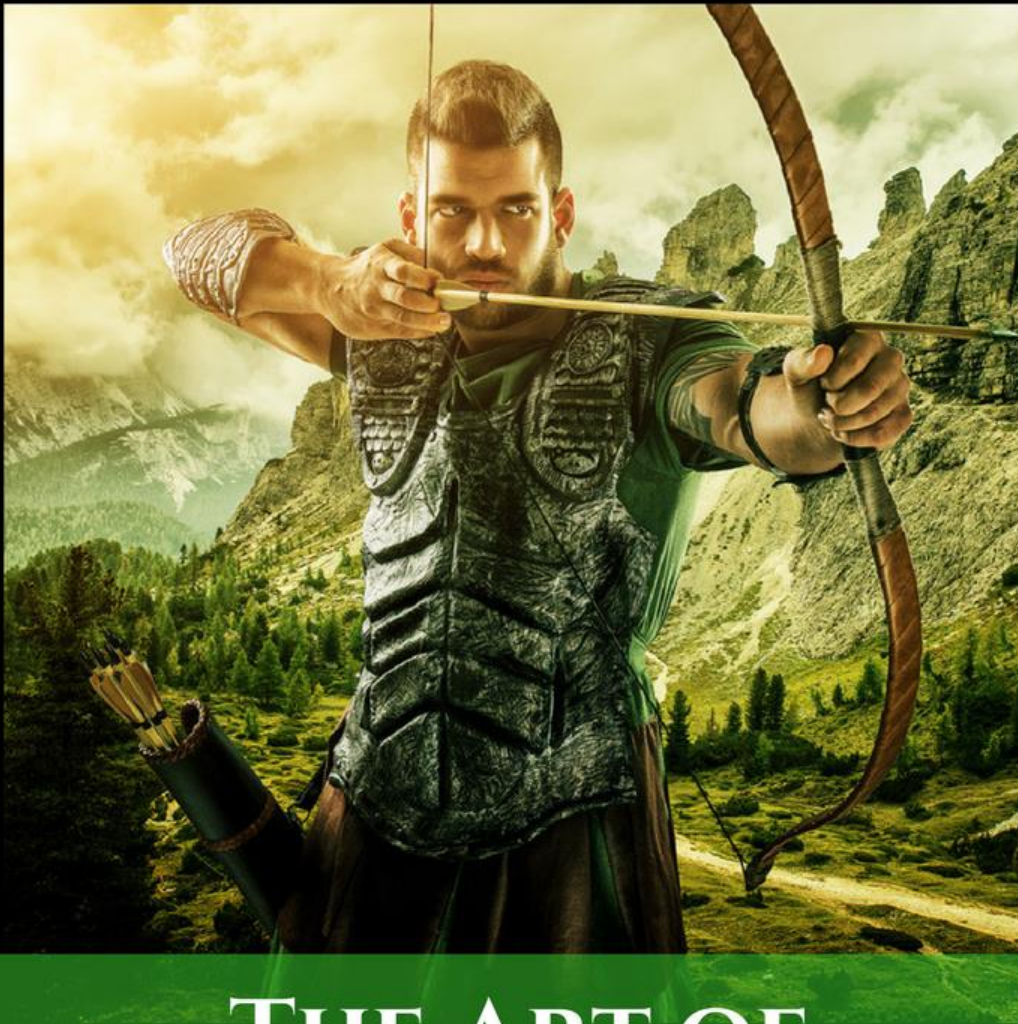


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THE ART OF GOAL SETTING

5 Steps to Setting The Best Goals

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DEFINE YOUR LIFE

'Tis the time of year where we look back on years previous and define what we want to accomplish moving ahead.

We make lists of things we want to accomplish. We give said things deadlines. We make checklists of the habits we're going to create that will help us achieve what we want to achieve. We *think* we know what we want, but we never spend the time nor do we dig deep enough to define what, precisely, our idea of 'life' is.

Heck, *I don't*. I think about it, ponder it in passing, even settle down for an evening of scotch and a cigar and a book and let both help such a question percolate. I don't, however, give such a question the time, focus, or strategic planning that it deserves.

It seems like it's not a tangible question. Too much philosophy involved, and too much change from year to year to give it a day or a week of reflection and strategy. We see the question of 'what is living' as a life long pursuit. It's why we're here, it's what we're here to answer and most of us don't think we'll ever actually answer it.

