

Chapter 2

DREAMS, GOALS AND VISION

INTENSITY

One ancient story from the *Mahabharata* is oft-repeated wherein the teacher of archery asked his students to aim at the eye of a bird hanging on a tree. When the students gathered, one by one he asked each one of them what they saw, while aiming at the bird's eye. Some of the students said they saw the mountains just behind the tree, where the bird was hanging; some said they saw leaves of the tree, its branches, greenery, etc. Then came Arjuna, who was the best archer amongst them. When the teacher asked him the same question, he replied that he saw the bird's eye and nothing else. He shot the arrow and it hit the bird's eye. The teacher applauded his effort and his answer very much. Unless you see the target, you cannot achieve it.

The extension to the story which is not so well known is, when Ashvathama, the teacher's son, put the same question to his friend, Karna, he said, 'I myself would become an arrow and the whole objective of my being would be to impinge the bird's eye.' The answer that Karna gave reflects a tremendous intensity and a great focus, absorbed in the target. This shows the intensity of purpose. When you are driven by a target in your life, you have the intensity.

Karna not only managed to impinge the target, he shot two arrows simultaneously; when the first one hit the bird's eye, the bird tilted upon being hit by the arrow and the second arrow impinged the other eye of the bird.

When you are absorbed in the target, you have an intensity that allows you to reach it

The most important thing is to be absorbed in what you really want from life, be filled with the thought and go all out to achieve your target. Never

let things distract you. That is focus. If you have a clear target, a goal in your life, then go out with full intensity. Push yourself and strive hard to achieve it. Don't waste time by looking at the obstacles, instead focus on the target.

Look, discover and create things that others miss; look beyond the obvious

Seeing the obvious is what our eyes do; looking beyond is what we have to train our mind to do like Karna. What the story tells us is his ability to look beyond, the way in which he released two arrows simultaneously to target both the eyes instead of just one; and seeing what others cannot, and doing something really special, that is vision.

VISION

Vision is about believing in your dreams and making them come true; it is the ability to see the invisible and then to make it visible to one and all. It is the spirit which says, let us do it; it says anything is possible; it is execution rather than fantasising; it is about doing it. It is the ability to face the difficulties and doubts with courage, it is to create something which is useful for people and helps them, it is overcoming disappointments; it is making what can be made and what is possible.

'Where there is no vision people perish.'

—Bible

The Air India, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, the Indian Institute of Sciences, the Taj Group, and the Tata Memorial Hospital, etc., are some of the pioneer institutes in India. Behind these are the efforts of dynamic persons, persons who could think well ahead of their time. One of them was J.R.D. Tata. He fulfilled his dream of building a strong infrastructure for the country in his lifetime. He had a vision to set up research and technical institutes in India at a time when people had very little knowledge of technology and most of the people were sceptic about it. But now people can look back and marvel at what he accomplished. This is vision.

Vision is perhaps the most important thing for achieving something in life; in all the great achievers you find that they have the quality to look beyond and see what others do not comprehend, thus creating a vision for people to move ahead. Great visionaries are people who make you believe in something that does not exist, but create it by aligning people with their vision and finally create something that is remarkable. It is the ability to see beyond the problems, it is about seeing opportunities that other people miss.

The impact of vision

Vision changes the lives of many, including yours. Look at J.R.D. Tata's vision; he built centres of learning and excellence which are doing a great job even several years after his death; John F. Kennedy had a vision to send man to the moon; he did not live when the first man reached the moon. But it was his vision that made it possible. The legacy of great men is their vision. Their vision guides people beyond their existence; they live in the world through their vision.

There are three kinds of people:

Those who think

1. 'Nothing is going to change.'
2. 'We are insignificant beings; it does not matter what we do; it is not going to make difference.'

Those who are

3. 'Busy in changing things around for progress and development; they are who make the difference.'

It is the third category of people who are visionaries; they make a difference not just in their life but also in the lives of several others. They are the people who have the ability to see beyond the current problems.

'The microscope with which you can see the opportunities in problems is called vision. Most people do not use it'

'It was Walt Disney's vision, which created a Disney Land.'

'It was vision which inspired Milton, who was blind, to write the most beautiful poems on nature.'

'It was vision of the Leader, called M.K. Gandhi, a thin, lean man, which shook the foundation of the British Empire and played a significant role in India's freedom struggle.'

'Henry Ford was a great visionary; he was the person who was instrumental behind the mass production and mass distribution of cars.'

