice, is writing a book on aging, death, and dying, is a hospice volunteer, and runs an "aging well" group for the Bethesda Metro Area Village.

During his filmmaking career, he swam with dolphins and whales, came face-to-face with sharks and Kodiak bears, camped with wolf packs, and waded hip-deep through Everglade swamps.

For over thirty-five years, he spearheaded the production of more than 300 hours of original programming for prime-time television and the IMAX film industry, work that won him and his colleagues many awards, including two Emmys and an Oscar nomination. He has worked with Robert Redford, Paul Newman, Jane Fonda, Ted Turner, and many other celebrities. His IMAX films include *Whales, Wolves, Dolphins, Bears, Coral Reef Adventure*, and *Grand Canyon Adventure*.

He has authored eight books, the latest published by Rowman & Littlefield in July 2021, and entitled *Finding Meaning and Success: Living a Fulfilled and Productive Life*. All proceeds from Chris's books go to fund scholarships for students at American University.

Starting in 2004, Chris served on American University's full-time faculty as Distinguished Film Producer in Residence until his retirement in 2018. While at AU, he founded and directed the

Center for Environmental Filmmaking at the School of Communication. He also created and taught a popular class called *Design Your Life for Success*.

Chris and his wife Gail have lived in Bethesda, Maryland, for nearly 50 years and raised three daughters. They now have nine grandchildren. Chris was a stand-up comic and has advanced degrees from London and Harvard. He has jumped out of helicopters, worked on an Israeli kibbutz, and was a high school boxing champion. Chris is currently learning to juggle, draw, dance, play tennis, and play the piano. He loves to stand on his hands for exercise and he keeps a daily gratitude journal.

His website is [www.ChrisPalmerOnline.com](http://www.ChrisPalmerOnline.com).

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***Thank you for your interest in the workshop.***

***Please call or email me if you have questions. My cell is 202-716-6160 and my email address is [christopher.n.palmer@gmail.com](mailto:christopher.n.palmer@gmail.com).***