

Success!

A Step-by-Step Guide on How to Achieve Your Goals & Dreams

by:

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Introduction

Welcome! I'm excited that you've chosen to "take the bull by the horns" as they say, and learn how to achieve the goals and dreams that you hold so dear.

I've spent the better part of a decade preparing the materials that you're about to use, and I'm very proud to say that I think I've assembled the best "how-to" guide on the topic of goal setting that you'll ever find.

As the title of the book states, this is a step-by-step guide on how to achieve your goals and dreams. Learning the steps to successful goal achievement is as easy as turning the page and completing each exercise. I promise you that if you will follow each step, you'll be amazed to discover just how much you can accomplish.

Achieving your goals will lead to some of the most memorable and rewarding experiences of your life. I'm glad you've chosen to allow me to be a part of your journey. Good luck, and happy goal getting!

Step One: In a Perfect World

The first step in achieving your goals and dreams is to lose your mind. Go crazy. Dream big, and forget to feel guilty about it.

For fifteen minutes to half an hour, I want you to evict your inner critic and write down what your life would look like in a perfect world. Be thoughtful, but don't let thoughts like "you can't do that" or "that's not practical" slow you down. For now, write what you **feel** without letting your brain interfere - there will be plenty of time to analyze your answers later on down the road.

To help you with this exercise, I've included a "My Ideal Life" Worksheet on the following page. Feel free to use it, or to create one of your own!

My Ideal Life

Directions: In the space provided, describe what your life would look like if everything were perfect in the following areas:

Physical

Spiritual

Mental & Intellectual

Emotional

Financial

Social & Recreational

Vocational & Occupational

Depending on how you feel, this might be a good time to put this book down, take a break, and let your mind rejuvenate itself. Come back when you feel nice and rested; there's lots more work to do!



Step Two: Get Your Head Out of the Clouds

Now that you've let your mind run wild, it's time to plant those feet firmly on the ground once again. For the next 15 to 30 minutes I'd like you to create a list of goals that will *move you in the direction* of achieving your ideal life. You don't have to map out exactly what you need to do to get all the way there, but each goal should be a concrete step in the right direction.

For example, say that you had put "I will maintain a healthy weight between 175 and 185 pounds" in the "Physical" box on your Ideal Life Worksheet. In the "Physical" box on the Goal List Worksheet (provided later in this section), you might enter "For the month of January I will keep a food journal that tracks all of my eating habits." Notice that you might have to do more than just keep a food journal in order to get to and maintain your ideal weight, but keeping a food journal is definitely a step in the right direction.

For those of you who haven't set a goal in a while, a bit of a refresher course might be in order. Here are a few things you'll want to remember as you set your goals:

1. **Your goals should be SMART:** For those of you who aren't familiar with this acronym, SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Let's look at each of these in turn:

- a. **Specific:** Your goal needs to be crystal clear. The more specific your goal is, the clearer the boundaries of your actions will become. Being specific limits the number of things we can do, but that's a good thing, because we're trying to find the most direct way possible to achieve our goal. Be specific!
- b. **Measurable:** Use precise quantities and dates so that you'll know when you've achieved your goal. "Earn more money" isn't very measurable; "Earn \$100 by 5:00 p.m. Friday" is.
- c. **Attainable:** This one's tricky. You don't want to set goals that are too easy to achieve – that would just be boring. But you also don't want to set goals that are impossible to achieve, because that's setting yourself up for failure. One term that I like which I've heard others use is "stretch" goals. This means that you set goals that are just beyond what you imagine you can achieve. That way you'll be motivated to try hard, and it will be all the more sweet when you achieve something you weren't quite sure you could.
- d. **Relevant:** This just means that your goal should be appropriate for the circumstances you find yourself in. Irrelevant goals waste precious time and energy, two resources we never have enough of.
- e. **Time-bound:** This is pretty self-explanatory, right? Set a date, and stick to it.

