

52 Weeks

“One principle each week! One reflection each time! A year of basics, balance, and betterment!”

Plastic surgery is rooted in timeless principles. But in our busy routines, even the most important ideas and principles can quietly slip to the back of our minds. This little initiative is a way of bringing them forward again; slowly, mindfully, and without pressure.

Here are 52 principles, one for each week of the year. Not just plastic surgery principles, but ideas that resonate across all branches of medicine. These are gathered and adapted from mentors, books, experiences, and everyday clinical life. One week, one principle, one reflection. A small pause to revise what we already know, and to remind ourselves of what we sometimes forget.

A little revision and reflection every week so that by year's end, we're operating better, thinking clearer, and repeating fewer of last year's mistakes.

Concept & Compilation @ Dr. Nikhil Panse

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Week 1 | Date:

Correct the order of priorities

Decide what matters most. Sound priorities guide safe and effective surgery!

[illegible]

Reflection: Am I prioritizing my surgical decisions correctly : Life before limb, function before form, and safety above all?

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Week 2 | Date:

Aptitude Should Determine Specialization

Choose your field based on skill and temperament, not prestige or popularity!

[illegible]

Reflection: Am I pursuing what I am best suited for, or what seems most admired?

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Week 3 | Date:

Mobilize All Available Resources

Use every skill and tool: Colleagues, technology, literature
to achieve excellence!

[illegible]

Reflection: Who or what can I include in my practise to strengthen patient outcomes?

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Week 4 | Date:

Diagnose Before You Treat

Operate only when the problem is fully understood!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I pause long enough to confirm the true diagnosis before acting?

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Week 5 | Date:

Replace Tissue Losses in Kind

The closer the tissue match, the better the functional and aesthetic outcome!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I merely fill a defect, or reconstruct it with respect for the region's aesthetics, sensibility, and function?

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Week 6 | Date:

Study and Learn Relentlessly

The more you learn, the more you see what remains unseen!

Reflection: What new idea or paper has challenged my
thinking this week?

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Week 7 | Date:

Assess and Analyse Your Outcomes

Objective assessment is the cornerstone of consistent improvement!

[illegible]

Reflection: What recent result could teach me something if I studied it closely?

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Week 8 | Date:

Innovation Begins with Imagination

Creative thinking within anatomical boundaries
propels progress!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I approach every routine case as an opportunity to improve the process and the result?

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Week 9 | Date:

Serve Beyond the Operating Room

Join reconstructive missions or local outreach.
Service magnifies skill!

Reflection: Do I devote some part of my time, skill, or
effort for a social cause?

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Week 10 | Date:

Respect Resource Limitations

Good judgment is knowing when to adapt, not attempt the impractical!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I attempt procedures that exceed the limits of my available resources, infrastructure, or support; and should I sometimes pause or refer instead?

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Week 11 | Date:

Patient First, Always

Every decision should prioritise the patient first!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do my decisions and actions consistently place the patient's interest above all else?

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Week 12 | Date:

Nurture Resilience & Guard Against Burnout

Care for yourself to care for others!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I look after my health as carefully as I do my work?

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Week 13 | Date:

Contribute to the Specialty

Advance the field through teaching, writing, innovation, and
mentorship!

Reflection: What contribution to the specialty will I
leave behind?

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Week 14 | Date:

Treat Every Patient With Dignity and Grace

Respect & Kindness is remembered long after the result is forgotten!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I ensure that my patients feel respected and heard, not just managed?

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Week 15 | Date:

Practice Ethical Communication

Never engage in professional jousting ; others’ complications
are visible to us, and ours to them!

Reflection: Do I speak ill of or belittle my colleagues,
even in subtle ways?

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Week 16 | Date:

Turn Setbacks into Learning

The wise surgeon learns more from scars than success!

Reflection: Do I learn from my complications or simply
move past them without reflection?

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Week 17 | Date:

Respect Donor Areas

The measure of mastery lies in how little harm the donor bears!

Reflection: Do I honour the donor site with the same
care that I give to the reconstruction?

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Week 18 | Date:

When in Doubt, Don't

When unsure, wait! Time often reveals what doubt conceals!

Reflection: Do I aggressively perform procedures today
that could have been safely done tomorrow?

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Week 19 | Date:

Remain Authentic

Overstatement diminishes excellence; honesty enhances it!

[illegible]

Reflection: Is every claim I've made in my publications a true representation?

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Week 20 | Date:

Balance Science with Empathy

Surgery without empathy is repair without healing!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do my patients feel cared for or merely treated?

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Week 21 | Date:

Make Informed Consent a Dialogue

Consent is not only a form; it's a conversation!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I communicate in a way that helps patients truly understand, not just consent?

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Week 22 | Date:

Pursue Research to Understand, Not just to Prove

Science channels curiosity into meaningful discovery!

[illegible]

Reflection: What clinical question deserves systematic study in my setting?

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Week 23 | Date:

Know the Ideal Normal

Every restoration begins with appreciation of the natural!

[illegible]

Reflection: How well do I know the aesthetic ideals for each region I reconstruct?

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Week 24 | Date:

Always Have a Primary Plan and a Lifeboat

Anticipate failure before it occurs, and it rarely will!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I plan for alternatives in surgery and in life; so that setbacks become pauses, not endpoints?

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Week 25 | Date:

Return What Is Normal To Its Normal Position & Maintain It There

Anatomy restored in place restores both form and function!

[illegible]

Reflection: Have I studied the normal anatomy deeply enough to restore it accurately?

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Week 26 | Date:

Acknowledge Your Limitations

Wisdom lies as much in restraint as in action!

Reflection: When was the last time I admitted I needed
help and grew from it?