We sure don't feel like we're living right now. We wake up and exist on autopilot. Some of this is due to necessity. We've crafted a routine that allows us to perform on a level we're satisfied with, but when was the last time we *genuinely* felt alive? It was probably on a trip where we did something dangerous or out of character.

Out of character...

What's 'in character'?

Is it being safe and conservative about how we act and what we pursue?

We exist in a bubble, afraid to step outside of it into a dangerous world, a sink-or-swim atmosphere of struggle, strife, pain, failure, and seemingly endless amounts of work. We'd rather avoid the discipline that a grand attempt at living requires for the safety of a relatively easy and persistent routine that asks little of us.

This is largely because we're afraid of the wrong thing.



"It is not death that a man should fear, but he should fear never beginning to live." ~ Marcus Aurelius

We fear death more than we fear not living.

WHAT IS LIFE?

I'm trying to figure this question out myself. What I do know is that it's filled with contradiction.

The dichotomy is that you need adventure, you need to get outside of your norm, but you also need discipline and focus or else you're not going to accomplish much.

Accomplishment *has to be* a big part of life, but it can't be the only part of life. Discipline exists not only to accomplish, but to give freedom.

The man with no discipline may live for a time in an adventurous state, but at some point he'll be too fat, too broke, too lazy to venture into the corners of the world where his definition of life is found.

PART I

ACCOMPLISHMENT

On some level, we exist to accomplish. Accomplishment is the realization of our potential. It's putting our talents and interests to use, and not just for ourselves, but for the betterment or enjoyment of others.

Developing a skill, mastering it, then creating something with it is accomplishment. It takes a great degree of discipline to do such a thing. It takes focus and clarity and intelligence.

Accomplishment is a massive part of life. Without it, in a life where we exist purely for existing's sake, we serve no purpose. We can have pleasure, happiness, and joy, but without *doing something*, we serve no purpose, and it's purpose that holds more weight than pleasure.

Pleasure is cheap. It gives us finite thrill and happiness. Accomplishment is hard won. It takes time, effort, and persistence.



No matter your definition of *living*, be it filled with daring adventure or family life, it is won on the back of effort. You cannot get something without giving something of equal or greater value, and often that *thing* you give is effort over time without the guarantee of reward.

Most people will read that last line and instead choose an easier way of life. When you're not trying to become very good, even great, at anything, you can excuse yourself from this requirement of persistent effort, but you then also have to excuse yourself from winning. That is, you're not going to become the man you have the potential to become because you didn't dare to aim high enough.

Whatever you *think* you want to accomplish right now, aim higher. The higher the better. More audacious is more exciting, and excitement is where life is found.

While the masses *exist* in worlds where they know they can do what they set out to do with moderate amounts of risk and effort, dare far mightier if you want to truly live.

PART II

ADVENTURE & DARING

There's a reason why we like adventure movies, action movies, movies where fellas go beyond what we're able or willing to do; we see adventure, wading into dangerous situations, and exploration, as living.

It's the *height* of living.

Read [*Farther Than Any Man*](#), by Martin Dugard, and tell me that Captain James Cook doesn't inspire you. Exploration is at the heart of what it is to be a *man*. We've always wanted more. We want to find out what's hiding around the corner, what's beyond our knowledge.

Accomplishment and adventure is what *living* boils down to.

Yes, relationships and family and building a legacy are incredibly important, they're necessary to live a *flourishing* life, but to *live*, to use your time engaged in living rather than intending or wishing or wanting, is to work and embark on the most grand adventures you can possibly embark upon.



DARE MIGHTILY.

On both spectrums of life, you need to dare. Whether it's setting the most ambitious goals you can set for your career, your work, and your craft, or sprinkling some daring into your journeys.

What's been done, what your friends are doing, what you're told to do, these cannot be your focus. There's nothing exciting in achieving something that took no guts or grit. There's nothing exciting about sitting on your ass for an entire vacation, staying within the confines of your gated community.

Whatever you do in life, dare greatly.



5 STEPS TO SETTING THE BEST GOALS

Over the past week or so we've talked about **what you need to do (discipline)** and **who you need to become (the code)** to accomplish them.

... but what about the actual goals?

