

How fivebyfive Emerged

A biographical account of the idea, the material, and the method

One voice in many. Can you hear me?

It did not begin as a brand. It did not begin as a business plan. It began the way most honest things begin: with the quiet admission that the maps I had been given did not match the territory I was walking.

For years the work lived under a different title. *I Don't Know... But here is what I have so far*. That phrase was not a marketing line. It was the actual posture of the inquiry. The book was never offered as a set of final answers. It was offered as a record of looking—honestly, imperfectly, and without the protection of formal credentials. The author made no claim to institutional authority. The only claim was that the material had been tested in the laboratory of lived experience and that the reader was free to test it the same way.

That first volume examined the constructs that quietly shape a life: fear, ego, control, judgement, and choice. It treated each of them not as abstract topics but as active machinery. Fear was shown to be a learned relationship with uncertainty rather than a fixed biological fact. Ego appeared as the ongoing construction of a self that must be defended. Control revealed itself as the attempt to force outcomes that cannot be forced. Judgement was described, simply and memorably, as comparison with attitude. Choice stood as the one capacity that remains available even when everything else feels constrained.

The central observation running through the book was quiet but radical: the quality of a life is determined less by the raw events that arrive than by the frames through which those events are interpreted. Reality, in this sense, is not merely encountered. It is constructed. That single insight would later become the ground of everything that followed.

The book also refused the usual hierarchy of knowing. It returned again and again to three questions drawn from Alan Watts: Who am I? What do I desire? What do I know? And it insisted that the only honest starting answer is often “I don’t know.” From that admission, discovery becomes possible. From the opposite posture—certainty that one already possesses the truth—discovery is blocked. This stance would remain the ethical foundation of the later method.

The second volume, *The New Golden Rule*, moved from inquiry into practice. It took the ancient instruction—“Treat others as you would have them treat you”—and added the missing piece that most versions quietly

omit: the self. The refined statement became: Treat yourself and others the way you want to be treated.

The addition is not a call to self-indulgence. It is a call to alignment. If a person reserves their highest standard of kindness, honesty, and respect for certain people while applying a lower standard to themselves, the entire exchange becomes false. The “high gear” reserved for the boss, the elder, or the admired figure is revealed as a performance. The New Golden Rule insists that the highest sustainable standard must first be established toward the self; only then can it be extended outward without hypocrisy. The world, the text observes, functions as a mirror. What is given tends to return.

This principle completed a necessary arc. The first book had dismantled the unexamined constructs. The second book supplied an operable ethical hinge. Together they established two movements that would become permanent features of the later framework: look carefully at what is being constructed, and act from a standard that begins at the core rather than at the periphery.

The third volume, *Battles of Belief*, placed the previous material in a larger context. It examined classic debates between atheists and Christian apologists and then stepped beyond both positions. The deeper claim was that the dualistic contest itself—proof versus disproof, one side versus the other—often remains inside the same limited frame. Beneath the arguments lies a more fundamental choice: Love or fear. The practical tool offered for reducing unnecessary suffering was forgiveness understood as non-judgment: the decision to stop generating stories of error about oneself and others, and thereby to free attention for the present moment.

Across the three books a single pattern kept reappearing. Observe. Question. Remove the unnecessary construction. Locate what remains true at the centre. Act from that place. The books never claimed to deliver final knowledge. They claimed only to provide tools for clearer seeing and more honest living. That claim would become the operating ethic of fivebyfive.

Somewhere in the middle of this long inquiry the radio metaphor arrived and refused to leave. In communications, “five by five” means the signal is both strong and clear—loud and clear. The phrase carries no mysticism. It is a technical report on transmission quality. Yet it mapped with surprising precision onto the work already underway.

A human being, the material suggested, is constantly receiving and transmitting. Noise enters from every direction: inherited beliefs, unresolved fear, defensive ego, the habit of judgement, the urge to control what cannot be controlled. The quality of a life depends, in large part, on

the quality of the signal that remains after the noise is reduced. Clarity is not a luxury. It is the precondition for any choice that is actually free.

From that recognition a five-step process began to take shape. It was never presented as a rigid formula. It was presented as a practical sequence for tuning:

Stop the signal. Interrupt the automatic noise—fear narratives, ego defence, judgement loops—long enough to notice what is actually present.

Set the tone. Establish the internal standard. The New Golden Rule lives here: the highest sustainable level of honesty, kindness, and respect begins with the self.

Pick a station. Choose the frequency. Decide, from the core rather than from reaction, what is worth transmitting and receiving.

Listen. Attend without the usual overlays of interpretation. The present moment becomes usable only when the static is reduced.

Love wins. Return, again and again, to the choice that does not generate further noise. Love, in this usage, is not sentiment. It is the decision to stop feeding fear.

