

The field guide.

Start small. Learn well. Build to last.

The work, the people, and the decisions from Phase 0 through the End Game.



Making a place useful / Benjamin's archive, 2024

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Land. Legacy. Lasting impact.

WORKING EDITION 01

01 OCTOBER 2026

Keep the destination. Test the next step.

Family's Friend expands Benjamin's family legacy into a whole-family wellbeing institution. The long view is 100 Acre Greens in multiple communities. The immediate work is to learn whether one useful offer can be delivered well.

A PROPOSED SEQUENCE, NOT A DATED PROMISE

Use the same seven phases everywhere. No stage has an approved completion date. Choose a review date for each experiment; do not convert a roadmap into an unsupported opening schedule.

A DECISION RECORD AT EVERY GATE

Write the question, evidence, full cost, responsible person, decision date, and advance / revise / pause / stop decision. Include failures and missing responses.

ROLES MUST BECOME NAMED COMMITMENTS

Owner labels in this guide are proposed responsibilities. They do not represent a confirmed team or partner. Benjamin should assign accountable people before delivery.

ONE PUBLICATION, THREE VOLUMES

Volume I explains why. This guide explains the work. Volume III tracks assumptions and evidence. Update the shared phase record before revising any individual document.

Start with real families.

Find one specific need, one first audience, and a small experience worth testing before committing to property.

THE WORK

Benjamin leads conversations with prospective participants, family members, buyers, hosts, and experienced practitioners. Separate the person receiving support from the person paying for it. Turn what is learned into a one-page pilot brief.

THE WORK PRODUCT

An interview record, a defined audience and problem, a proposed offer, a complete cost estimate, named responsibilities, and a written learning plan.

THE DECISION GATE

Advance when the pilot has suitable participants, a venue and delivery team, a fully scoped budget, and decision criteria agreed before bookings. Revise the offer if interviews do not support it.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Benjamin + a designated pilot lead. Roles to be assigned.

FUNDING LOGIC

Bounded discovery and preparation budget; amount still to be scoped.

Learning question: Who needs this, who will pay, what prevents participation, and what would make the experience useful?

One weekend. Real learning.

Test a modest nonclinical retreat at a rented venue without treating a single good weekend as proof of the whole model.

THE WORK

Use the current planning case of six adult guests and two hosts over two nights. Offer rest, meals, nature, creative time, and optional reflection. Record actual costs and invite voluntary day-7 and day-30 follow-up.

THE WORK PRODUCT

Booking and attendance records, actual costs including founder time, participant feedback with response counts, follow-up observations, and willingness to return at a viable price.

THE DECISION GATE

Repeat, revise, or stop against the agreed learning criteria and subsidy limit. Advance only when demand and delivery quality are credible enough to test repeatability.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Pilot lead + hosts + finance owner. Roles to be assigned.

FUNDING LOGIC

Quote-supported pilot budget; any learning subsidy agreed in advance.

Learning question: Would people choose it again, can it be delivered well, and what does it really cost?

Make good care repeatable.

Turn founder effort into a dependable program, with a team, a sustainable cost model, and access that can be funded.

THE WORK

Repeat the core experience, document the host playbook, price all labor and overhead, and test paid and sponsored places separately. Co-design family, veteran, and reintegration pathways with appropriately qualified partners.

THE WORK PRODUCT

Repeat demand, reconciled delivery costs, a staffing model, partner scopes, an access policy, continuity plans, and consistent experience quality across repeated delivery.

THE DECISION GATE

Advance when a team can deliver the core offer consistently and the funding model supports its full costs. Broader family services must have their own evidence and delivery design.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Operating lead + program partners + finance owner. Roles to be assigned.

FUNDING LOGIC

Program revenue and explicitly committed support; no assumed cross-subsidy.

Learning question: Does the model work beyond Benjamin's direct presence, and who remains unable to access it?

Let the work shape the land.

Translate the sacred campus vision into a specific, affordable, operable place before land and construction commitments.

THE WORK

Build the campus service brief. Compare candidate properties and tenure options. Commission site-specific use, access, utilities, design, capital, staffing, and operating studies. Resolve governance and funding structure.

THE WORK PRODUCT

A parcel-specific feasibility package, professional cost estimates, a phased opening plan, operating reserves, accountable leadership, and a credible financing plan.

THE DECISION GATE

Commit only when site feasibility, capital and operating funding, and program readiness align. Keep 100 Acre Greens as the destination while testing actual acreage and capacity.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Development lead + qualified site advisers + governance body. Roles to be assigned.

FUNDING LOGIC

Separate feasibility and campus capital budgets; neither is priced today.

Learning question: Can this particular place support the intended people and programs for the long term?

Build a place that keeps showing up.

Open the first campus in useful stages and show that the whole place works through ordinary operating cycles.

THE WORK

Open essential lodging, shared spaces, and ready programs first. Add services only with people and funding to sustain them. Maintain the land, continue support after visits, and report experience quality and full economics.

THE WORK PRODUCT

Operating results across seasons, participant and family experience records, staff continuity, maintenance and reserve performance, access data, and documented improvement decisions.

THE DECISION GATE

Advance toward replication only after campus operations and quality are dependable and transferable. A beautiful property alone does not establish a repeatable institution.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Campus director + program leads + stewardship oversight. Roles to be assigned.

FUNDING LOGIC

Funded opening stages, operating income, committed access support, and reserves.

