

Doug Smith ([00:06](#)):

Hey, leader and welcome to episode number 353 of the L3 Leadership Podcast, where we are obsessed with helping you grow to your maximum potential and to maximize the impact of your leadership. My name is Doug Smith and I am your host, and today's episode is brought to you by my friends at Beratung Advisors. If you're new to the podcast, welcome, I'm so glad that you're here and I hope that you'll enjoy our content and become a subscriber. Know that you can also watch all of our episodes over on our YouTube channels to make sure you're subscribed there as well at L3 Leadership. Well, in today's lesson leader, I'm gonna do a personal lesson on the habits, systems, and routines that you need to have your best year ever. This is a subject I'm very, very passionate about and I really do share pretty much all of the habit systems and routines that I have in my life, and I think it's gonna add a ton of value to you.

Doug Smith ([00:48](#)):

But before we dive into the lesson, just a few announcements. This episode of the L three Leadership Podcast is sponsored by Beratung Advisors. The financial advisors at Beratung Advisors help educate and empower clients to make informed financial decisions. You can find out how Beratung Advisors can help you develop a customized financial plan for your financial future by visiting their website [Beratungadvisors.com](#). That's B E R A T U N G advisors.com. Securities and investment products and services offered through LPL Financial member FINRA, S I P C, Beratung Advisors, LPL Financial, and L3 Leadership are separate entities. I also wanna thank our sponsor, Henne Jewelers. They're a jeweler owned by my friend and mentor, John Henne. My wife Laura and I got our engagement and wedding rings through Henne Jewelers and had a wonderful experience. And not only do they have great jewelry, but they also invest in people. In fact, for every couple that comes in engaged to their store, they give them a book to help them prepare for marriage, and we just love that. So if you're in need of a good jeweler, check out [hennejewelers.com](#). And with all that being said, let's dive right in. Here's my lesson on the habits, systems and routines that you need in your life to have the best year ever enjoy.

Doug Smith ([01:53](#)):

Hey, leader, today I'd like to talk to you on the subject, developing the habits, the systems, and the routines that you need in your life to have the best year ever. And what I'll be sharing in this lesson is three things. First, I'll be sharing my annual routines around goal setting. Then I'll be sharing my daily agenda with you, and then I'll be wrapping up the lesson by sharing the habits that I have in each area of my life that I think could add value to your life. But where I wanna start this lesson is really by encouraging you and my encouragement to you as you kick off this new year is to start where you are. Start where you are. You know, every January 1st, I post a quote on social media. I post the same quote every year. It's one of my favorite quotes that has impacted me throughout my life.

Doug Smith ([02:33](#)):

And I first heard it through John Maxwell and the quote says this, although you cannot go back and have a brand new start, my friend, anyone can start from now and have a brand new end. I love that. Although you cannot go back and have a brand new start, my friend, anyone can start from now and have a brand new end. And listen, I don't know what your 2022 look like. I don't know what last night looked like for you, but what I do know is, regardless of what the pasts look like, the past is in the past. Today is a brand new day and this is a brand new year. And you can start to make changes in your life right now to write a brand new story for you that'll have a brand new end and start. But you have to start where you are because here's what I know, if you don't start where you are, you stay where you are.

Doug Smith ([03:15](#)):

So start where you are today and as you listen to this podcast, my hope for you isn't that you implement all these habits and routines and structures that I share with you. My hope is that you'll hear one or two things that add value to you that you could implement in your life. I help you all the time. The best system, the best habit, the best routine is the one that you actually do. So I hope that you find one or two things that are helpful for you. And hey, maybe you're listening to this and you've been on a personal growth journey for a long time and you're listening to my habits, routines, et cetera. And you're saying, you know, Doug, that's a great routine, but there's probably a better way to do that. Here's what I do, please let me know. I'm always looking to to grow and have better routines, habits, et cetera.

Doug Smith ([03:53](#)):

And you can email me your habits and routines at Doug Smith L three leadership.org. I'd love to hear and learn from you as well. So with that being said, let's dive right into the practical part of this lesson. And first I wanna just share with you my annual routines around goal setting. And for me, it all starts with having a life plan. A life plan is something I was introduced to by Michael Hyatt many, many years ago. And all life plan is, is having a plan for your life. And I'll include a link to this in the show notes, but everyone who joins L three, the first thing we do is have them create a life plan. And we have them read a book by Daniel Harkavy and Michael Hyatt called Living Forward. And it walks you through how to create a life plan.

