

PRIMAL VIRTUES FOR THE MODERN MAN

FOCUS QUESTIONS & CHALLENGES

INSTRUCTIONS

- Each Virtue includes focus questions and a physical challenge. The focus questions are to be used with a group of men. The physical challenges are difficult. Do not take them lightly. Why have I included them? What's the point? If you want to grow in mental toughness, fortitude, and rugged discipline you must start with the body. The mind & spirit are housed in the body. It will be almost impossible to tap into your undomesticated side without strengthening the body in some capacity through voluntary exposure to physical duress. You will be tempted to quit. Don't.
- Build yourself up until you have completed all of them. Report back to the group with your experience. You are welcome to do them together as well.
- *No man is more unhappy than he who never faces adversity for he is not permitted to prove himself”*

- Seneca

DISCLAIMER

The risk of serious injury and/or death from the activities involved may include, without limitation, the following: (i) drowning; (ii) near-drowning; (iii) sprains; (iv) strains; (v) fractures; (vi) heat and cold injuries, including burns, heat-related illness and hypothermia; (vii) over-use syndrome; (viii) (ix) animal bites and/or stings; (x) contact with poisonous plants, falling from heights; (xi) heart attack; (xii) diseases from exposure to fecal contaminated water or slurry; (xiii) permanent paralysis; and/or (xiv) death.

You are NOT required to participate in the following challenges (although you will reap the benefit of accomplishment and deep satisfaction if you do). You are participating on your own accord without the knowledge or assistance of Jonathan Rios. These challenges are suggestions. Consult with your primary care physician before you begin.

Respectfully,

Jonathan Rios

VIRTUE 1

1) In your own words, how would you define what it means to be an undomesticated primal man? Ask yourself... Where have I become too conformed to cultural norms? Where am I too domesticated? Am I being too passive with my time? Relationships? Career? Spiritual disciplines? Health? Marriage? Get specific.

2) Where have you allowed the opinions of men to trump the opinions of God? Where are you conforming to culture instead of to Christ? (Consider your associations, lifestyle, & habits).

VIRTUE 1 continued

3) Primal men do not live for the crowd's approval. They reverence God. They seek his approval recognizing how fickle the crowd can be. We often conform to the cultural pressures of the day because we want to appear empathetic, kind, and "loving" but there is a fine line between striving to be a loving neighbor and violating personal convictions & biblical truth. Conformity can be defined as: a type of social influence involving a change in belief or behavior in order to fit in with a group. This change is in response to real or imagined group pressure.

Ask the Holy Spirit, "Is there any part of my life that is out of alignment"? Ask a close friend the same question.

Meditative Scriptures

“For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ”- Gal 1:10

“Stop imitating the ideals and opinions of the culture around you but be inwardly transformed by the Holy Spirit through a total reformation of how you think.”- Romans 12:2 TPT

CHALLENGE 1

Take 10 days and get back in touch with your rugged side. Begin with 10 consecutive days of cold showers as well as 10 days of consecutive hard exercise in nature.

10 days of “Rejection inoculation” (See next slide). Get out of the comfort zone voluntarily. The purpose behind these exercises is to desensitize you to rejection. To slowly build your resilience and help you tap into your courage. Courage is like a muscle that must be exercised or it will begin to atrophy.

REJECTION INOCULATION

- Ask a stranger for 1 dollar
- Ask a stranger for a cigarette
- Sing a song louder than normal at the mall or a populated area
- Send an email with typos, don't apologize
- Avoid texting someone back for 24hrs. Again use typos.
- Sit in the front row at a church service or public gathering
- Raise hands during a worship service/jump/dance around
- Ask someone out on a date
- Post a video on social media about something you believe in
- Voice an opinion on social media
- Wear an outfit you hate to the mall or somewhere public
- Yell out the "time" in a crowded area
- Go into a grocery store, ask if they sell any small pets
- Walk into a gas station barefoot or with no shirt on
- Release your art (make it public)
- Blast any song on your car radio at a stop light while singing it loudly with the windows down
- Share your beliefs about the afterlife with a stranger
- Walk into a goodwill and ask if they have any free giveaways
- Ask a stranger for directions
- Ask someone you are attracted to for directions
- Attend an AA/NA meeting alone
- Go watch a movie alone, ask for free popcorn or soda

Virtue 2

1. Respond to the following quote “*There are malevolent forces desiring to neuter, kill, and destroy you and that which you love*”. Agree? Disagree? Review the following scriptures with the group. What stands out?
 - “Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. 9 Stand firm against him and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are.”- 1 Peter 5:8
 - “And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man *deceive* you.”- Matthew 24:4
2. (Apathy, fear, deception, greed, ego, cowardice) Share an instance in your own life where you have fallen victim to these enemies. Are you currently in a battle now? Share.

