

# Secrets to Success, Part 1: Connecting Your Goals to Your Core Values

From losing weight to saving more, goals are the way to get things done. So why are they so hard to stick to? Here's Part 1 in a series about overcoming the obstacles that keep you from following through.

**Information + Motivation = Inspiration**

– Zig Zigler

For more than 20 years, I've been in the business of providing information: tips to help TV news viewers and readers make more, spend less, and avoid bonehead money moves. But while information is useful, when it comes realizing goals, it isn't enough. If it were, nobody would be overweight, smoke, or overuse credit. We do things that aren't in our best interests not because we're lacking *information*, but because we're lacking the *motivation* to change.

If you've ever set a goal – say, saving \$1,000, or losing 10 pounds – and not succeeded, you know what I'm talking about. Your goal was obviously important, or you wouldn't have created it. Yet you couldn't summon the motivation to follow through. Why? It's an interesting question that I've been seeking answers to. In this post and a couple to follow, I'm going to share some of what I've learned. Hopefully these posts will provide the missing ingredient that will help you reach your goals and help you help those close to you, both at home and at work, reach theirs.

## Connecting your goal to your core values

We all know that the only way to accomplish anything is to make it a goal: to write it down, share it, have a start date, an ending date, yada, yada, yada. (I've written about it many times, in posts like [Step One in Destroying Debt? Create a Goal!](#)) You might like:

- [10 Things People Buy They Should Get Free](#)
- [5 Jobs in Demand That Pay Well and Don't Require a College Degree](#)
- [Penny Foolish: How 6 Tiny Money Leaks Cost Me \\$1,702 Annually](#)
- [5 Smart Uses for Credit Cards](#)
- [Daily Deals: Photos, Women's Clothing, Appliances, and a Free Waffle](#)

So you make goals: Lose weight. Pay off a credit card. Exercise. Quit smoking. Sometimes they work, more often they don't.

Why don't they get accomplished? Because they're not directly tied to what really makes you happy: your **core values**.

If you're going to accomplish anything – especially something that requires changing your behavior – you've got to start by knowing what's important. Not what's important to me. Not what's important to your husband, wife, or boss. What's important to *you*. You've got to take the time to reflect on what you want your life to be about.

In my book [Life or Debt](#), I ask you to close your eyes and imagine the happiest moments of your life. Or to imagine for a moment that you're on your deathbed. What parts of your life would you be remembering? Traveling? Fishing? Family? Laughing with friends? Helping or mentoring others?

Before you set Goal 1, brainstorm. About what you want from life. About who you are. About what *really* makes you happy. This is the first step to getting it. And just as important, it's going to expose how you're now wasting time, money, and energy on stuff that you really don't care about.

When you're lying on your deathbed, will you be remembering all that TV you watched? The clothes you wore? The car you drove? Unless you're shallow as a puddle, not likely. Yet you're spending a lot of your only nonrenewable resource – the time you have on this planet – on this stuff. Why? Because you've lost touch with your core values. Instead of doing what you should be

doing, you're doing what the commercials told you to do, what your parents thought was a good idea, or what your friends are doing.

## **Create a goal that works**

If you want to create a goal that works, start by knowing what you really want from life. Then connect your goals to that purpose. If travel blows your skirt up, buying skirts at the mall isn't taking you where you want to go, nor is giving money to a [credit card](#) company. If serving others makes your life fulfilling, you'll do more of it if you stop filling your life with TV. If family lights you up, you'll be around them longer if you stop lighting up.

In short, if you want to follow through with a goal, tie it to a core value. And if you want to help other people follow through – your family, your friends, or your co-workers, help by asking them to first focus on the happiest moments of their lives, or the way they picture their ideal selves. Then help them get there by creating goals that align with that ideal.

Stay tuned for more in my next "Secrets to Success" post.

Source: [Money Talks](http://s.tt/13hXv) (<http://s.tt/13hXv>)