Doug Smith ([04:33](#)):

And then they actually provide a template for creating a life plan. And we'll include a link in the show notes to that as well. So you can start this process, but all you do to create a life plan is you basically go away, you try to schedule a retreat for a day or two, and then you really think about every area of your life, you know, family, health, finance, et cetera. And you basically fast forward to the end of your life and say, Hey, in, in every area of my life, what, what do I want to say at the end of my life that I accomplished in this area? Or what would I want people to say at me, say about me and my funeral in each of these areas? And it really helps you craft an 80,000 foot vision of every area of your life.

Doug Smith ([05:13](#)):

And, and once you have that vision, that's what's really gonna give you a foundation and set the tone for you setting your annual goals, which I'll talk about in a second. So you, I really wanna encourage you to have a life plan. And for those who are listening who may have a life plan, once you have one, you review it every year. And so I'll share this in a minute, but a, a few weeks ago was the end of December and I finished my year end review. And at the end of my year end review, I always look to set goals for the next year. And I always start by reviewing my life plan. Do I, am I still focus? Is the vision still the same for them in my life? Do I need to make any changes to my life plan? But I review it to remind me what's really, really important.

Doug Smith ([05:49](#)):

And then once you have a life plan, then you can actually set your annual goals. And what I encourage you to do for your annual goals is take take each area of your life and basically say, Hey, at the end of this year, looking back, what do I want to be able to look back on and say that I accomplished? That'll make me happy with my progress for the year? And you do that in every single area of, of your life. And I would encourage you to have one or two goals in each area of your life, cuz you don't want to get

overwhelmed by 500 goals, but they should. They should basically help you take steps forward towards reaching your goal of your life plan. So what steps can I take this year in my marriage? What steps can I take with my children?

Doug Smith ([06:28](#)):

What steps can I take in my finances? What steps can I take in my career that'll get me closer to that end that I have in my life plan? You set annual goals and also with annual goals. Just for fun, I did a lesson a few episodes back on bucket lists and I do believe that everyone needs a bucket list, but you should also have bucket list goals every year. You know, what items on your bucket list can you actually cross off? Be intentional. Cuz sometimes people have things on their bucket list and then they never review it again or they don't plan to make them happen. Your bucket list won't happen by accident. It has to happen intentionally. So I always set bucket list goals with my annual goals as well. So I am, I have experiences and things that I want to do and look forward to, so make sure that's a part of your annual goal setting process.

Doug Smith ([07:10](#)):

Now I also encourage you with your annual goals to write them out weekly. And it's just a way to keep them fresh on your mind and keep them in front of you. So I have a goal journal that every week, even if it's the same goals from the previous week, it's the habit of writing and keeping those goals in front of me that is so important. So I just always am having my top goals in front of me. So that's how I set my annual goals. And then I break down my annual goals into quarterly goals. And this is where we start to get really, really practical, okay, I have what I wanna accomplish in an entire year. What steps do I need to take in the next 90 days to help me make progress towards those annual goals? And you do the exact same thing, okay, this quarter, here's what I wanna accomplish in my marriage, here's what I wanna accomplish in my finances, here's what I wanna accomplish physically in my health, et cetera.

Doug Smith ([07:56](#)):

And you set 90 day goals. And at the end of every 90 days, what I would encourage you to do is have a quarterly review. And a quarterly review is just a time where you look back on the last 90 days and review it. Hey, what, what progress did I make? Did I hit my quarterly goals? Did I do what I wanted to do in the last 90 days? If I did, great, celebrate. If I didn't, hey, what held me back? Why didn't I accomplish that? Celebrate what you did accomplish and learn from what you didn't accomplish. And then you just simply set the next quarter's goals. And if you'll live in 90 day increments like that, I think it'll make a dramatic difference in the results that you'll see, uh, in executing on your goals. So again, we set a life plan from our life plan, we create annual goals from our annual goals, we break them into quarterly goals, and then from quarterly goals, we break them into daily execution.