2. **Your goal should be something that you can control.** So “By December 31st, I’ll get a job” doesn’t work, because you can’t control whether or not someone gives you a job. “By December 31st, I’ll send out 10 resumes to potential employers” works, because the action to be taken is within your control.
3. **Write your goals down.** Again, pretty self-explanatory. An unwritten goal possesses no power; you need something that you can look at, feel, and touch. Write those goals down!

Well, it’s time now for our next exercise, the Goal List Worksheet. Be as thorough as you can, but don’t allow yourself to go for more than 30 minutes at a time – if you do your brain will get soggy, and it might start leaking out of your ears!

Goal List

Directions: Based on your “Ideal Life” Worksheet, create one or more goals that you would like to achieve in each area of your life.

Physical	
Spiritual	
Mental & Intellectual	
Emotional	
Financial	
Social & Recreational	
Vocational & Occupational	

Feeling a bit overwhelmed? You've got every right to be. After all, that's a long list of goals you've got there!

If you're worried, don't be. We're not going to try to eat the whole elephant all at once. We'll do this one little bite at a time.

If you haven't taken a break yet, now would be a great time to do so. We're getting down to the nitty-gritty, and you're going to want to bring your A-game to the next exercise.

When you feel like you've got 45 minutes worth of effort in you, come on back and we'll get started on turning one of these goals into reality!



Step 3: EASIER is Better

Are you ready? Good, because here is where the going gets tough and the tough get going. Our job is to turn one of those goals you set in the previous exercise into REALITY, and to do that it's going to take some real gumption¹.

To help us achieve our goal, we're going to use another acronym (the first one was SMART, as I'm sure you remember). This one is EASIER, which I like, because we all know that EASIER is better, right? To help you learn what EASIER means, I've created another worksheet for you to fill out. This worksheet is called an EASIER Worksheet. Let's take a look at it, and then I'll provide some directions on how to fill it out.

¹ gump·tion/'gəmpSHən/

Noun:

Shrewd or spirited initiative and resourcefulness.

An EASIER Way to Achieve Your Goals and Dreams

My goal: _____

Is my goal SMART? Specific Measurable Attainable Relevant Time-bound

E nvision	For five minutes when I wake up, five minutes during my lunch break, and for five minutes before I go to sleep, I will envision my life as it will look after I have achieved this goal. <p style="text-align: right;">Initials: _____</p>
A ssess	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.
S trategize	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.
I mplement	I will implement my strategy beginning on the ____ day of _____, 201_. <p style="text-align: right;">Initials: _____</p>
E valuate	I will evaluate my progress every: <input type="checkbox"/> Day <input type="checkbox"/> Week <input type="checkbox"/> Month <input type="checkbox"/> Year
R eport	I will report my progress to: _____ _____

My reward for achieving this goal is: _____

Filling out Your EASIER Worksheet

Filling out the EASIER Worksheet is as easy as 1, 2, 3. Let me count the ways.

1. Write your goal down.
2. Do the SMART goal checklist. If your goal isn't SMART, rewrite it until it is!
3. Read the statement in the "Envision" box, and then put your initials in the space provided.
4. Make an assessment of where you stand in relation to your goal. Try to get an exact picture of where you are at this very instant. Don't make any assumptions; only write down those things that are cold, hard facts. By the time you're done with this section, you should have a clear picture of the distance between where you are and where you want to go.
5. Create a strategy that will get you from where you are to where you want to go. If there's not enough space in the box provided, turn the sheet over and continue your strategy on the back.
 - a. Note: Coming up with a complete strategy can be difficult at first. There are all kinds of unknowns that might pop up, and seeing as though we're human,

there's a good chance we'll make some mistakes. I try not to put too much pressure on myself when I'm creating a strategy. The thing to remember is that you're going to be evaluating your progress all along the way, and if you need to change your strategy at any point, you're free to do so. Don't aim for perfection as you create your strategy; just do your best to lay out some steps that seem like they'll get you from where you are to where you want to be.

