

Essentialism Cheat Sheet

The Disciplined Pursuit of Less by Greg McKeown

What Is Essentialism?

Essentialism isn't about doing more with less—it's about **doing less, but better**.

It's the relentless pursuit of **clarity, focus, and intentional trade-offs** so you can channel your time and energy toward what truly matters.

At its core:

“Only once you give yourself permission to stop trying to do it all, to stop saying yes to everyone, can you make your highest contribution toward the things that really matter.”

Core Principles

1. Choice Is a Responsibility

Not choosing is still a choice. Essentialists take ownership of their time and decisions instead of letting others decide for them.

2. Discern the Vital Few from the Trivial Many

Not everything is equally important. High performers often struggle because *everything feels urgent*. Essentialists step back and ask: *What's the highest point of contribution?*

3. Trade-Offs Are Strategic, Not Sacrificial

You can't have it all or do it all. Essentialists acknowledge this reality and **choose deliberately** what to say yes to—and what to eliminate.

4. Protect the Asset (You!)

Burnout doesn't serve anyone. Sleep, boundaries, and whitespace are not indulgences—they're essential to performance and clarity.

5. Eliminate Nonessentials

Saying no is a skill. Essentialists learn to **say no with grace and purpose**—and to design systems that minimize distraction and friction.

6. Make Execution Effortless

The right routines, habits, and environment make it easier to stay aligned with what matters most.

Essentialism for Property Managers

Property management is *inherently reactive*—but Essentialism helps shift your mindset from firefighter to architect. Here’s how to apply it in your world:

For Your Business:

- **Clarify your “essential intent”** for the quarter: What’s the one thing that would make the biggest impact for residents, investors, or your team?
- Audit your services, tools, and reports: What’s useful—and what’s just noise?

For Your Time:

- **Protect deep work** blocks for leadership, hiring, or strategy—especially when your calendar is jammed with urgencies.
- Set boundaries for availability. Every yes to a spontaneous call is a no to something else.

For Your Team:

- Don’t just do more for them—ask *what only you* can do, and delegate the rest.
- Teach your team how to think, not just what to do. This multiplies capacity.

“The way of the Essentialist means living by design, not by default.”

Questions to Ask Yourself (or Your Team)

- What’s the one thing I’m doing this week that doesn’t need to be done at all?

- Where am I saying yes out of guilt, habit, or fear?
 - What would a “disciplined pursuit of less” look like in my role?
 - How would I structure my week if I could start from scratch?
-

Quick Wins to Try

- Block off 30–60 minutes this week just to think. No agenda—just clarity space.
- Say “let me check my calendar and get back to you” instead of defaulting to yes.
- Eliminate one recurring task or report that doesn’t drive results.
- Identify your top 3 priorities for the month—and share them with your team.