Too often we write down the first goals that come to mind. They're the goals we *think* we want to accomplish but we don't give ourselves enough time to really determine whether or not they align with our idea of our ideal life.

You may, for example, write down that you want to gross \$1,000,000 this year, or \$300k or \$500k, but does your idea of your ideal life actually require you to earn that much?

There's a lot you *can put*, but what are the *best things to put as your goals*?

Clarity comes when you know who you are, who you want to become, and what your values are.

It's also something we're almost completely missing in a society where true originals are few, and options are seemingly endless. We're pulled in so many directions, told many narratives, that we end up following something, someone, or an idea without giving much thought about whether we really want it or not.

I run into this a lot.

When you read a lot, when you work a lot, it can be difficult to decipher which desires and ambitions are yours, and which are someone else's. So how do we find clarity on what we really want to accomplish?

1. YOU HAVE TO SPEND A WEEK AND FORM YOUR IDEAL LIFE.

Spend time every morning or night crafting your ideal life. Where will you live? What will your house look like, feel like? Who will you live with? How many horses and dogs will you have? What will your routine be?

Craft the story that you want to write. Determine what your life will be like on a daily basis, your routine, then add in a completely different narrative of what you do for fun, your adventures, your hobbies and other pursuits.

Form the life and the persona that will make you happy, give you purpose, and most importantly make you excited to get to work. Take a week. Don't try and do this in one sitting.



2. DO THE MATH.

Figure out how much money you'll need to earn and save to create this life.

Keep in mind that stuff is useless. I don't need a new truck. My truck is just fine.

So a new truck doesn't make it into my dream life because I simply don't care *that much* about getting a new one. A ranch, however, is something I *definitely do want*, and I've looked at the areas where I'd like to buy, the land I want to have, and I've found the prices of ranches and ranch land, along with how much I would have to put down, upkeep costs, mortgage payments, and so forth.

What you'll find is, when you're focusing on the *most important things in life*, you actually need to make a little less than you may think.

Of course, you want to make millions, but you can create your *genuinely* perfect life with much less. Money is a measuring stick for how good you are at what you do, it can give you freedom, but as soon as you make it your be all end all and you attach meaning to *things*, money becomes a burden, it's becomes a trap.

3. TIMES IT BY TEN.

Multiply both the amount and the goal by ten. Just because this is what you need to create what you want, doesn't mean that you shouldn't aim for more.

More is better. More, as in, asking more of yourself. The greater the goal, the more excited you're going to be about setting out to accomplish it.

Multiply both the life, the business goal, the income goal, the savings goal, and any other goal, by ten. Bigger is better when it comes to goals, as is shorter...

4. CUT THE TIME IN HALF.

A year is too long. Five years is *way too long*. Aiming to achieve a MASSIVE goal in 6 months is scary, but it can often get accomplished if enough work is done. Actually, I'd say it's more likely to get accomplished than an annual goal because 6 months enables greater clarity.

When you have a six month goal it becomes pretty clear as to what you need to do within six months to achieve it. Bringing it to 3 months doubles that clarity as you know precisely what you need to do and who you need to be to make this audacious life your reality.



I don't have yearly goals. I have goals that I will accomplish within six months, and others I'll accomplish within three months.

When I set annual goals they never get accomplished, so I'm done with them. You should be too.

5. FIGURE OUT YOUR IDEAL DAY WITH WHAT YOU HAVE AND WHO YOU ARE RIGHT NOW.

With all of this daring ambition sprinkled into a goal-setting scenario, you also need to figure out what your ideal day is with what you have right now.

The 'stuff' you're aiming to acquire really doesn't matter. You should be able to live a great life with where you are right now. Greatness shouldn't have to be something that you push into the future, that you have contingencies for.

When I get a million dollars, then I'll live the life I want.

When I make a million bucks I'll travel, write, live as 'the man'.

That's what we usually tell ourselves. Then a million bucks comes and we push it to two million, or 100 million, or a billion, and we spend our lives chasing a dollar amount when our ideal life, and our ideal self could have been realized on day one.

What's your ideal day?

These steps should help you find clarity both in what you want to accomplish this year, who you want to become, eventually, and what your end game is.

Be daring. Be ambitious. But don't wait to become the guy that these goals need you to become. Act like the billionaire now. Be the adventurer *today*.

