



5 WAYS TO ACHIEVE YOUR ULTIMATE PURPOSE

ESSENTIAL TOP TIPS FOR WORKING DADS

by Ian Dinwiddy

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I know how it starts...

It was a cold January morning in 2010 when I held our daughter for the first time.

3am and nothing is going to be the same again.

I made secret promises to her, her little eyes piercing my soul.

Promises I hoped I'd be able to keep.

Promises about what sort of Dad I would be..

Wanting to make my late Mum proud.

But not knowing what the hell I was doing!

Worrying that I would drop my daughter was just the first thing!

Would we have enough money?

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One income and lots of extra costs!

I was worried I couldn't be a great dad AND have a great career.

Worried our relationship would take 2nd place to our children.

Worried we'd just be parents, not partners.

I'd have to grow up - no more spontaneous trips to the pub.

No more gaming, end of social life?

I muddled along as best I could.

I knew one thing for sure.

I wanted to be a different type of Dad.

I wanted to share responsibilities with my wife, we wanted an equal marriage and the opportunity was there.

My wife went back to work - I took on the nappies and the naps.

It was tough

I was 35 and literally had no idea of what I was going to do next.

I hadn't worked out my path.

So, did I talk about it?

What do you think?

Of course not!

I was struggling to balance the conflict of wanting to be there and wanting to work.



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The certainty of my previous existence had gone.

The uncertainty and the lack of clear purpose was depressing at times.

I should have felt happier.

The reality was, I was woefully unprepared for the challenges ahead.

It was not a problem I could easily solve.

"How to be a great dad and have a great career?"

And then the worst thing happened.

I learnt that a university friend had died.

His son had suddenly died and overcome with grief and post-traumatic stress he had taken his own life a few days later.

It put everything into context.

Life can change in an instant.

Living a life of meaning and purpose is vital.

Setting and achieving great goals is crucial.

Read on to discover 5 ways to create goals that succeed and take your life to the next level.

Good luck,
Ian



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#1 - Align your goals with your true purpose.

Dads wear many masks in their lives - breadwinner, attentive father, 'perfect' partner, drinking buddy perhaps...

But the sad truth is that we don't always spend the time required to properly understand what exactly is truly important to us.

The downside of this is "the drift", a sense of feeling rudderless and feeling a bit 'meh'.

If you lack the energy and focus that comes from becoming aligned with your purpose, then that can be a real issue for your mental health, your relationships + your ability to be a great dad.

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You COULD get your head down and plow on, strong, stoic and brave, being the rock for the family. In a crisis that approach definitely has it's merits. (Covid - I'm looking at you)

But it's not sustainable.

Bottling up your emotions and delaying tackling difficult issues will just make things worse.

If you want a different life, full of energy and focus you're going to need to do something different.

Action #1 - Be, Do, Have

You'll need to be honest about what is truly important to you...

List out all the things

1) You want to **“Be”**

2) You want to **“Do”**

3) You want to **“Have”**

4) Decide if your goals are "right and fair" to those close to you

5) Choose **YOUR** top 5.

That's your true purpose right there.

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#2 - Make sure you & your family are on the same page

"Love does not consist in gazing at each other, but in looking outward together in the same direction."

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Great quote, important message.

For true harmony you and your family need to be pulling in the same direction.

It DOESN'T mean you need the SAME goals but you do need to be working on goals that compliment each other and are well understood by all involved.

If you **haven't** previously been honest with each other about what really matters, then this next action is really important.

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Action #2 - Talk openly to your partner.

You've done some really important work in action #1.

You've got into the detail of what is really important to you.

- The person you want to BE.
- The things you want to DO.
- The possessions you want to HAVE.

Now you need to share this with your partner.

Make no mistake, this could be tricky...

You may never have told anyone what really makes you tick.

Even those closest to you.

Especially those closest to you.

There is a risk that what you say won't be taken favourably - not if it has the potential to cause disruption to your family life.

But, it's a risk worth taking if you are going to achieve your goals.

- 1) Talk about your Be, Do, Have list.
- 2) Get your partner to create their own list.
- 3) Talk about what is truly important to both of you.
- 4) Now create shared purpose and family goals.

Honesty and vulnerability are key here.

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#3 - Design your finances to support your goals

You've got dreams, aspirations, goals AND a shared purpose with your partner.

Your goals will need to be robust and aligned with what you truly want, because it's likely they require some sort of investment.

Most of us don't have the financial freedom to do everything.

There are trade offs to be made which is why it's so important to align your family finances with your family priorities.

Goals always require investment - time? income? savings? borrowing? Without a good plan, your goals will fail.

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New career, new kitchen or trip to Disney in Florida - these all require a plan and some investment.

Action #3 - Financial planning

- 1) Start with a list of your family goals (Action 2)
- 2) Work out the financial impact for each goal
 - When is the investment needed?
- 3) How will you fund it?
 - Save now for future spend?
 - Use savings now?
 - Borrowing? (what cost to repay?)
- 4) Review your current finances
 - Each month - what's coming in, what's going out.
- 5) Design and cost your future budget
 - how much do you need to save to make the goals work

I can't stress how important it is to get your finances and your goals aligned. Research shows that money worries are the number 1 reason married couples split.