Virtue 2 continued

3. Discuss the quote “*The fear of God is the spiritual chiropractic adjustment that places all other fears in their rightful place*”. What does this mean?

4. Memorize the quote by Plato “*Courage is knowing what not to fear*”. Unpack this statement as a group. Contrast the quote with the following verse.

- *The LORD Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread. - Isaiah 8:13*

5. In your own words, describe and define the machismo narrative. What were you taught growing up about the role of a man in the following categories: Sex, Money, Authority, Performance?

6. In your own words, describe and define the gender cancellation narrative. Have you experienced pressure to conform to or celebrate popular cultural trends in the workplace? School? Social media? Among friends & family? Share with the group.

CHALLENGE 2

Complete one of the following:

- 1) Run 6 consecutive miles
- 2) Complete a MURPH: *{One-mile run, followed by 100 pullups, 200 pushups, and 300 squats, followed by another one-mile run.—it's named for Lt. Michael P. Murphy, a Navy SEAL killed in action in 2005}*
- 3) Swim 300 meters in a body of water

Virtue 3

- 1) Define decadence in your own words. Identify where you are seeing decadence in culture. Discuss as a group.
- 2) “Masculinity at it’s core is the opposite of childhood”. Agree? Disagree?
- 3) Unpack the Spartan Warrior creed “He who sweats most in training bleeds least in battle”.
- 4) Honestly assess yourself in the following four categories. Are you currently challenged: PHYSICALLY? VOCATIONALLY? PSYCHOLOGICALLY? SPIRITUALLY? Share with the group. Where do you need to step up your game?

“What man actually needs is not a tensionless state but rather the striving and struggling for some goal worthy of him. What he needs is not the discharge of tension at any cost, but the call of a potential meaning waiting to be fulfilled by him.”- Victor Frankl (Holocaust survivor & psychiatrist)

CHALLENGE 3

Execution: 1) Implement a 7-day intermittent fasting challenge.

Practice fasting food for 16 hours a day. Only eat for 8 hours.

(Example: Stop eating at 8pm and eat again at 12pm the following day.) Try eating twice as many vegetables & fruit as you normally eat.

Make sure to partner up with someone. Let them know what you are doing. Allow them to hold you accountable.

2) Get up 30 minutes earlier than usual. Get creative and spend time listening to God. Read your bible. Pray in the woods. Worship. Journal.

Get silent. You are stepping up your discipline game. This is what warriors do.