Learning question: Does daily life here deliver the intended experience, and can the institution sustain it?

Carry the practice. Learn the place.

Test whether another team can create a strong local expression of Family's Friend without losing its purpose or standards.

THE WORK

Publish the operating playbook, train a second team, assess local needs and site economics, and define the relationship between independent adopters and any formally affiliated locations.

THE WORK PRODUCT

A second-location feasibility case, trained leadership, local partners, funding, shared quality measures, and a record of what must adapt.

THE DECISION GATE

Expand only when the second team can sustain delivery, access, and financial discipline with appropriate local adaptation. Do not assume that first-campus results transfer automatically.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Replication lead + local operating team + network oversight. Roles to be assigned.

FUNDING LOGIC

A standalone budget and funding plan for every location.

Learning question: What travels well, what must change locally, and can quality survive the transfer?

More families. More places to belong.

Serve as many people as the model can responsibly support across the United States and, potentially, abroad.

THE WORK

Develop locally accountable places connected by shared learning, training, and transparent standards. Publish improvements so others can adapt the model. Evaluate each new region on its own needs and operating conditions.

THE WORK PRODUCT

Sustained site quality, wider access, accountable local teams, comparable reporting, and transparent evidence for any claimed efficiency or effectiveness.

THE DECISION GATE

Growth remains conditional on quality, access, and viable local operations. International expansion requires separate local validation; no location count or launch timetable is promised.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Local leaders + network governance + learning team. Roles to be assigned.

FUNDING LOGIC

Location-level economics and explicit funding for shared network functions.

Learning question: Are more families being served well, and are we improving as we grow?

Make the first experiment specific.

Before dates or bookings, complete this brief with the people who will deliver the pilot. The questions below are proposed working prompts.

PEOPLE & NEED

Who is this for? What practical need did they describe?

OFFER & PAYER

What exactly happens? Who pays, and why would they choose it?

SCOPE & EXCLUSIONS

What do hosts provide? What is outside this experience?

COSTS & SUBSIDY

What is fully quoted? What is unknown? Who funds a shortfall?

LEARNING & DECISION

What evidence would justify repeating, revising, or stopping?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Who owns delivery, finance, communication, and the decision?

One weekend. Room to breathe.

BEFORE ARRIVAL

Confirm the venue's suitability and permission for use; sleeping, food, and access needs; clear scope; host coverage; local response contacts; full costs; and booking and cancellation information.

FRIDAY / LAND

Arrive and settle. Share dinner, receive a short welcome, and choose an open evening. Nobody needs to tell a personal story to belong.

SATURDAY / REST

Offer nature time, meals, creative work, reflection, and generous unscheduled time. Provide indoor and quiet alternatives. Coaching requires a suitable provider and a defined scope.

SUNDAY / RETURN

Invite a personally chosen next step, such as one useful practice or boundary. Leave around midday. The participant decides what to share and with whom.

DAYS 7 AND 30 / LEARN

Offer voluntary follow-up. Ask what carried into ordinary life. Record how many people responded and what remains unknown. Feedback describes experience; it does not establish treatment effectiveness.

Illustrative case: six adult guests, two hosts, two nights. Staffing and capacity still need validation. No booking date or price is confirmed.

Protect the details that make people welcome.

REST & ACCESS

Privacy, suitable sleeping arrangements, bathrooms, routes, weather alternatives, and food needs belong in the initial brief. Choose the site and program around the actual people attending.

WHOLE-FAMILY SCOPE

Develop family and intergenerational programs with their intended participants. Do not scale an adult retreat by simply adding children or changing the audience label.

QUALIFIED PATHWAYS

Veteran, recovery, clinical, and equine offerings need separate expertise, scope, readiness, and budgets. The current pilot is nonclinical.

STEWARDSHIP

Land, buildings, staff, food, maintenance, reserves, and continuity all require accountable owners. A phased campus should open only what the team can sustain.

REPLICATION

Document essentials that should travel: participant choice, transparent scope, cost discipline, and quality review. Adapt local program mix, partners, staffing, and site design using new evidence.

"Greatness is measured in subtleties, be a renaissance man" – Uncle Tony. Exact wording supplied by Benjamin.

What did we learn? What changes next?

A small, consistent evidence record is more useful than a polished story that outruns the facts.

PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

Track bookings, attendance, choices, voluntary feedback, follow-up response counts, and missing responses. Keep personal reflections private; report only appropriately shared or aggregated material.

ECONOMICS

Separate one-time setup, repeat delivery, founder labor, recurring overhead, contingency, and reserves. Record actuals against assumptions and explain variances.

DECISION HISTORY

For every change, record the date, responsible owner, evidence, decision, and next question. Publish useful lessons without exposing private participant information.

CURRENT NEXT STEP

Complete Phase 0 conversations and the one-page pilot brief. Agree the learning criteria and subsidy limit before asking people to book. Contact Benjamin to help shape that work.

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Sources: Benjamin's 01 October 2026 direction; current Experience Blueprint, 29 September 2026; proposed editorial and operating recommendations in this edition.

A little wisdom. A little mischief.

The voices that stay with us, wherever the road goes.

“Greatness is measured in subtleties, be a renaissance man”

UNCLE TONY

“Within ye your patience, possess ye your soul”

GRANMA

“If I could give one bit of life advice, Never trust a fart”

DAD

Family sayings preserved in the exact wording supplied by Benjamin.
