

# The Perfect Day Formula

## Craig Ballantyne

A discussion guide for the Simple Scrapper Book Club.

QUOTE // “It’s time to stop being vague. If you wish to be an extraordinary person, if you wish to be wise, then you should explicitly identify the kind of person you aspire to become. If you have a daybook, write down who you’re trying to be, so that you can refer to this self-definition. Precisely describe the demeanor you want to adopt so that you may preserve it when you are by yourself or with other people.” Epictetus, Art of Living

QUESTION // Q1. Who are you trying to be?

QUOTE // Control your mornings. Conquer the chaos of your afternoons. Concentrate on what really matters in the evenings.

QUESTION // Q2. This is the Perfect Day Formula. What is your initial reaction?

QUOTE // Structure = Freedom This may sound odd, and you may bristle at the thought of more structure in your life, but very soon you’ll come to see how more structure, created by having a set of rules for your life, liberates you and allows you to achieve your big goals and dreams.

QUESTION // Q3. What is one of your big goals or dreams?

QUOTE // The most important ritual in your life is what time you choose to get out of bed, and the best decision you can make is to start getting up fifteen minutes earlier. This will allow you to attack your number one priority first thing in the morning. Do not linger under the warm covers. That is for average people stuck in the struggles of ordinary lives. You are destined for greatness.

QUESTION // Q4. What's the first thing you currently do in the morning? Per Ballantyne's approach, what should you be doing first thing?

QUOTE // Your Magic Time is where you can get three times as much work done as you would at any other time of the day. We all have our own Magic Time where we are more focused, energetic, and creative. For most people it is first thing in the morning. Your job is to identify your Magic Time, to block it off and ruthlessly protect it from others, and to

use it to your advantage. Leveraging this powerful opportunity is essential to making big progress every day.

QUESTION // Q5. What might be your Magic Time?

QUOTE // Success is simple once you accept how hard it is. It may sound counterintuitive but once you accept how difficult it is going to be, then and only then will you be mentally willing to accept the challenges that it will require, such as sacrifice, dedication, preparation, planning, and perseverance. If you accept these facts, and you must, then it is a simple process of doing the work to create your Perfect Day. You'll simply put your head down and do it.

QUESTION // Q6. This is stoicism in a nutshell. How do you feel about this approach?

QUOTE // Your rules state what you will and will not do. Your rules automatically dictate that you make the right decisions, making it easy to overcome obstacles and resist temptation. Your rules replace your reliance on willpower to get you through challenges. Your rules guide you to greater productivity and guilt-free behavior that is congruent with, and supportive of, your goals.

QUESTION // Q7. Do you have any rules you follow as if it were law?

QUOTE // The scripted day is the best day. The best day leads to a great life. A great life ensures a lasting legacy. Each minute is a battle to be won. Make the right decisions with your time. This is the only life you have—and that's why it needs to be planned in great detail.

QUESTION // Q8. How scripted are your days?

QUOTE // Compare what you say you want against what you actually do. Do they match? If not, it's time to change and figure out what really matters. Once you do, line up your priority with the actions you need to achieve it, and then embrace the pain, pay the price, and earn the prize.

QUESTION // Q9. Do you have "behavioral congruence", meaning you act in accordance with what you want to accomplish?

QUOTE // Here are the three most important rules you need to create for your life: State what time you go to bed and get up every day. Write down the number one action step you will take each morning that moves you closer to your big goals and dreams. Create a Simple Health Plan.

QUESTION // Q10. Roughly, what would your three most important rules be?

QUOTE // The world will tempt us with fantasy football, breaking news, celebrity gossip, and television show marathons. These are not part of your vision. They do not move you closer to your goals. You must stay strong, controlling what you can, coping with what you can't, and concentrating on what counts.

QUESTION // Q11. This is where I personally really struggle with stoicism. These are often opportunities for connection with other people, not merely escapes. What's your takeaway from this discussion on the stoic approach to personal time management?