6. Read the statement in the "Implement" box, fill out the blanks, and sign your initials in the space provided.
7. Decide how often you'll evaluate your progress, and then check the box that applies.
8. Choose someone that you'll do your evaluations with and report your progress to, and write their name in the blank.
 - a. Note: If I know you, you're tempted to skip this step. **DON'T!** It's very important that you find somebody to report your progress to. Human nature is such that you'll want to give up at different points in the goal achievement process; having somebody to be accountable to will ensure that you follow through with your commitments. Find someone you trust, and let them share in the joy of goal achievement with you. You'll be glad you did!

9. Think of a reward that you'll give yourself when you achieve your goal, and write it in the space provided.

That's it! Now you've got everything you need in order to go about achieving your goal. It's just a matter of implementing your plan, sticking to your guns, and following through until you've got what you want. See how easy that was? I told you EASIER was better!

Phew! I'm worn out! Why don't you take a break for my sake, and come back when you have a few minutes to spare. This next section won't take long to get through, but it's got some important information that you're not going to want to miss!



Step Four: Fasten Your Seatbelts

If achieving our goals was as easy as filling out a bunch of worksheets, I'd be out of a job. Like anything else in this life, the real hard work is showing up every day and doing what's necessary to make our goals and dreams come true. If you're going to avoid the potholes and survive the turbulence that's about to come your way, there's a few things you should know. One is a warning. The other three are attributes that you're going to need to cultivate if you want to become a consistent goal achiever. Finally, I'll leave you with a little mantra I've developed that you can repeat to yourself whenever you feel like giving up. Without further ado:

A Warning

When I counsel others I often say that living a purposeful life is a lot like trying to swim upstream. It takes a lot of effort and a lot of focus, and a lot of the time it feels like we're not going anywhere. In order to work our way upstream, we need to have our wits about us at all times. In the spirit of this analogy I'd like to prominently post a warning sign that will save you lots of time and heartache:

BEWARE OF DRIFTERS!!

What's a drifter? They are the people who have made the choice to stop swimming, those who have decided that it is just too much effort to continue trying.

Drifters are dangerous for two reasons. One, they rarely watch where they are going. Like the man who drives his car with his knees while eating a burger with one hand and talking on the cell phone with the other, these people are reckless and thoughtless. A collision with one of them could do significant harm, and if you happen to get tangled up with them, you could be halfway back to where you started by the time you struggle free. Two, many drifters know that they should be swimming upstream. They're just too lazy to do it- so they look for someone who *is* swimming to latch onto. Don't let this happen to you. When I worked as a lifeguard one of the first things I was taught is that the most dangerous situations occur when someone who needs saving grabs on to someone who is trying to help. Then both parties drown.

You may be tempted to let someone exploit your efforts, particularly if the drifter is a friend or a loved one. Don't do it! You put both of your futures in jeopardy if you do.

In case you don't feel confident in your ability to identify a drifter, I've included five common characteristics for you to look out for:

The Five Characteristics of a Drifter

A Drifter:

- 1) Wants something for nothing
- 2) Is cynical, skeptical, and doubtful of everything and everyone
- 3) Is quick to flatter, and quicker to criticize
- 4) Blames others for their shortcomings or misfortunes
- 5) Demands their rights while ignoring their responsibilities

These aren't all the characteristics of a drifter, but it should be sufficient to help you spot one. When you encounter a drifter, my advice is to distance yourself immediately. This doesn't mean eliminating the person from your life, but it does mean carefully establishing boundaries that protect both you and them. This may be quite painful, because as I mentioned, you might have drifters in your family or network of friends.

Remember the lesson of the salmon and the lemmings, though, which is that the group of people you spend your time with will largely determine your fate. Please don't be a lemming.

3 P's, Please

Now that I've told you what you need to avoid, I'd like to share with you three attributes or characteristics that you will need to develop if you want to become a consistent goal achiever. I call these The Three P's: Passion, Practice, and Persistence.

Let's talk about why it's important for you to develop these three attributes.

