

# Check In With Yourself

Identity, obsession, and the habit that separates high performers from everyone else.

---

## High performers are not born differently wired.

They do one thing more consistently than everyone else: they check in with themselves. Multiple times a day, against a clear internal standard. This piece examines what that standard is, why obsession is not a character flaw, and how to build the practice.

Tony · FitFiliate · 2025

---

You have felt the vibration. Not literally — that high-alignment, high-energy state that accompanies doing your best work. Serving, creating, contributing. Moving toward something that matters.

And if you have felt that, you have felt the opposite: the heavy, oppressive weight of being out of alignment. Busy, but hollow. Working, but not toward anything that feels right.

These are internal forces — signals from the part of the brain responsible for drive and meaning. The question is whether you pay attention to them or override them with urgency.

## Two Forces That Matter Most

In a long-term study of over 40,000 high performers, two internal attributes showed up with striking consistency: Identity — the personal standard they hold for themselves — and Obsession — the relentless pursuit of what matters to them.

What distinguished these individuals was not simply that they had high standards. It was that they checked in on those standards multiple times a day, every day.

High performers set standards not to be seen as excellent by others, but because they see themselves as excellent. Excellence is not their reputation — it is their identity. That distinction changes the goals they set, the effort they apply, and their willingness to appear unreasonable in pursuit.

## On Obsession

Obsession has earned an unfair reputation. "He's so obsessed" is said dismissively, as though sustained, deep engagement with something important is suspicious.

Passion is considered acceptable. Understandable. The even playing field. But obsession — staying emotionally engaged through the ebb and flow of interest, through the boring stretches, through the failure — that is something else. That is what drives the high performer forward not by choice, but simply as a function of who they are.

To create anything meaningful or innovative, base-level effort is insufficient. Obsession is not a personality flaw. It is the engine.

## Building the Practice

This is not a possession. Identity and obsession are created — the same way energy is created, the same way clarity is created.

Start by knowing your values — not as a philosophical exercise, but as a practical one. Who do you want to be in each familiar situation: at work, at home, in difficulty, in success? Then check in on that, regularly, throughout the day.

Set large goals. People who set goals and self-monitor their progress are 2.5 times more likely to succeed. The larger the goal, the more this holds — because larger goals demand more self-monitoring, more energy, more identity.

Then measure. Define the indicators. Check them. Adjust. Repeat.

### The thing that stops most people

Most people are unwilling to check in because checking in means holding yourself accountable. It is easier to let circumstances carry the blame.

A coach makes this easier — not because they do the work, but because they hold the mirror steady when you are inclined to look away. But the trajectory is always yours.

Set big goals. Measure them. Be obsessed. Check in. Repeat.