These five movements are not chapters of theory. They are a tuning sequence. They can be practised in a single difficult conversation, in a morning of quiet attention, or across the long arc of a life. The name fivebyfive simply names the desired result: a signal that is strong and clear.

Around the five steps two further ideas settled into place and refused to leave. The first was Core Construction. If the quality of a life is shaped by the frames through which experience is read, then the work begins at the centre. What is truly believed at the core? What is merely inherited, performed, or defended? Core Construction is the patient examination of that centre and the deliberate rebuilding of what no longer serves. Everything else—relationships, work, health practices, spiritual posture—radiates outward from whatever is held there.

The second idea was Framing. Circumstances are real enough in their effects, yet they function as frames around the core. A person who changes the frame without changing the core merely rearranges the furniture. A person who strengthens the core discovers that many frames lose their power to define the picture. The two ideas work together: construct the centre honestly, then notice how the surrounding frames shift in response.

Health, happiness, and healing were never treated as separate departments. They were understood as natural consequences of clearer signal and more honest core construction. Physical practices, mental

quieting, and spiritual attention were not add-ons. They were the ordinary means by which a human being keeps the instrument tuned. Meditation appeared early and remained central—not as an exotic technique but as the simple, repeated decision to stop feeding the noise long enough to hear what remains.

The phrase “A Course in Living” arrived as the natural container for all of it. Not a course in the institutional sense. A self-study guide written by the participant for the participant. The books supply the maps. The five steps supply the daily practice. Coaching, when it occurs, is simply guided application of the same material. Nothing is outsourced. The authority remains with the person doing the living.

This is why the project never settled comfortably into the ordinary categories of life coaching or therapy. It does not promise to fix anyone. It does not claim clinical authority. It offers a framework for seeing more clearly and choosing more deliberately. The usefulness of the framework is measured by one standard only: whether, when tested in ordinary life, it produces less unnecessary suffering and a more honest relationship with oneself and others.

What finally emerged was not a list of topics but a coherent operating approach. The three books had explored the territory. The radio metaphor had supplied the language of signal and clarity. The five steps had organised the daily work. Core Construction and Framing had named the inner architecture. The New Golden Rule had supplied the ethical hinge. Non-judgment had offered the most immediate relief from self-generated noise. Love, understood as the consistent refusal to feed fear, had become the final orientation.

fivebyfive is therefore best understood as a practical method for tuning a human life toward greater clarity. It is executable. It can be practised in the next difficult moment. It does not require belief in any particular metaphysical system, although it is compatible with deep contemplative traditions. It requires only the willingness to look, to choose, to practise, to notice what changes, and to choose again.

The sequence that now sits at the centre of the work is deliberately simple:

Begin with the question: What do I want to come of this?

Look—really look—at what is present.

Choose, based on the core rather than on reaction.

Practise behaving accordingly.

Notice what is different now.

Choose again—all day, every day.

The motto that closes the circle is equally simple: Forever Forward—Nothing Lost. Every honest examination, every deliberate choice, every moment of reduced noise becomes part of the ongoing construction. Nothing useful is discarded. The path is not linear, but it is cumulative.

This is the usefulness of the work. It does not remove difficulty from a life. It changes the relationship to difficulty. It does not supply ready-made answers. It restores the capacity to ask better questions and to act from a clearer centre. In a culture saturated with noise, the ability to produce a signal that is five by five—loud and clear—is not a small gift.

The project continues to refuse the usual professional packaging. It does not present itself as therapy, nor as motivational performance, nor as a proprietary system that must be purchased in order to be understood. The books remain available as the foundational record. The five steps remain available as daily practice. The invitation remains the same one that opened the first volume: examine the material for yourself. Keep what proves useful. Leave the rest.

What began as three separate books of inquiry has cohered into a single, practical Course in Living. The course has no fixed curriculum beyond the willingness to stop the unnecessary signal, set an honest tone, choose a clear station, listen without the usual distortions, and return, as often as necessary, to the choice that does not generate further fear. The method is portable. It fits inside an ordinary Tuesday as easily as it fits inside a formal lecture or a quiet morning of attention.

The name fivebyfive is therefore not an arbitrary brand. It is a precise description of the intended result. A life tuned toward clarity. A signal strong enough and clean enough to be useful—to oneself and, by extension, to others. The work does not claim to have invented the underlying principles. It claims only to have gathered them, tested them in lived experience, and arranged them into a form that can be practised rather than merely admired.

In the end the story is straightforward. A long personal inquiry produced three books. The books produced a set of recurring observations about how reality is constructed and how it can be met more honestly. Those observations organised themselves into a five-step tuning process under a name that already meant “loud and clear.” The process proved useful enough, when tested, to become a Course in Living—self-directed, provisional, and available to anyone willing to begin with the only admission that keeps discovery possible: I don’t know... but here is what I have so far.

I am one voice in many.

Can you hear me?

5 by 5

Loud and Clear

Much Love