Passion

Everybody I've ever met is passionate about something. Most of us don't pursue our passions, though. We get caught up in the hustle and bustle of life, and let our passions wither in the closet corner. It is my opinion that our passions are a critical indicator of our mission here on earth. I believe that our lives should center on our passions, because only when we are passionate about something are we able to consistently overcome the obstacles placed in our way. Part of the purpose of the My Ideal Life worksheet is to help you identify your passions so that you can then center your goals on ways you can use those passions to better yourself and those who lay within your sphere of influence. Just remember- if you aren't passionate about your life, no one else will be, either.

Patience

Seeds don't sprout the day we plant them. Diamonds don't form overnight. Time, that mysterious construct of the human imagination, has become an integral ingredient in all human affairs. The need for patience is patently obvious, particularly in a pursuit such as goal achievement.

One way of thinking about this is to liken goal setting to the principle of compounding interest. For those of you who are

good with money, you may understand what I mean. For the rest of us, a short explanation is probably due.

If you ever meet with a financial advisor, or study how money works, one of the first things you'll learn about is compounding interest. Benjamin Franklin called compounding interest the eighth wonder of the world, and Albert Einstein is quoted as saying that compound interest is the most powerful force in the universe.

The equation that lies at the root of compounding interest is $X = 1 + i^n$, where “i” equals interest rate and “n” equals time. Don't worry about the math if you don't understand the equation, though. All the equation says is that the amount of money you can expect to receive from a compounding investment is dependent on your interest rate, and the number of time periods you drop money into your account. The higher the interest, or the longer you continue to invest, the bigger your return. To receive the biggest payoff, find a high interest rate, and invest for a long time. Get it? Good!

For our purposes, let's not worry about interest rates. Let's change that “i” to an “e”, so that the equation is now $X = 1 + e^n$. And let's say the “e” stands for effort. What the equation says now is that we can expect our return to be dependent on our effort, and the time we sustain that effort. As we increase our effort, and as we sustain our effort over a longer period of time, the compounding interest of effort kicks in, and our results exponentially increase.

As obvious as it might be, it's worth saying out loud: the more you practice and the more effort you put into using the skills I've taught you in this book, the better your results will be. Just let time do its thing, and marvel at the rewards of consistent effort applied over time.

Persistence

Persistence is the golden key that will finally unlock the door to consistent goal achievement. Study the lives of any of the great men and women who have lived upon this earth, and you will see that the one characteristic each of them shared was persistence. Too many of us give up the moment we meet resistance. We shrug our shoulders and think to ourselves, "It just wasn't meant to be." Only the great recognize that resistance is a sure sign of progress. Once you've identified your passion, persist until your vision is realized. Don't let anything stop you or stand in your way. Persist, and there is nothing that you cannot accomplish. Give up, and nothing can be done to convert your dreams into reality.

A Mantra

A mantra is simply a statement that is frequently repeated, and what I'm about to teach you should be repeated anytime you feel down or discouraged about your progress. The mantra is:

Passion + Patience + Persistence = Peace, Power, and Prosperity

Repeat it when you wake up in the morning. Repeat it when you go to bed at night. Repeat it throughout the day, whenever you wonder if it's worth all the time and energy you're putting into your goal achievement efforts. Say it until you believe it, and then say it some more.

The End of the Road

Well, here we are. I've taught you everything you need to know in order to achieve the goals you'd like to pursue. That wasn't so bad, was it? If I might, I'd like to leave you with a final thought.

A former coach of the New York Giant football team once said, "The road to success would be a lot more crowded if so many people didn't get off looking for a shortcut." I hope you won't be one of those who exits the road to success prematurely. There's no sadder words in the English language than "what could have been."

If at any time during the reading of this book you've felt a nudge to become a little more than you already are, I hope that you'll choose to follow this program for the rest of your life. If life really is like being dropped into a river, I don't know any way to make the current of life slow down or switch directions. I haven't been able to find a way to hop out of the river and meander up the banks of the stream, smelling the roses along the way. What I have discovered is a way to make the swim a little easier, a lot more fulfilling, and even a little bit fun.