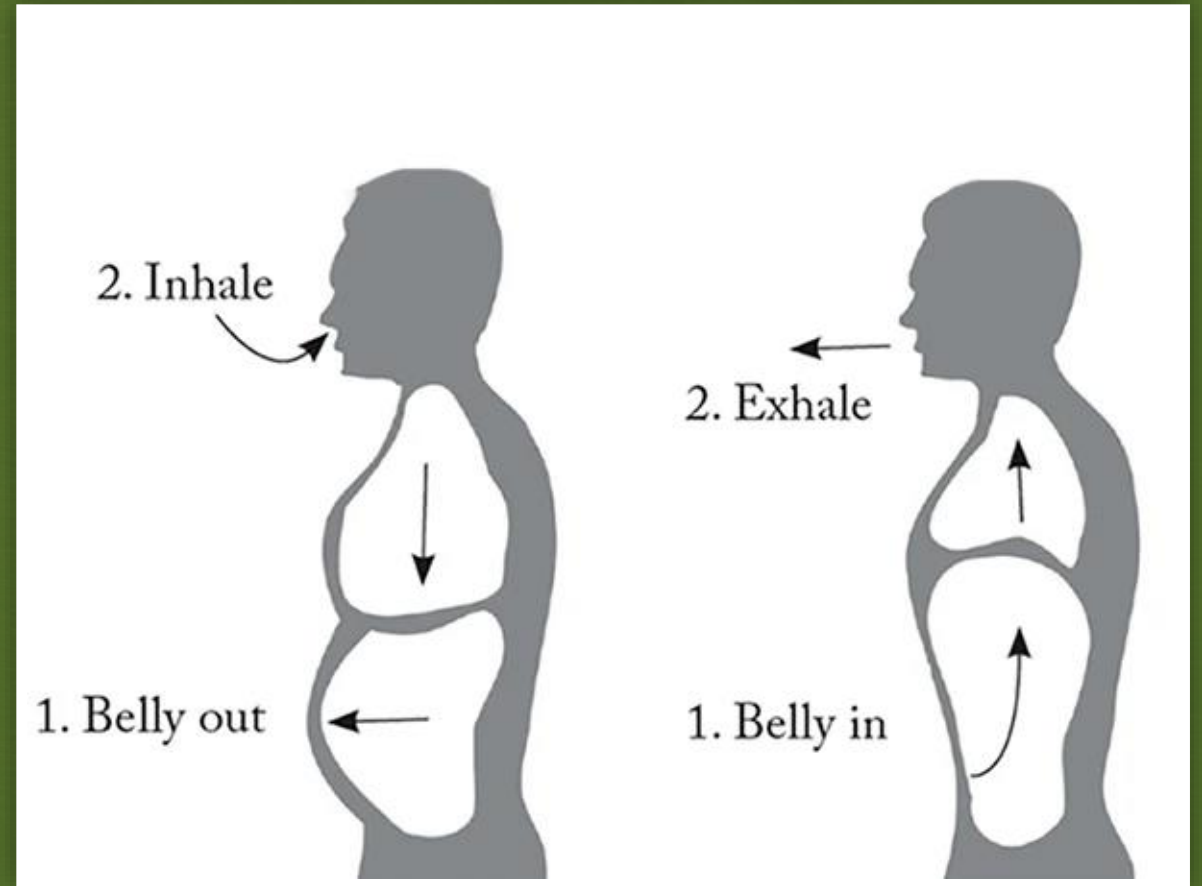
Virtue 4

1. Review the story at the beginning of virtue 4. Discuss the quote “To neglect the day of small things is to delay or prevent your ultimate promotion”.
2. Where are you neglecting the small things? Cutting corners at work? Apathetic towards your physical and mental health? Growing cold & indifferent to spiritual matters while consuming too much Instagram and Netflix? Despising your current job by showing up late and doing the bare minimum?
3. Consider this...” *Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work*”. -Thomas Edison. We often downplay and belittle meager jobs and circumstances because we don't think they matter. They do. What opportunities are before you today that you are downplaying? We would be wise to heed the advice of this great warrior. “Opportunities multiply as they are seized” -Sun Tzu (Art of War)
4. Meditate on the following scriptures:
 - “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters”. Col 3:23
 - “Whoever can be trusted with little can also be trusted with much”. Luke 16:10

CHALLENGE 4

1) Implement a 10-day breath training routine. Start with the **tactical breath**. Inhale for 4 seconds through the nostrils, exhale for 8 seconds from the mouth. Breathe deeply into your belly triggering the diaphragm. Do 10 cycles and then move into a 30 second breath hold. Do another 10 cycles then hold your breath for 1 minute. Do another 10 cycles then hold your breath for 1.5 minutes.

2) Find a local trail in nature. Hike 10 consecutive miles with a ruck sack (backpack) on. Choose your own weight.



Virtue 5

1. How might identifying as a victim bring about a boost in social “status”? Where in culture are you seeing this?
2. How are you going to “play the hand you’ve been given”? List and share (3) difficulties or “disadvantages” you have faced. List & share (3) advantages & gifts you have been given.
3. Honestly assess your “performance” in the following areas: Finances- Eating- Exercise- Work Ethic- Cleanliness- Sleep routine- Personal development- Spiritual Disciplines.
 - (Use a Likert scale 0---10) Share with one other person & commit to tackle at least one discipline with massive action this week.
 - Quote: “Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning”. - Dallas Willard
4. Meditative scriptures:
 - “Go to the ant your sluggard, consider her ways & be wise”. Proverbs 6:6
 - “For each one will have to bear his own load”. Galatians 6:5
 - “So then each of us will give an account of himself to God”. Romans 14:12

CHALLENGE 5

Purchase 3 bags of ice (10lbs minimum). Pour them into your bathtub. Take an ice bath for a minimum of 10 minutes. Literally sit in the tub, make sure the water is over your legs. Build up to it if you have to. Repeat at least 3 times over the course of 7 days. You won't die. Get it done.