BONUS TIP - Discuss your attitudes - are you spenders, savers, risk takers, security seekers + who controls how money is used?

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#4 - Create balance and harmony in your life

No man is an island.

"Work Life Balance" is loaded term and it'll mean different things to different people but it's a unavoidable truth that no one ever looks back on their life and wishes they spent more time at work.

Creating meaningful connections with your family will insulate you from mental health problems and relationship breakdown - both now, and in the future.

It's not just about being a hero to your kids and being there for their school activities, it's about being equal partners.

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Creating balance and harmony in your life matters - it's literally the core of my coaching business:

“Helping Stressed Dads Balance Work And Fatherhood”

Leave it to chance like Toby and end up separated:

“If there's one thing I wish we'd done better, it would have been to have those really honest discussions - rather than the more off-hand comments and observations - about the work life balance for both of us, including as a couple and as parents. But hey - we live and learn, eh?!”

but Will took action to fix his balance before it was too late

“It was Easter when I said I couldn't do it anymore. I think it was something about always seeing darkness. I decided I couldn't tolerate how I was living any more. I could feel the signs that it was getting too much.

The thing is I knew how bad it could get – I was an alcoholic (now 7 years clean). I didn't want to reach rock bottom again before did something about it.”



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Action #4 - Make sure everyone's needs are met.

- 1) You need to make sure you have open lines of communication with your partner so that both your needs are met.
- 2) Seek out and embrace flexible working patterns
 - Men who work flexibly report a far greater understanding of the pressures and challenges that women have more typically faced – the “mental load”.
- 3) Learn about "mental load"
 - Mental Load is the activity of organising family life. Even in families where both couples work the load falls disproportionately onto women.

The pandemic has brought balance and harmony to the forefront. Working for home, sharing childcare and home schooling as created enormous tension but has also shone a light on the benefits of improved work life balance.

Designing a work life that serves your family is more important than ever.

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#5 - Construct goals that really mean something to you

Constructing a meaningful goal is the life blood of achieving your dreams (plus a healthy dose of accountability).

In this final section I will shine a light the techniques I use to support my clients to create and achieve goals that really work.

Here are some core principles...

- 1) Without a date, your goal is just a dream
- 2) **Your** goals need to be within **your** control
- 3) Your goals need to have a strong “Why”, the more inspirational and exciting the goal is, the more likely you’ll take the action necessary to achieve it.

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Action #5 - Write your goals in the right way

1) S.M.A.R.T. - the grand-daddy of goal setting.

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time-Bound

2) P.P.P.P. - The "4 Ps"

- Personal - goals written as 'I' - in the first person
- Present (tense) - I am (I have is ok too)
- Positive - "start" v "stop"
- Possible - realistic

Examples of some good and bad goals.

✗ I want to get fit so that I can run a marathon because my mate John did it last year.

✓ It is 1st September and I have run a sub 1-hour 10km

✓ Every Mon & Thurs I get up at 6am to do 30mins of running.

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3) H.A.R.D.

- Heartfelt: enriching your own life and the lives of others. Who else is impacted positively by achieving this goal?
- Animated: and vivid in your imagination. What does my business, career, or life look like when I achieve this goal?
- Required: for personal or professional well-being. Why is this goal so necessary? What are the stakes?
- Difficult: forcing you to leave your comfort zone and learn new skills. What will I have to learn to accomplish this?

Regardless of how you write your goals the important part is, as Stephen Covey always said - "begin with the end in mind",

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Recap - The 5 Ways To Create Your Ultimate Purpose

#1 - Align your goals with your true purpose.

Action #1 - Be, Do, Have

#2 - Make sure you & your family are on the same page

Action #2 - Talk openly to your partner.

#3 - Design your finances to support your goals

Action #3 - Financial planning

#4 - Create balance and harmony in your life

Action #4 - Make sure everyone's needs are met.

#5 - Construct goals that really mean something to you

Action #5 - Write your goals in the right way.

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Work with me

My name is Ian Dinwiddy, the founder of Inspiring Dads Ltd, an experienced coach, specialising in coaching and mentoring working dads. I have 10 years' experience as a Management Consultant, including working with major retailers such as Tesco, Sainsburys and B&Q, and food manufacturers including Uniq, United Biscuits and Samworth Brothers.



After our daughter was born in 2010, I spent seven years combining freelance work with being a primary carer to our children including two stints as a “full time” stay at home Dad.

Meanwhile wife is a busy London based funds lawyer - managing our work life balance is an ongoing challenge.

Outside of work I umpire at the highest levels of domestic field hockey in England.



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In September 2018 I launched Inspiring Dads, a coaching and mentoring business that helps men find their own path to navigate the complexity of modern fatherhood.

I work with private individuals and businesses, both directly and as an associate.

I specialise in supporting paternity leave return to work and broader challenges around men's purpose, focus and performance. I support men to answer the all important question:

***“How To Be A Great Dad,
Without Sacrificing A Great Career?”***

Interested in working with me?

CONTACT US



Speak soon

Ian