I wish you the best as you strive to become the best you possible. If there is ever anything I can do to be of assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me at juriggs@gmail.com. Here's to you – the new you – the you you always hoped you could be!

Appendix A – Evaluation Form

When you perform your evaluations, you might want to use the form that you'll find on the following page. If this worksheet doesn't meet your needs, feel free to come up with a system of your own.

Evaluation Form

Goal: _____ Date: _____

Progress Made	
Obstacles I've encountered	
Steps I'll take to overcome obstacles	

Evaluation Form - Daily

Goal: _____ Date: _____

Progress Made	Check if completed: <input type="checkbox"/> Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday	Notes:
Obstacles I've encountered		
Steps I'll take to overcome obstacles		

Appendix B – Day Planner Template

When you're working on one goal it's not too hard to keep things in line, but once you start working towards achieving several goals at a time, life can get a little bit hectic. One good way of organizing yourself is to buy or put together a day planner. For those of you who are cheapskates like me, I've created a template that you can use. The sheets print out at 8.5" x 11", so you can just three-hole punch them and put them into any old 3 ring binder. Or, if you want to get fancy, you can go to your local office supply store and pick up a nicer planner to store your sheets in.

This particular template doesn't have the date notated on it (although it does have space at the top for you to enter the date yourself). If you'd like a copy of the file that has the additional information, just email me at juriggs@gmail.com and I'd be happy to forward it on to you. It's a Microsoft Word document, so it's very easy to change the day, month and year. Just double click in the header, change the information that needs to be changed, and print out the upcoming month. Couldn't be easier!

date:

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

7 am	
8 am	
9 am	
10 am	
11 am	
12 pm	
1 pm	
2 pm	
3 pm	
4 pm	
5 pm	
6 pm	
7 pm	
8 pm	

PRIORITIZED TASK LIST

GOALS IN PROGRESS

PEOPLE TO TALK TO

NAME	PHONE NUMBER	REGARDING

About the Author



Through hard work, prayerful pleading, and a little bit of dumb luck, I'm one of the lucky few who has carved out a nice little life that I truly love and appreciate. I've always been a bit of an explorer, trying out different places, careers, and schools of thought. If life is a journey, let's just say I'm not averse to pulling off the side of the road if something catches my attention.

Until recently I'd been something of a restless soul in my professional life. I never seemed to find that "right fit" until I came across a job as a Web Applications Developer and was given the opportunity to exercise both my brain and my creative impulses each and every day. It's nice to have a job where my biggest problem is not having enough work to do each day!

I have a saintly wife (Katie) and two adorable children (Evelyn and A.J.) who are teaching me how to grow up and stay young at the same time. I'm a bit of a homebody, love reading great literature, playing my guitar, producing music on my computer, and trying not to kill myself or anyone else on the soccer field. My favorite quote, one that fits well with my life as a goal achievement specialist, comes from J.R.R Tolkien. He says:

"Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go."

That's why goal setting is so important, I think. It gives us a chance to dare to achieve something we're not sure we can - and when we find we can, we become more and more curious to see just how far we can travel!

Services

Justin provides the following services:

Corporate Training: No matter how big or small your organization is, chances are you could use some help in meeting your goals. Allow me to train your employees on the best practices of goal setting, and watch your organization thrive!

Train-the-Trainer Training: Try saying that ten times fast! If you're a professional who is involved with helping people achieve their goals and dreams, and you would like to learn more about how you could use the EASIER Method in your practice, I'd be happy to sit down and talk with you about what I've learned from my experiences.

Public Speaking: Unlike most people, I love speaking in public! Book me to speak at your next event, and rest assured that you'll enjoy an engaging, informative, and entertaining presentation.

To arrange for Justin to provide any of these services, simply email him at juriggs@gmail.com. He promises to respond to your inquiry within 24 hours.