Virtue 6

1. Discuss the differences between “Drive” & “Motivation”.
2. Review the quote “It is not until we come to the conclusion that we do not require motivation that we can begin to make consistent progress”. Agree? Disagree?
3. “The world is in desperate need of men who make less announcements & more assertive moves”. Contrast this quote with the words of Sun Tzu. “Make your plans as impenetrable as night, but when you move, fall like a thunderbolt”. Discuss.
4. What plans are you making in “darkness”? Stop announcing, start taking massive action in hiddenness. (Share your plans with at least one other trustworthy person who believes in you).
5. Assertive men know what they want & take assertive action steps to go in that direction. Passive men do not know what they want & take no effective measures to move in a direction. What do you want? Have you written them down? What are the desires God has placed inside of you? Take some time to write them down. Create (3) action steps per objective.

CHALLENGE 6

Complete the Marine Corp PT test. Build up to it until you can successfully complete it. If you are unable, repeat one of the past challenges.

Max out pull-ups & pushups in 2 minutes. (*3 pull-ups minimum & 40 push-ups minimum*)

3 mile run in under (28:20 time limit)

Max out Crunches in 2 minutes (70 minimum)

Virtue 7

1. Unpack the statement “We live in a time where truth has become relative.” What does this mean? Where are you seeing this in culture?
2. “To rail against truth will ultimately destroy you and those around you”. Agree? Disagree? Share an example of a time when you violated “the TRUTH” and suffered for it?
3. The Nihilist (the man who rejects all religions & moral principles) believes life is meaningless. If life is meaningless then there is no need for responsibility. Contrast this with the scripture “The fool has said in his heart there is no God”. Psalm 14:1 Discuss the practical ramifications of a life lived without a “higher purpose” and no sense of personal responsibility.
4. “Some of us have been so busy, distracted by the rat race, so stuck in our pain & fears that we have grown numb to the inner compass, the voice within. It will arise if we get alone, preferably in nature, in humility, with honest pursuit”. Discuss the difficulty found in solitude. Why do you think most men avoid it? Engage the “execution” challenge.

CHALLENGE 7

1) Spend 3 hours of uninterrupted time in nature. Do not bring any technology. Walk a trail. Get to a body of water. Breathe. Take in the smells. Observe the animal life. Pray. Get silent.

2) Take (1) night minimum to be alone in the wild. Go camping. Start a fire. Bring a knife. Eat meat. Get some solitude. Preferably away from other campers. The point is to engage nature, get uncomfortable, rid yourself of technology, and be alone with your thoughts. Take a journal, write down anything that comes up for you.

Virtue 8

1. Where are you stuck in the past? Reliving your regrets? Reliving the glory days? What old identity are you still utilizing? Share.
2. “The path toward self-forgiveness is one of radical acceptance. We accept what we did & seek to make amends where possible through restitution”. Explore the concept of restitution as a group. What does Restitution entail? Give examples.
3. Discuss the words of Carl Jung “making the darkness conscious”. What does that mean? I propose making the darkness conscious could mean digging into those parts of your heart and mind that do not want to be touched. Facing your own demons. Facing down your own resentments, fears, shame. Being willing to do battle with your own lust and pride.
4. Consider attending a 12-step meeting or Celebrate Recovery service to learn more about self-forgiveness and restitution. Sit and listen.
5. Meditative scripture: “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, *not counting men’s trespasses against them.* And He has committed to us the message of *reconciliation*” 2 Corinthians 5:17-19

CHALLENGE 8

Do this one with a buddy. Find a sauna or steam room that reaches at least 110-120 Fahrenheit. Enter for 20-minute blocks of time until you reach 60 minutes. Take 5-minute breaks in between. Hydrate beforehand. Endure the heat for the entire hour. Push yourself. This is a difficult task so get ready. (If you have high BP or other medical conditions clear thing with your doctor first).

