

Embracing One's Finitude - Tool

Inspired by the insights of Oliver Burkeman

Purpose:

Embracing one's finitude – the acceptance of life's inherent boundedness – can improve your resilience and well-being. This reflective tool helps you explore how you relate to it and where areas of growth could be.

How to use it:

For each statement, rate yourself from 1–5:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral / Unsure 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Finitude & Acceptance of Limits	Score
1. I recognise that my time and energy are limited, and I make choices accordingly.	
2. I feel at peace with the fact that I can't do or experience everything in the time I've got.	
3. I consciously let go of goals or commitments that no longer fit this season of my life.	
4. I rarely tell myself that "I'll start living fully later, when things calm down."	
2. Control & Perfectionism	
5. I can tolerate uncertainty without needing to be in control of every detail.	
6. I'm comfortable sharing imperfect work or ideas rather than waiting until they're 'just right.'	
7. I accept that life will always be somewhat messy and incomplete.	
8. I notice when striving for control or perfection is causing me stress or holding back progress, and I moderate my approach.	
3. Focus & Prioritisation	
9. I know what truly matters to me and I make space for it.	
10. I celebrate completed actions (e.g., using a 'done list') rather than fixating only on what is left still to do.	
11. I consciously say "no" to opportunities or activities that don't align with my values.	
12. I regularly step back to reflect and review where my time and attention are going.	
4. Action & Engagement	
13. I prefer to take small, imperfect steps toward what matters to me rather than wait for the time and conditions to always be 'right'.	

14. I notice when my fear of failure is holding me back and take action anyway.	
15. I trust that progress emerges from doing, not from endless planning.	
16. When I feel overwhelmed I focus on the next positive step I can take, however small it is.	
5. Connection & Presence	
17. I allow myself and others to be imperfect and human.	
18. I'm able to find pleasure in the present moment, even amid unfinished tasks or uncertainty.	
19. I am willing to show vulnerability and invite connection rather than hide behind my 'shield'.	
20. I often pause to appreciate and be grateful rather than race toward the next goal.	
Total Score	

Scoring & Reflection

For each theme, total your 4 responses (possible range 4–20 per theme) then reflect using these ranges:

Score Range	Interpretation
16–20	You're living these principles with awareness and ease. Keep deepening them.
11–15	You're developing a healthy relationship with this area. Notice where you might soften or simplify further.
6–10	You may be experiencing tension or resistance. Explore what attitudes, beliefs, or habits could be behind this and how you could develop a more constructive approach.
4–5	You may be resisting, denying, or shying away from the truth of these principles. Explore what attitudes, beliefs, or habits could be causing this and consider options that could help you to develop a more constructive approach, such as journaling and coaching.

Total Score Interpretation:

80–100: You're embracing life's finitude with presence and clarity.

55–79: You're aware of these ideas but may struggle to live them consistently.

<55: You may be caught in control, busyness or perfection cycles — a fertile area for coaching exploration.

Optional Reflection Prompts

- Which themes scored lowest and so indicate possible development areas for you?
- What small changes would raise your lowest individual scores by one point and what would the benefits be?
- What have you learned about yourself from this quiz?

Life coaching can help you explore ways to embrace your finitude and improve your well-being and resilience. Contact Mark Wilkinson of Headspace Coaching+ if you'd like to learn more or would like support for any aspect of your personal and professional development. For useful tools, insights and even recipes dropped in to your inbox from time to time why not subscribe to my Blog?