

The Baggage Check

Travel Lighter. Lead Better

"The mountain ahead may not be getting steeper. Your backpack may simply be getting heavier."

Introduction

Every successful expedition begins with preparation.

Before setting off, experienced climbers stop to check their backpack. They remove unnecessary weight, organise what they need and make deliberate decisions about what deserves a place on the journey ahead.

Leadership and life are no different, throughout our lives we collect experiences, expectations, responsibilities and beliefs. Some strengthen us, whilst others quietly weigh us down. The challenge is that we often become so accustomed to carrying this weight that we no longer notice it.

The Baggage Check is an opportunity to pause, unpack your backpack and decide what will help you reach your next summit.

Remember:

You cannot always choose the mountain you climb. You can choose what you carry.

How to Use The Baggage Check

Set aside **20 to 30 minutes** in a quiet space where you can reflect without interruption.

Work through each Basecamp in order, answering the questions honestly and without judgement. There are no right or wrong answers. The aim is to increase your awareness of what you are carrying and identify what will best support your journey ahead.

Focus on one or two actions that will have the greatest impact, then revisit The Baggage Check regularly to reflect on how your backpack and your journey, has changed over time.

For deeper reflection, explore the related Aspiration Experts resources recommended throughout this guide and other reflective tools available on our [Resources page](#).

Section Overview

- **Basecamp 1: Open Your Backpack**
Identify the thoughts, emotions and behaviours you are carrying.
- **Basecamp 2: Identify the Heavy Rocks**
Recognise which items have the greatest impact on your energy and leadership.
- **Basecamp 3: Explore the Weight**
Reflect on where your baggage comes from and whether it continues to serve you.
- **Basecamp 4: Sort Your Backpack**
Decide what is essential for your journey and what you are ready to leave behind.
- **Basecamp 5: Repack with Intention**
- Use the choices you've made to prepare for the journey ahead with clear strengths, actions and support.
- **Basecamp 6: Leadership Reflection**
Consider how the baggage you carry influences those around you and identify one positive step forward.

Summit Commitment

Commit to the actions you will take and the changes you want to make before your next climb.

Continue Your Journey

Explore other Aspiration Experts resources to deepen your self-coaching and leadership development.

Basecamp 1: Open Your Backpack

Take a moment to consider what you are carrying today.

Emotional Weight	Leadership Challenges
☐ Stress ☐ Anxiety ☐ Guilt ☐ Anger ☐ Resentment ☐ Grief ☐ Disappointment ☐ Emotional exhaustion Something else:	☐ Decision fatigue ☐ Unclear priorities ☐ Feeling stuck ☐ Lack of confidence ☐ Responsibility overload ☐ Leading through uncertainty Something else:
Thinking Patterns ☐ Self doubt ☐ Imposter feelings ☐ Perfectionism ☐ Fear of failure ☐ Fear of judgement ☐ Limiting beliefs ☐ Overthinking Something else:	Backpack Weight Score <i>How heavy does your backpack feel today?</i> 0 (Very Light) > 10 (Extremely Heavy) Today's score:  _____ /10
Behavioural Habits ☐ Difficulty saying no ☐ Overcommitment ☐ Constant busyness ☐ Trying to please everyone ☐ Avoiding difficult conversations ☐ Carrying other people's problems Something else:	

Basecamp 2: Identify the Heavy Rocks

Most backpacks contain many small items. The greatest challenge often comes from the few heavy rocks we continue to carry.

What are the five heaviest items in your backpack?		
Baggage	Weight (1 - 10)	<i>How long have you carried it?</i>
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		
5)		

Now ask yourself:

- Which one drains the most energy?*
- Which one affects my leadership the most?*
- Which one would make the greatest difference if I left it behind?*

If I could remove only one item today, it would be:

Basecamp 3: Explore the Weight

Before deciding what to carry forward, take time to understand where each burden comes from, how it affects you and whether it still deserves a place in your backpack.

For each heavy item, reflect on the following questions.

- *Where did this come from?*
- *Did I choose to carry it?*
- *Did someone else place it in my backpack?*
- *Is it based on facts or assumptions?*
- *Can I control it?*
- *Can I influence it?*
- *Is it helping or hindering my progress?*
- *What would happen if I decided to put it down?*

**Reflection**

If someone I cared about was carrying this same burden, what advice would I give them?

Basecamp 4: Sort Your Backpack

Awareness creates choice. Having explored what you're carrying, decide what deserves a place in your backpack for the journey ahead and what you are ready to leave behind.

I Choose to Carry Forward:**I Choose to Leave Behind:****Then ask:**

- *Why am I choosing to keep this?*
- *What will become possible if I let this go?*

Basecamp 5: Pack for the Journey Ahead

With your backpack now lighter, consider how you will intentionally prepare for the next stage of your journey. Use the choices you made in Basecamp 4 to shape your next steps.

- *Looking at what you've chosen to carry forward, what strengths will help you most?*
- *How will these strengths support your journey?*
- *Looking at what you've chosen to leave behind, what will you do when those thoughts, habits or behaviours reappear?*
- *What practical action will help you stay true to your choices this week?*
- *Who can support or challenge you as you continue your climb?*

Basecamp 6: Leadership Reflection

The way you carry yourself influences the people around you. Reflect on how travelling lighter and leading with greater intention could shape your relationships, decisions and leadership.

Take a moment to reflect.

- *How is the weight I'm carrying affecting my leadership?*
- *What might my colleagues, team or family notice?*
- *Am I unintentionally asking others to carry some of my baggage?*
- *What would change if I led with a lighter backpack?*
- *What conversation have I been avoiding?*
- *What small step could I take this week?*

Notes:

Summit Commitment

You've reached the summit of this reflection. Before beginning your next journey, take a moment to commit to the choices that will help you travel lighter and lead with greater purpose.

My Summit Commitment

The one piece of baggage I am leaving behind is...

The strength I will rely on most is...

The action I will take within the next seven days is...

The person who will help keep me accountable is...

The difference I hope this will make is...

I will revisit The Baggage Check on:

Closing Commitment

From today, I choose to travel lighter by...

Continue Your Journey

Reaching the summit is not the end of the journey. The insights you've gained through The Baggage Check can become the foundation for lasting change when you continue to reflect, learn and take purposeful action.

Explore Further

If today's reflection highlighted an area you'd like to develop, you may find these [Aspiration Experts](#) resources helpful:

- **Internal Weather Report** – *Build greater emotional awareness and recognise what is influencing your thoughts, feelings and behaviours.*
- **Values Basecamp** – *Reconnect with the values that guide your decisions, actions and leadership.*
- **Route Finder** – *Clarify your direction, identify your priorities and plan your next steps with confidence.*

Ready to Explore More Deeply?

If this guide surfaced something important, left you feeling curious, or highlighted an area where you'd value additional support, we're here to help.

Our coaching conversations provide a confidential space to:

- **Reflect with clarity** – Step back from the day-to-day and explore your challenges from a fresh perspective.
- **Deepen your self-awareness** – Better understand your values, motivations, behaviours and patterns.
- **Challenge limiting beliefs** – Explore new perspectives that unlock greater confidence and potential.
- **Turn insight into meaningful action** – Create practical, achievable steps that lead to lasting change.
- **Lead with greater purpose** – Strengthen your impact by aligning your actions with the leader you aspire to be.

Whether you're beginning your self-coaching journey or looking for personalised coaching support, we'd be delighted to continue the conversation.

Visit www.aspirationexperts.com to explore our coaching services and free self-coaching resources, or contact us to arrange a complimentary **Fireside Chat**.

Travel lighter. Lead with purpose. Keep climbing.