Doug Smith ([08:46](#)):

And so the best tool that I have found for this is the full focus planner. And this is a tool that Michael Haya created. Uh, again, it's called the Full Focus Planner. If you just Google it, we'll put a link in the show notes as well. You can find these. For years I tried electronic to-do lists and apps and I basically tried every system there was. I've been using Michael Hyatt's full focus planner now for five years and it's made a dramatic difference in my productivity. But in your full focus planner, you actually write out your quarterly goals, and then every day you write out a to-do list and you have to name your top three priorities. And then at the end of every week you do a weekly review and you basically say, okay, what, what did I, what are my priorities for the upcoming week?

Doug Smith ([09:27](#)):

What did I miss last week that I need to put on this week's agenda? And what are my priorities for the week? So again, when it comes to daily execution, this really, really helps you. So again, life plan annual goals, quarterly goals with a quarterly review, and then weekly execute execution by using the full focus planner or some productivity app that'll really, really help you. And then the last routine that I have when it comes to annual goals is my year end review. If you know me or listened to the podcast for any period of time, you know that I am, I absolutely love, love, love my year end review process. In fact, a few episodes back, if you're interested, I did an entire lesson on how to do a year-end review and we provide a template for you and it's not too late to do it for the previous year.

Doug Smith ([10:10](#)):

So I really encourage you to go back and listen to that and do a year-end review. But it's really just the time to intentionally extract all the lessons that you can from your entire year, from your journal, your calendar, your goals, et cetera. You know, John Maxwell said that the, the best teacher is an experience, the best teacher is evaluated experience. And so it gives you an opportunity to evaluate the year you just live so you can better prepare for the following year. So those are my annual routines around goal setting. I hope that helped you. What I want to dive into next is my daily agenda. You know, one thing when I, when I talk to leaders or see a leader that's living a great life, I always wonder like, what does your day look like? Like what, what does your daily agenda? Cuz I read a book when in 2003 that dramatically changed my life by John Maxwell.

Doug Smith ([10:55](#)):

You'll hear his name a lot. Um, he wrote a book called Today Matters Today Matters. It's still one of my favorite books of all time. And it taught me the importance of today. And the whole premise of the book is this, John just said, the secret of your success is found in your daily agenda. The secret of your success is found in your daily agenda. It's what you do every day. So I am always curious about leaders' daily agenda. So I thought I would share mine with you. And here's my daily agenda in general. Every day I wake up at 5:00 AM and for me, I, I quit drinking coffee two years ago. Unfortunately, I do miss it and I drink tea, but I throw tea on and that first hour of my day is all about personal growth. And so I have my devotions and I spend time with God in prayer and in worship and I read the word.

Doug Smith ([11:43](#)):

And then people always ask me how I read so many books. I'm usually reading two or three books at a time and I basically just commit to a chapter a day. You'll be shocked how much you can read in the course of a year if you'll just read a chapter a day, uh, in a book. But that first hour is all about personal growth. The second hour of my day is, is all about working out. So, uh, I try to work out six or seven days a week. That would include breast day, like with yoga and things like that. But in general, fitness is really, really important to me. And so every day I work out and then basically the hour after my workout, I get the kids ready and get them off to school. And then basically I go to work. And as far as my execution, as far as work is concerned, I really work through the full focus planner.

Doug Smith ([12:23](#)):

I mean, that drives my day and that drives my week. I certainly have appointments, but I know my top three priorities for the day. I know the major things that I want to get done. And if I can get those top three priorities done every single day, I'm gonna make a ton of progress for my goals, uh, both at work and at home. But then I have my workout, my work day, and then I basically go home. We try to have

dinner every night as a family. That's really important to us. And so Laura and I usually, uh, one of us are cooking, so we cook dinner, we have family time until the kids go to bed around eight 30 or nine o'clock. And then after that, if we're not passed out in our bed, uh, Lauren and I try to stay up and just talk and just have time together and then we go to bed.

Doug Smith ([13:02](#)):

So that's, that's our daily agenda. Very, very simple. But uh, maybe that'll help you cuz I think routines are very, very important. And so if you don't have some sort of routine that's pretty consistent in your daily agenda, I really encourage you to think through what would an ideal daily agenda look like for you? I can't answer that, but you need to figure out what that looks like for you. So that's my daily agenda. And then the last thing I wanna end the lesson with is just sharing with you different habits that I have in each area of my life that I thought would be helpful. The first area I wanted to share about is just personal growth. Uh, I, I've mentioned earlier that I've been growing intentionally for 18 years in my life. And so I, I'm obsessed with personal growth. I loved it.