Once Michelangelo, the famous sculptor, was asked how he made such beautiful statues from the stones. The craftsman replied that, out of the stone, just the excess material had to be removed and that was it. A really cryptic reply, but it really shows the way in which he worked. When others saw the stone, this great sculptor saw the statue and not the stone. He just needed to remove the excess material, which shows the visualising power of the maestro that made it easy for him to carve out masterpieces.

You will get what you see; if you see opportunities, you will have them; if you see problems, you will have them

The difference lies in the vision; he had the power, the vision, to see beyond the stone. He pretty much knew and visualised what he wanted, and that is what ordinary people miss. You will find what you are looking for. Same stone, different views and thus different results. That is what made Michelangelo a great sculptor: the ability to visualise and move ahead.

Great visionaries are the people who

Take the roads less travelled.

Explore something completely new.

Cultivate positive approach.

Undaunted by what others say, they believe in themselves.

Clarity of understanding.

Have a sense of purpose.

Vision to help others.

Amazing curiosity with which they do things.

Trust their intuition.

Think big and ahead.

Possibility thinkers expand and explore all possibilities.

Look ahead into the future.

Exhibit extraordinary persistence.

Executing your vision:

There is a huge difference between having a vision and accomplishing one; a lot of us have a vision but fall short of achieving it. What holds us back? What stops us? More often than not, it is the inability to work out finer details of the task in hand. Looking into the future and having a vision does not mean that the minute details be missed, rather it should make us focus harder on working out all the details and be adept at it. Never overlook the immediate task before you in order to achieve the vision you have. Having a vision means you have an eye on the future but your hands are on the work.

‘Every dream can be turned into reality, provided you believe in it.’

Dream is something that you see but others don't, that is why it is a dream. People may label it as impracticable, unrealistic or impossible. But if you have a dream, pursue it; don't let anyone stop you from achieving your dream. Dream big and believe in your dreams. Follow your dreams, no matter what the situation is. Be prepared to give all it demands from you to realise them; in the process of realising your dreams there will arise occasions when you will feel downcast, discouraged and tired; but if you stop, you will never be happy. So keep moving forward even when you feel like stopping. Unless fire melts iron, steel cannot be forged; stick to the dream when it is difficult, because that is the real test of your commitment towards your dream.

Live your dream

The most exciting journey is when you are headed in the direction of your dream. Only you can live your dream, no one else but you. Believe me the thrill of making a dream come true is great, but very few people experience it, because most of the people don't dream; if they do, they do not pursue their dreams and stop in the middle in the face of difficulties. Rare are those who become more intent on achieving their dreams in the face of difficulties; they become more dedicated to their dreams when the going gets tough. They are the people who are powered by the dreams and they try to achieve extraordinary feats. Rise above the current problems and pursue your dreams.

You may not get a second opportunity to do it; you never get a second chance to live your life. Make the most of what you have and live your dreams. Most people regret not doing what they wanted to do in life; they regret not pursuing their dreams. Don't let life pass just like that, awake and realise your dreams. Work hard and do something that you cherish the most.

Don't let logic come in the way of your dreams; have a dream and then use logic to achieve it. The limitations of logic can be overcome by dreams.

Believe in yourself

'Believe in yourself and your dream.

Though impossible things may seem,
someday, somehow, you'll get through
to the goal you have in view.

Mountains fall and seas divide

before the one who in his stride
takes a hard road day by day,
sweeping obstacles away.
Believe in yourself and in your plan,
Say not 'I cannot', but 'I can'.
The prizes of life we fail to win
because we doubt the power within.'

—Author Unknown

'Dream is the fuel which ignites the mind. The ignited mind transcends into a state where all shackles of limitation are broken and thus anything can be achieved.'

So what holds us back from achieving our dreams?

Here are some of the things which one can often identify as the created obstacles in the path of dreams.

Tend to get carried away by what others say.

Difficult to break free from a set pattern.

Not willing to go the extra mile for achieving the dream.

Dreams come from the heart, not always from the head. People don't trust the heart nearly as much as the head.

Risk, I am not ready for it.

Self-imposed limitations that limit us in going for our dreams.

'Build a dream and the dream builds you.'

—Robert Schuller

Dream about your dreams; see yourself accomplishing them. Take some time regularly to think about your dreams, visualise them as coming true. It relaxes the brain and also triggers action in the direction of your dreams.

Always remember

Nobody can rob your dream, unless you allow him to do so.

Never underestimate the power of a dream.

The effort required to follow a dream is a major hurdle. A lot of people are not willing to put in the effort; you have to give something extra to achieve something extra.

If you believe in yourself, you will believe in your dreams.

Resist the resisting forces along the way of your dreams.

Self-imposed limitations that limit us in going for our dreams.

‘When conviction conquers doubt that is when dreams come true.’

