



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

S E R I E S

THE NUTSHELL OF ESSENTIALISM

By Greg McKeown
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The Essentialist — Essentialism is about making the wisest possible investment of your time and energy in order to operate at your highest point of contribution by doing only what is essential.

CHOOSE — When we surrender our right to choose, we give others not just the power but also the explicit permission to choose for us.

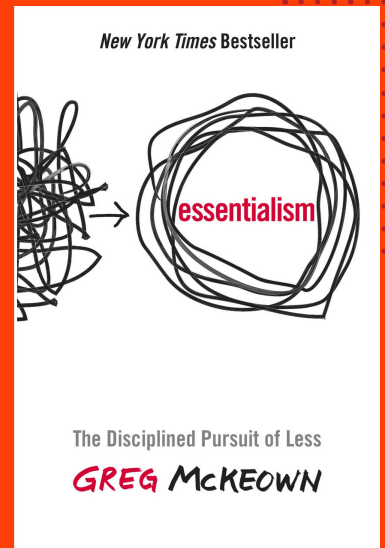
DISCERN — Many capable people are kept from getting to the next level of contribution because they can't let go of the belief that everything is important.

TRADE-OFF — By definition, a trade-off involves two things we want. But as much as we'd like to, we simply cannot have it all.

ESCAPE — We need to create space to escape in order to discern the essential few from the trivial many.

LOOK — It isn't enough to know the who, what, when, and where; you have to understand what it means. And why it matters.

PLAY — Studies show play has the power to significantly improve everything from personal health to relationships to education and much more.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Greg McKeown writes and speaks on living and leading as an Essentialist.

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SLEEP — Essentialists see sleep as necessary for operating at high levels of contribution more of the time. Sleeping less does not mean achieving more.

SELECT — If we feel total conviction to do something, then we say yes. Anything less gets a thumbs down. If it isn't a clear yes, then it's a clear no.

CLARIFY — How do we achieve clarity of purpose? Make the big decision and then all subsequent decisions come into better focus.

DARE — We need the courage to say no to the non-essential. Why is it hard? We are unclear about what is nonessential. And we fear social awkwardness.

UNCOMMIT — It's natural not to want to let go of what we wasted on a bad choice, but when we don't, we doom ourselves to keep wasting more.

EDIT — Making the choice to eliminate something good can be painful, but it gives us room for something better.

LIMIT — If you don't set boundaries—there won't be any. Boundaries protect your time from being hijacked.

BUFFER — No one knows what will happen. Give yourself some wiggle room by building in buffers to reduce friction caused by the unexpected.

SUBTRACT — First, be clear about your goal—your essential intent. Then identify all the obstacles standing between you and completing your goal.

PROGRESS — When we start small and reward progress, we end up achieving more than when we set big, lofty, and often impossible goals.

FLOW — Routine is one of the most powerful tools for removing obstacles. Without routine, the pull of nonessential distractions will overpower us.

FOCUS — Every second spent worrying about a past or future moment distracts us from what is important in the here and now.

BE — Whatever decision or challenge or crossroads you face in your life, simply ask yourself, "What is essential?" Eliminate everything else.