

How do you get from here to there?

If I was going to drive from Brisbane to Perth, and I'd never made the trek before, it would be easy for me to just think, 'Yeah, I know where I'm going, and our road system is good enough, so I'll just get in the car and drive, following the road signs along the way'. A few hours into the trip, when I'm feeling a little fatigued and distracted, I might miss a couple of signs and after a while, find myself at the back of nowhere heading north instead of west. I might panic for a moment, start to stress, and spend a lot of time, effort and energy getting back on track again. Sure, I'll eventually make it to Perth, but it will have taken me longer and cost me more than it would have if I'd taken the time to plan the trip before I headed off.

We all need a good road map (yes, even the blokes!).

Many of us treat our personal and business lives in the same way – we head off in the general direction of where we want to get to, hoping that we'll spot all the right signs along the way, and when we find ourselves off track, it can really throw us for a loop! Just like in our road trip example, we don't make firm plans for where we want to go, how we're going to get there, and where we should be at certain points in time...and then we wonder why we're working so hard but not getting to where we want to be.

In my experience, the most common things that stop people from achieving their goals are:

- lack of planning, and
- procrastination.

And sometimes we even procrastinate the planning! We all like to put off doing difficult or uncomfortable things, it is a perfectly human thing to do, but it often leaves us stuck on the road to nowhere.

If there's anything that you want or need to do in life, realise that there will never be a more perfect time to start making it happen than right now, today. All you need to do is make the decision to just get on with it – stop thinking, worrying and stressing about it, and start doing it.

How? The fastest and easiest way to get from A to B, from Brisbane to Perth, or from where you are today to wherever you want to be, is to create a road map for yourself by setting goals. I'm going to walk you through how to do that, but before we get started, it's important to point out the difference between dreams and goals. Dreams are just that, they're fuzzy, feel-good fantasies that live in our imaginations, and that's often where they stay. We all need to have dreams, but we also want to make some of those dreams a reality in our lives, and that's what a goal is: something that we are aiming to actually make happen. Goals are the road maps that we create for our lives, they pinpoint exactly where we're going and how we're going to get there, and they help to give us a sense of purpose, direction and achievement in life.

So let's start setting goals.

Make sure your goals light you up. The things we usually put off doing the most are the things we don't like doing; the things that bore us; that aren't fun and that don't give us a sense of satisfaction. So, if you set goals around doing things that make you feel that way, you won't make a true commitment to achieving them. Sure, we can't always spend our days doing our favourite things, but there has to be a great pay-off in it for you – your goals have to light you up from the inside; they have to 'feel' right for you.

Goal Booster

Because I am a natural health practitioner I use and recommend a lot of 'natural medicines' that can help in all areas of our lives. Ginger is a herb that is excellent for giving you a metaphorical 'kick in the pants'! It's

brilliant for getting procrastinators into action. Anytime you need a bit of a push along:

- Brew yourself a cup of fresh ginger herb tea (hot or iced). Take a knob of fresh ginger, grate or chop it, and infuse a teaspoon in a cup of hot water – drink it warm or let it cool and drink as a tangy iced tea.
- Use some aromatherapy in your home or workplace. Vaporising some ginger essential oil, in combination with other energising essential oils such as May Chang and Grapefruit, will help keep you focused on the task at hand and lighten your mood when you're feeling bogged down by it all. I have created an oil blend for this very purpose, it's called Play More, just add 5-10 drops to an electric room vaporiser or car vaporiser.

Write your goals in language that excites you into action. What impact do you think your language has on your mental, emotional and physical wellbeing, and on what you achieve in your life? We all know someone who is 'Mr or Ms Negative', they always have a problem, an excuse, and a reason for why they can't do what they want to do, or why they aren't getting the results they want – and it's always someone else's fault! In reality, it is that little voice that we all have inside of us that can make us doubt and question ourselves – and some people are better at managing it than others.

You'll never get that little voice to be quiet, but you can take control of what it's saying and what you choose to pay attention to. The key to changing your self-talk is to first begin noticing it, and then to replace the negative commentary with a positive one. For example, you could replace existing scripts such as 'I can't do this' with 'I'm learning how to do this', or 'I am determined to become good at this', or 'I know I can do this'. So when you're setting and reviewing your goals always use positive language, confident and inspiring words that describe you achieving your goals, and leave no room for negativity.