Doug Smith ([13:41](#)):

It's a passion of mine. And so here's some things that I do to, to grow on a daily basis. One, and again, this isn't every day, but I'm in a part of, uh, I'm a part of, uh, several mastermind groups and I say it all the time to the biggest source of growth in my life has been mastermind groups. And they're just groups of six or 12 leaders that meet on a consistent basis for at least one year in order to hold each other accountable and to do life together. And being a part of a group where you have access to, you know, 12 or 13 other leaders minds, networks, advice, et cetera, has been so, so beneficial. And we say it all the time at all three, that we want every leader in a, in a mastermind group to be fully known, fully loved, and fully challenged.

Doug Smith ([14:23](#)):

What does that mean? Fully known? We want you, we want our leaders in mastermind groups to have a place where they can fully be themselves and share what they're going through, the highs and the lows. And they'll be fully loved. They'll be loved right where they're at, regardless of what they're going through. But the third and really, really important is also fully challenged. I tell people all the time, sometimes we, we want a pat on the back and a hug, but what we need is a slap in the face. And if you have the right mastermind around you, you'll have people that do all three of those, those things, and they'll greatly enrich your life. So if you don't have a mastermind group, really encourage you to do that for your personal growth. Second thing I do is I listen to podcasts all the time.

Doug Smith ([14:58](#)):

I'm fortunate, well, some people may think this is unfortunate. I have a about a 30 minute commute every day. So that's about an hour of car time every day. And I usually fill that by listening to podcasts. So every day there's an additional hour of growth. For me listening to podcasts, I read books every day. I mentioned that already. I try to read a chapter a day. I do learning lunches. This is huge. So an area specifically voca like vocationally for my career, I try to find people who are doing things 10 times better than I'm doing, uh, in my role and basically set up half hour to an hour meetings with them and I just pepper them with questions and say, Hey, help me better. How do you guys do this? How do you guys do this? And that always keeps me forward thinking and lets me see things at a much bigger level.

Doug Smith ([15:40](#)):

And it has certainly helped me go further faster in my career. So if you don't set up consistent learning lunches, I really encourage you to do that. Um, watching YouTube videos, I try to find different growth experiences every year. So usually that's going to conferences or joining cohorts or being a part of collaborative, um, always trying to do that, asking for feedback. Highly overrated or underrated, uh, way to get to, to grow. Personally, I'm always asking for feedback. In fact, I've actually been criticized that I ask for feedback too much. Um, but I'm always, Hey, is there anything you see in my, in my life? What, where can I get better? Where can I get better? And, uh, that's been, if you can find a few people who will be brutally honest with you and give you real feedback, it'll change everything for you. So always ask for feedback.

Doug Smith ([16:24](#)):

Journaling's really big for me. Uh, I've done podcasts in the past on my journaling process, but if you don't journal, you're missing out for a huge opportunity for growth. And I already mentioned I do my year end reviews and then quarterly reviews as well. So I'm always reviewing my, my past pro uh, progress and then dreaming about future progress. So those are some things in the area of personal growth that I do. And again, I tell people all the time, one of my favorite quotes about growth is, growth equals happiness. If you show me a growing marriage, I'll show you a happy marriage. If you show me a growing organization, I'll show you a happy organization. If you wanna be happy, be a growing person. The second area that I wanna share some habits in is family. Here's just some of our family habits that are helpful.

Doug Smith ([17:06](#)):

We have a weekly family team meeting. This is huge. Every weekend Laura and I meet and we discuss, we go over our calendar, we meal plan for the week, we talk about upcoming things in the calendar. We go through our finances and we really also talk about, Hey, how can I be a better husband? How can you be a better wife? Uh, how can we be better parents to our kids? How do we need to change and adapt? And just imagine if you had those conversations on a weekly basis, really, really helpful for the growth of your marriage and family. So, weekly family team meetings, we have family dinners. I mentioned earlier that we want to have family every, we try to have dinner every night as a family. Really, really important to have that time together around the dinner table. Really sacred to us.