Virtue 9

1. Fill in the blanks. “We go to great lengths to avoid looking _____ and thus remain _____.”
2. Explore the concept of “ego” as a group. How does your ego hold you back? Where do you clearly see ego permeating culture? Give examples.
3. Discuss the Latin phrase “Esse Quam Videri”. Share a moment in time when you presented yourself to others as better than you really were.
4. Discuss the following quote: “Every man must humble himself through many humiliations and trials”. Agree? Disagree?
5. Meditative scriptures: “Humble yourself before the Lord and he will exalt you”. James 4:10
“Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” Mathew 23:12
“Pride brings a person low, but the lowly in spirit gain honor”. Proverbs 29:23

CHALLENGE 9

Find a body of water (preferably a pool). Tread water for 30 minutes without taking a break or touching bottom. Make sure you are not alone..... or.....

Find a high school or college track. Run (3) 400 meter sprints (a full lap) in under 85 seconds per lap. Rest between each one for 85 seconds.

Virtue 10

1. Have you taken the time & made the effort to contemplate your own death & legacy? Memorize: “Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom”. Psalm 90:12
2. Write your own eulogy. Share it with at least one other person. Update it annually. (See my sample on the next slide)
 - *Instructions: What would you want to be said at your funeral? How would you like to be remembered? Who will be there? Write your eulogy from the perspective that you have lived a full life, you have pursued your dreams courageously & made your amends. Meditate on these things and write freely. Share with at least one other close friend.*

Sample Eulogy

Jonathan Rios passed into eternity on a cool summer's eve. He was surrounded by his beautiful wife of 70 years, 4 incredible children, & 16 grandchildren. He died in peace. His death is not to be mourned as usual. Why? Because he lived while he was alive! He took risks. He told others how he felt. He lived without regret. He loved deeply. He persevered. He was loyal to his God, his wife, his family, and his friends. He pursued God with intention and zealous expectation. His legacy is strong & his voice will echo for an eternity.

He was known to be a man of his word. His adventurous spirit got him in trouble on occasion but was a guiding compass in his life. He lived with hope. He did not fear death nor did he fear the opinions of men. He was gripped by respect & reverence for God. He did not allow the pressures to conform to take root in his heart & mind. Courage was his foremost virtue. He was driven to live each moment fully. He was quick to own his mistakes, to seek reconciliation, and was known as a man of deep self-control.

He gave no room in his heart to apathy and victim thinking. He lived the warrior ethos believing it better to be a warrior in a garden than a gardener in a war. He chose the hard path, the path of faith, honor, and sacrifice. He did not believe in luck but rather cause and effect. He despised cowardice in himself and others.

He is now not dead but more alive than he has ever been. He is with God & will rejoin his family & friends at the great banqueting table in heaven.

He died a faithful son, father, husband, and friend. This is his legacy. Celebrate him.

"Lord teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom". (Psalms 90:12)

CHALLENGE 10

If you're looking for a final monster challenge to cap things off choose from the following:

- Spartan Race "Beast" (1/2 Marathon with 30 obstacles)
- Enter a "Sprint" Triathlon (600 meter swim, 13 mile bike, 5 k run)
- Run your own 1/2 marathon. Map out the route. Execute.
- Cycle 20 consecutive miles
- Complete the Navy Seal Pre-Screen test:

(PASSING SCORES) 500 yard swim (12:30 minimum), Pushups (50 minimum), Situps (50 minimum), Pullups (10 minimum), 1.5 mile run (10:30 minimum)

(COMPETITIVE SCORES) 500 yard swim (8 min), Pushups 80-100, Sit ups 80-100, Pull ups 15-20, 1.5 mile run 9-10 minutes)

Below are my website, Anxiety masterclass, book, and social media accounts for free video and blog content...

- Website: www.Thriiv.co
- Ecourse- “overcoming anxiety & panic: <https://thriiv-co.teachable.com/>
- Instagram: [Jrios_therapy](https://www.instagram.com/Jrios_therapy)
- Book on Amazon: “Primal Virtues for the Modern man”
<https://www.amazon.com/Primal-Virtues-Modern-Jonathan-Rios/dp/B08VWY9T6T>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100024290341356>

Get it done gentlemen,

Jonathan Rios