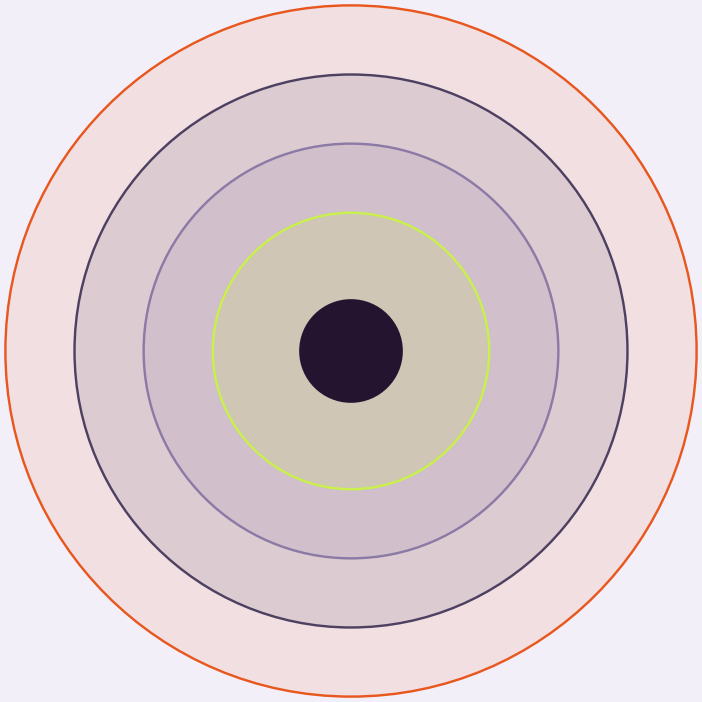


Empty Your Back-pack

A reading of the book by Sam Demma (2022)

1. ACTION BOOK

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is HourLife's reading of Empty Your Backpack, in our own words. It is not a substitute for the book.

BEFORE YOU START 01

The book in a minute

A young speaker's case that the beliefs you carry are mostly other people's, and that small consistent actions outperform every plan you have made.

Below are the 8 ideas HourLife readers vote up most, each in our words with a note on what it asks of you, and then the steps that put them to work.

WHAT READERS KEEP

The takeaways

1

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Most of what is weighing you down was handed to you. You have been carrying opinions you never agreed with.

The backpack image the whole book runs on — the load is real, but almost none of it is yours.

2

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Small consistent actions: the whole operating system of the book, in three words.

Demma's soccer career ended with injuries; he credits a teacher with this idea.

3

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

One bag of litter is nothing. A year of Sundays is something. The difference is only ever showing up again.

PickWaste, the litter clean-up movement Demma is associated with, is the kind of proof the method points to.

4

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

A dream dying is not the end of the story. It is the end of one route to it.

Written by someone whose soccer career ended with injuries; HourLife reads the book as treating setback as re-routing.

5

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Keep the stories that lift you. Put down the ones that only ever made you smaller.

The sorting instruction: not positivity, just an audit of what you agreed to carry.

6

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Motivation is what gets the backpack open. Consistency is what keeps it light.

HourLife's reading: a keynote can start you, but only repetition keeps the load light.

7 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

You are one conversation away from a completely different decade.

HourLife's reading: the argument for saying the useful thing to someone else.

8 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Waiting to be qualified is just carrying the bag longer.

Aimed squarely at young readers, and at anyone who has made 'not yet ready' into a permanent address.

PUT IT TO WORK

Your action book

Do the setup steps once, then keep the habits going. The setup changes your week; the habits keep it changed after the first good one.

The download puts this whole reading and a printable action book in one PDF: the setup checklist, then a page of real calendar days for each habit, starting on the day you choose.

SET UP ONCE

- [ ] List everything in the backpack
- [ ] Mark whose voice each one is in
- [ ] Choose the one action you will repeat
- [ ] Pick the day and put it in the calendar
- [ ] Write the story you are keeping

KEEP UP DAILY

- ◯ Do the one action, on the day, every week
- ◯ Log it in one line
- ◯ Say the useful thing to one person a week

30 days · Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026

Part two, after the reading, prints each of these as a page to fill in by hand.

THE LAST WORD

Before you go

Pick one step from the action book and do it today. An idea from a book starts to count once it changes what one ordinary day looks like.

PART TWO

The action book

Change the setup once, then keep it up. 5 setup actions to do once, and 3 habits to mark each day for 30 days.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026

Print it, or write on it in any PDF app.

SET UP ONCE

The setup checklist

Each of these is done once. Do one a day, and check it off when it is done.

☐ SETUP 1

List everything in the backpack

Ten things you believe about yourself that limit what you attempt.

Write them all, no editing. This is the inventory the rest of the book operates on.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 2

Mark whose voice each one is in

Next to every line, write who said it first.

A coach, a parent, a comment in grade nine. Most of the list will have someone else's name on it, and seeing the names is the intervention.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 3

Choose the one action you will repeat

Not a goal — a repeatable act.

One page, one call, one street, one rep. If it takes longer than fifteen minutes, make it smaller.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 4

Pick the day and put it in the calendar

Pick a fixed day for your action, say Sunday.

Yours needs a fixed slot with a name, because 'when I can' is where consistent actions go to die.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

☐ SETUP 5

Write the story you are keeping

One thing you have done that proves you can do hard things.

Keep it somewhere you will see it on a bad week — the backpack refills, and this is what you replace the weight with.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

DAILY HABIT 1 OF 3

Do the one action, on the day, every week

No streak app, no announcement.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6 ○
7 ○	8 ○	9 ○	10 ○	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 2 OF 3

Log it in one line

Date and what you did.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 3 OF 3

Say the useful thing to one person a week

Make saying the useful thing to others the other half of the habit.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
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December 2026

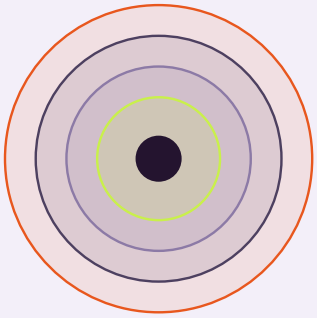
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP



You do not need a bigger plan. You need a smaller action you are willing to repeat.

HOURLIFE DISTILLATION