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Week 27 | Date:

Control Tension

Tension is the silent enemy of beauty and the architect of scars!

This image shows a single page from a notebook or sketchbook. The paper has a light cream or off-white color. It features ten horizontal blue lines spaced evenly apart, typical of standard ruled paper. In the background, there is a very faint, large-scale pencil drawing of a person's lower body, specifically the legs and feet, which appear to be standing or walking. The drawing is so light that it serves as a subtle watermark-like pattern behind the text lines. There are no handwritten notes or other markings on the page.

Reflection: Do I achieve a truly tension-free closure through appropriate planning and sound surgical technique?

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Week 28 | Date:

Support Colleagues and Build Fraternity

Collaboration, not competition, strengthens the specialty!

Reflection: Have I celebrated another colleague’s
success recently?

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Week 29 | Date:

Be Accountable in Complications

Discuss complications honestly, address them swiftly, and do so with empathy. This prevents larger ones later!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I take full responsibility for my complications and address them promptly, honestly, and with empathy?

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balance, and betterment!”

Week 30 | Date:

Teach with purpose

Teaching transforms experience into legacy!

Reflection: Do I make an effort to transfer my experience
to trainees and peers through teaching, discussion, or
publication?

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Week 31 | Date:

Never Underestimate the Enemy

Respect infection, tissue ischemia, and complexity; they test
your vigilance!

Reflection: What recent complication reminded me to
stay alert and respectful?

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Week 32 | Date:

Have a Goal and a Dream

The best surgeons see the result before they begin!

Reflection: What dream fuels my daily work as a
clinician?

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Week 33 | Date:

Balance Tissue with Robin Hood's Principle

Take tissues from where you can spare, to give where it's most needed!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I create balance through my actions and not imbalance through excess?

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Week 34 | Date:

Avoid the Rut of Routine

Originality thrives outside the comfort zone!

Reflection: Do I regularly challenge my own habits and
assumptions to keep growing?

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Week 35 | Date:

Be a Mentor and a Student

Mentorship sustains legacy; learning sustains relevance!

Reflection: Do I teach with humility and learn with
gratitude?

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Week 36 | Date:

Keep Curiosity Alive

Complacency dulls skill; curiosity sharpens it!

Reflection: What excites me about surgery now and what
have I stopped questioning?

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Week 37 | Date:

Value Teamwork and Recognition

Acknowledge every contributor. Success is shared!

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. In the background, there is a very faint, light-colored pattern consisting of several vertical, slightly wavy lines that appear to be part of a larger design or watermark. The overall appearance is that of a clean, unused piece of stationery.

Reflection: Do I recognize that every achievement is built upon the efforts of many, not mine alone?

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Week 38 | Date:

Cultivate an Artistic Eye

Art trains us to see beyond length, breadth, and height; to perceive time, and how tissues and beauty evolve with it!

[illegible]

Reflection: What form of art inspires my aesthetic sense this month?

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Week 39 | Date:

Engage in Critical Self-Review

Regularly revisit your methods, mindset, and motivation!

Reflection: Do I reflect on my decisions and invite
feedback from colleagues and patients to improve care?

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Week 40 | Date:

Align Patient Expectations Realistically

A clear understanding prevents dissatisfaction!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I match my patient's vision with what is realistically possible?

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Week 41 | Date:

Perfect Your Craftsmanship

A surgeon's legacy is written in the fineness of his/her scars!

Reflection: What technical aspect can I refine to move
closer to mastery?

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Week 42 | Date:

Keep Meticulous Records

Good records safeguard patients, refine science, and protect
surgeons!

Reflection: Am I taking regular clinical photographs and
documenting them appropriately?

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Week 43 | Date:

First do no harm

Every incision should heal more than it hurts!

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines, typical of notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Reflection: Do I check every comfort of patient and safety detail before making an incision?

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Week 44 | Date:

Seek Insight into the Patient's True Desires

A good surgeon operates on anatomy; a wise one on understanding!

[illegible]

Reflection: Do I truly hear what the patient wants or only what I expect?

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Week 45 | Date:

Empty your Cup Periodically

Only when the cup is emptied can it be filled again with better
knowledge, refined skill, and renewed perspective!

Reflection: Am I open to unlearning outdated concepts
and embracing new evidence?

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Week 46 | Date:

Uphold Integrity in Publishing and Communication

Credit collaborators, disclose conflicts, and report truthfully!

Reflection: Have I been fully transparent in my recent presentations or publications?

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Week 47 | Date:

Guard Confidentiality

Protect your patient's story as you would their tissue!

[illegible]

Reflection: Am I careful about discussing my patients in public or online spaces?

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Week 48 | Date:

Use Economy and Judiciousness

Each cut, each suture, each movement must have purpose!

[illegible]

Reflection: How could I simplify my next operation without compromising quality?

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Week 49 | Date:

Reconstruct by Anatomic and Aesthetic Units

Respect boundaries; Rebuild regions, not random defects!

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Reflection: Do I use the subunit principles with judgment, not rigidity?

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Week 50 | Date:

Collaborate Across Boundaries

Cross-specialty collaboration multiplies excellence!

Reflection: Do I actively collaborate with colleagues
from other specialties to improve patient outcomes and
broaden my perspective?

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Week 51 | Date:

Reflect and Renew

Revisit your principles and purpose regularly to stay aligned with evolving practice and values!

[illegible]

Reflection: How have I evolved as a surgeon and as a person this year?

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Week 52 | Date:

Go for Broke - With Purpose

Commit fully ; but with thought, direction, and responsibility!

Reflection: What bold yet meaningful goal will define
my next year?