Doug Smith ([17:45](#)):

And then something we implemented around about two years ago was having a weekly Sabbath. And this is just a day for us. It starts Saturday night and ends Sunday night. It's a 24 hour period, but it's a time. We're basically as much as we can, we don't do any work or anything related to work. We just try to have fun and spend time together. And you might say, well, what does that look like? Well, we usually have a Sabbath meal and we try to make this a little bit more special than just a family dinner throughout the week. And so, we'll actually a lot of times we'll set the table or put out nice, um, dishes and silverware, China, et cetera, and try to make it a little bit of a different meal than the other meals of the week. And we like candles for that as well.

Doug Smith ([18:25](#)):

And then after our Sabbath dinner, I usually grab my Bible and, and just share some kind of lesson. And the way I share lessons with our kids is I really think through for Laura and I, Hey, what values do we want our kids to have? Or what, what, what do we think they need taught this week? And then we're just trying to find a biblical example of that and then teach that. And then we have discussions around

that. And, uh, that's been really, really awesome and it's been great to see our kids react to that, which has been great. Then after dinner, we usually do movie and dessert, which is a lot of fun. And again, we just try to spend time resting and really we just spend time planning the next day. What could we do that would just be so much fun? Do you guys want to go to this place or that place?

Doug Smith ([19:01](#)):

And we just try to make it as fun as possible. So those are some family habits. Physically. I mentioned that I love fitness. Um, I tell people all the time that with fitness, the best workout is the one that you'll actually do. So that, that could really, really help you. Um, if you have struggled with fitness in the past, it may just be because you haven't found something that you love, love, love. For me, I love working out at home. I love doing Beachbody workouts or, uh, riding the Peloton or running. So for me, I don't like going to the gym or CrossFit or any of these things. Um, for me, I want to get it done quickly and at home and have really enjoyed being told what to do through programs such as Beachbody, Peloton, um, et cetera. Uh, other quote I just thought I would share when it comes to, to physical fitness and health is Tony Robbins said this and it really impacted me, but when it comes to nutrition, he said nothing.

Doug Smith ([19:48](#)):

Uh, not nothing tastes as good as fit, feels. Nothing tastes as good as fit feels. And that's just a constant reminder to me when I want to eat something I shouldn't eat, Hey, this is not gonna taste as good as it will me feeling fit. So I hope that those quotes inspire you. As far as my routines and habits, when it comes to, to physical fitness, I had mentioned I try to work out six to seven days a week. Uh, right now I'm doing a hybrid of Beach Bodies program, six weeks of the work and Body Beast, two great workouts, but usually I try to do, uh, three or four days of lifting, two or three days of cardio and, and then usually a day of yoga. And that's pretty much what my routine looks like there. Something I've been implementing over the past few months that I've actually really enjoyed is, uh, every morning I also take three, uh, at the end of my shower, I take a three minute cold shower, which is crazy at first.

Doug Smith ([20:40](#)):

Um, but I have noticed it made a difference. And if you wanna study, you can just research, uh, the benefits of taking cold showers. A lot of research out there. Uh, I've been experimenting over the last month with intermittent fasting so far. I'm seeing really great results, uh, in a lot of areas. So that's something I'm experimenting with. I also have accountability built in. Uh, me and my friend tj, if you're listening to this, shout out to tj, but we text each other every day. Hey, here's my workout of the day. What was yours? If we didn't work out, we tell them why. And we just try to hold each other accountable. That's been really, really helpful. And then I also try to have some kind of annual challenge. And so that could be, Hey, I wanna run a marathon this year. Hey, I want to do a, a triathlon no matter what it is.

Doug Smith ([21:18](#)):

Try to have some kind of annual challenge, uh, each year, and I think that'll really help. So that's physical fitness. Then when it comes to finances, um, I've shared on this before, but you need to have a vision and a plan for your finances for a long time. And still, we love Dave Ramsey and we'd encourage you to go through Financial Peace University. Uh, huge, huge, huge. And it'll really give you a vision for your finances long term. And then secondly, I would encourage you if this is a habit for us, we got a financial advisor. Shout out to Ryan, what was Zach out there? And, uh, we meet with him twice a year and it's

having a financial coach in your corner. And that's been extremely helpful for us and we're very, very grateful. But I really encourage you to have the habit of meeting with a financial advisor.