Shoot for the stars – one step at a time. Goals are about stretching yourself to achieve the things you want in your life, but we still have to focus on taking manageable steps along the way – you don't have to achieve a lifetime's worth of goals this year! For example, if I were to write down a goal to buy a \$1 million beach house, and I earn \$50,000 per year, the stress that sits behind this goal will sabotage my achieving it. It's called non-integrative thinking. So while you might set a big bold goal such as this, within a short period of time you will start to realise that the goal is way too hard at this point in time, and that you're not likely to realise it within the timeframe that you've set yourself, so you give up on it and it ends up becoming a de-motivator that spreads into other areas of your life as well. Remember, goals are meant to inspire you, not to set you up for failure, so make sure they're challenging but achievable.

Set goals for your personal and business life. Setting goals in all areas of your life will help to ensure that you maintain a sense of balance, which in itself can help you to keep up the momentum needed to achieve your goals. Start by setting goals around:

Family and home life
Physical body and health
Emotional health
Spiritual health
Finances and career
Continued education
Social life and relationships

Write your goals in great detail. The more information and detail that you put into your goals, the more efficient your subconscious mind will be at helping you to achieve them. You see, when you write down a detailed goal, your subconscious mind takes that as an instruction to make that thing happen. It's like when you decide to buy a new car, and you suddenly start to see that same type of car everywhere – what we tune our subconscious minds in to, we bring into our lives. So, if you're setting a goal to take an overseas holiday, put all of the details about that trip into your goal – who you'll fly with, where you'll stay, what

you'll see there and so on. The more detail, the better.

Goal Booster

Our memories are strongly linked to our sense of smell, you've probably had the experience when you smell a particular aroma and in an instant it takes you to another place and time in your mind. You can also use this memory association to help you focus on your goals. For example, this year one of my goals is to go to Turkey for the rose harvest (as an aromatherapist this is a very cool thing to do), so I have been vapourising rose essential oil and using a rosewater spritzer every day to help keep me focused on achieving that goal.

Keep them in your face. Out of sight, out of mind. If you don't remind yourself of your goals every day, it's very easy to lose track of them and just get busy with the day-to-day demands of life. I keep my goals in my diary, so that I see them every day. Reviewing your goals daily is a crucial part of your success and vital to make sure that your conscious and subconscious minds are focused on working toward them. Take a few minutes each morning to read your goals and visualise yourself achieving them (really do a little daydreaming here, imagine what it would look like and feel like to have achieved your goals), this is a technique that sportspeople use all the time to help them stay focused and committed.

Monitor your progress and adjust your goals. Review your goals periodically and adjust them as you go – just because you've set a goal doesn't mean you can't make changes to it along the way, you've got to be flexible. As you look at your goals and plan your day, ask yourself if what you are doing is taking you toward your goals or not. If it is, you know you're on the right track, and if it's not, see whether it's your goal or your actions that need to be adjusted to get you heading in the right direction again. When you do find yourself off track don't give yourself a hard time for it (I did say 'when' not 'if' because we're all only human and we all wonder off track now and then), just be glad that you realised it, and get back to what you know you should be doing.

Goal Booster

Learn to put up your hand and ask for help when you need it. You may never be able to achieve some of your goals without a little help or guidance along the way – but for some people (myself included), learning to put ego aside and ask for help can be a goal in itself! You'll reach your goals, faster and easier and give other people the opportunity to be of service to you and to share in your success if you just learn to ask for what you need.

Share your goals with someone. Sharing your goals with someone you trust can be a great way of making sure you stay on track, and it can give you someone to help celebrate your milestones with along the way. But you do need to be careful about whom you choose to share your goals with. It's human nature that some people will be excited about what you want to achieve and be there with you every step of the way, while other people can feel threatened, or jealous, or just put out that you're making an effort to change your life while they're not, and they can react negatively and make you doubt yourself. So choose one or two trusted people, who are as positive and 'can do' as you are and help each other to achieve everything you want in your lives.

Goal Booster

Reward yourself! So often we focus on what hasn't worked in our lives and what we're yet to achieve, and we forget to acknowledge ourselves for what we do achieve. Make this the year of acknowledging and celebrating your achievements, and share that success with a friend. Within my own close network of friends, we have chosen this year to share all of our 'Woo-Hoo!' moments, whether by email, phone or in

person, we connect with those people who share our vision and celebrate and encourage each other with some good-old positive reinforcement.

Everyone benefits from goal setting, without it, life can just seem to be happening to us, pushing and pulling us in all kinds of directions and we can start to feel powerless about what's happening and where we're heading. Remember to set goals for all areas of your life, it's not all about what we want to achieve in our working lives, it's also about 'having a life'. Living a balanced life is about finding a way to have it all, without losing your health, sense of humour or sanity along the way! It's about feeding yourself energy, not draining the life out of you – and simple goal-setting can help you to achieve just that.

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