Doug Smith ([21:57](#)):

We review our finances weekly as a part of our family team meeting. That's been great. And then lastly, uh, when it comes to generosity, we've been consistently giving basically our, our whole wives, um, have been giving at least 10% of our income away, if not more every year. And we've been really just trying to pray through getting stretched on the generosity front. So, hey, above 10%, what else could we give? Could we get to 20% one day? Could we get to, you know, this extreme? But Rick Warren gives 90% of his income away. Like, that's pretty amazing. What if we could be in a position where we're that generous? So generosity is a habit in our household work. As far as work habits, um, I love, love, love the EEO s operating system from a book called tra, um, from a guy named Gino Wickman.

Doug Smith ([22:40](#)):

Gino Wickman wrote a book called Traction. That's an absolute game changer and it really helps you think through how to run an organization and they give you the systems that you actually need to run the organization. So if you've never read traction and you're looking for a way to get a better handle on leading your organization, really encourage you to go through that. I use most of their systems, which again, I won't go through necessarily, uh, on this podcast. Go through the book Traction. Uh, I do weekly one-on-ones with all my direct reports. This is really important to me. Uh, on the relational side, I think it's really important. On the work accountability side, I think it's really important and, uh, I just think those meetings are so important. We also do quarterly retreats with our teams. So every 90 days, similar to the quarterly reviews that we do personally that I shared, uh, we also do that with our teams.

Doug Smith ([23:23](#)):

So our teams set quarterly goals and every quarter we review, Hey, what was the last quarter like, what is the quarter headed look like? And what issues are holding us back from achieving our goals? So those quarterly retreats have been huge. And then annual planning. Every single year we do a two day retreat and we just try to plan our year, and that's been beneficial as well. And then the last se, uh, section that I'll share as far as habits are concerned is spiritual life. And, uh, for me, having a Bible reading plan is absolutely huge as a habit right now, probably the best one I've gone through. And, uh, I'll include a link in the show notes is an app called Mission one 19. And you go through the Bible in 93 weeks and there's a reading section each day, but then there's a 10 minute, um, devotion audio, uh, from a pastor named John Soaper.

Doug Smith ([24:07](#)):

Really, really insightful. Comes with notes every day. It's awesome, awesome. So I encourage you to check that out. Prayer and fasting is a consistent habit in my life. And then I already mentioned, uh, giving and generosity. And so a lot was covered in those few minutes that we've been together. And again, hopefully you found one or two habits, systems or routines that you can start to implement in your life to have a great year. As I mentioned, if you have any questions about this or if you have a system that you think would, uh, be better than one that I shared, please let me know. I'm always looking to grow. And I really do hope that 2023 is the best year of your life. It's an honor to be involved with your life. Thank you for listening to the podcast and if there's anything I can ever do to help you grow and develop or help you in life, please let me know.

Doug Smith ([24:48](#)):

I'd love to help you any way I can. And, uh, I'll talk to you next episode. Hey, leader, thank you so much for listening to my lesson on the habits, systems and routines that you need in your life to have the best year ever. I really do hope it added value to your life, and I hope that you'll be able to implement one or two of them. And I also hope you have the best year ever, and you can find links to everything that I discussed in the show notes l3leadership.org/353. Well, leaders, it's a brand new year, and I tell you every episode that if you want to tenax your growth this year, you need to either launch or join an L3 leadership mastermind group. Mastermind groups have been the greatest source of growth in my life over the last seven years.

Doug Smith ([25:23](#)):

And if you don't know what they are, they're just simply groups of six to 12 leaders that meet together on a consistent basis to help each other grow, hold each other accountable and to do life together. So if you're interested in learning more about launching or joining a group, go to [L3leadership.org/masterminds](https://l3leadership.org/masterminds). And as always, I like to end every episode with a quote and I'll quote Simon Sinek today. He said this, he said, the joy of leadership comes from seeing others achieve more than they thought they were capable of. I love that. And that is so true. Well, leaders, we say it to every episode, Lauren, I love you. We believe in you. And don't quit. Keep leading the world desperately needs your leadership. We'll talk to you next episode.