Once upon a time there lived a young boy. His family was very poor, so he could not get even primary education. He had to work even in his childhood to meet the daily expenses on food, etc. He had to earn his living at a young age by delivering newspapers in the streets of London. He saw several days of intense struggle and penury. When he was thirteen years old, a book binder employed him.

Here in the bookbinding business, this young boy had access to a variety of books and research papers. He read as much as he could. He always managed to find some time from his work and learned whenever he could be it day or night. Slowly he developed interest in science and started attending lectures on scientific subjects. Soon he left the bookbinder’s shop and started concentrating on learning science and ultimately became a renowned scientist; he was none other than the great physicist, Michael Faraday.

Michael Faraday was a man who was passionate and believed in his dreams; he made them come true by working with sheer determination and resilience. He was a man of firm resolve and fought all situations and overcame them, fulfilling his dreams. That is what made the man a great scientist.

‘If you lose yourself in quest of something, you invariably get it.’

If you want something desperately, which is noble, which you truly believe in, for which you can lose everything if you want it really badly, you will surely find a way to get it. Just give your best. When you work hard and are constantly driven in pursuit of something, if it engages your faculties and industry, then you channelise your energies to achieve it. Pursue your dreams and strive to do your very best and you will find that this sort of single-minded determination is what will get you your dreams. Never let your dreams die; fill you life with dreams and act with all your might to have a life of fulfilment. Immerse yourself in what you want from life and you will get it in your life.

To dream the impossible dream,

To fight the unbeatable foe,

To bear with unbearable sorrow,

To run where the brave dare not go,

To right the unrightable wrong,

To love pure and chaste from afar,
To try when your arms are too weary,
To reach the unreachable star.

Lyrics from *The Impossible Dream* (The Quest)

***‘A dream is just a dream. A goal is a dream with
a plan and a deadline’***

—Harvey Mackay

Dreams are powered by goals. Goals provide the necessary plan of action and also the direction for the dreams to be manifested. Goals are the platform for realising your dreams. What differentiates a dream from a fantasy is a clearly laid out action plan. A dream is an aspiration, whereas a fantasy is merely an illusion.

Why are goals important?

The goal setting theory, developed by Edwin A. Locke and Gary Latham, remains one of the most widely acclaimed and practised theories in the field of management. Here is what some of the researchers have found about goals.

People achieve more when they set difficult (challenging, even impossible) and specific (clear) goals in their lives.

Increase your motivation to achieve the most out of life.

Goals provide feedback and also make people committed.

Goals regulate action by affecting what for, how hard and how long people work for them.

Increase your desire to excel.

Improve your self-confidence.

Plan to eliminate attitudes that hold you back and cause unhappiness.

Propel you into action.

How to write the goals

Goals should be written statements made in the positive. The discipline of writing things down shows that you are making an effort and are serious about your goals. The simplest things are often most difficult to accomplish.

The Yale University conducted a survey on the outgoing students of the 1953 batch; it was found that only 3 per cent of the students had

written their goals and again in a survey in 1973 when the same batch was surveyed, it was found that the 3 per cent of the students who had written their goals had done much better in their lives than the rest of the students.

Written goals have magic; they really energise you and provide you a great motivation to move ahead. Very few persons set goals, even fewer set written goals, Research has shown that written goals are useful for achieving them. Written goals do make a difference. They help you focus on the targets and achieve the goals. Set your goals in such a manner that you can address the following.

What you need to do in order to accomplish your goal?

How do you need to get to your goals?

When you need to do it?

The mind of an individual is best concentrated by goals. The best way to focus your mind on your goals is to have goals. Psychologists have often laid emphasis on the ability of the mind to seek goals, which is known as the “Goal seeking mechanism”. Charge your mind with goals. Whenever you do anything, break your task into small goals and make your mind focus on them.

Set SMARTEST goals

S – Be **specific** about your goals; be clear about what you want. Write it specifically; don't write vague goals.

M – Goals should be **measurable**. You should set goals which can be quantified, so that you can ask yourself questions like how much, how many, etc.

A – Set yourself goals which are **attainable**. Have goals which are difficult to achieve but are attainable; don't set unrealistic goals. Take all things into account.

R – Write them down; have written goals. They have the capability to influence your mind and channelise it in the direction of your goals. Set goals which are **relevant** to your purpose in life. Have goals which take you closer to your purpose.

T – Set **time bound** goals; this is very crucial; write down goals which can be achieved within a fixed time frame, so that you can clearly monitor your progress.

E – Have goals to **enthuse** you that get you going; don't set too easy goals. Goals that really make you keen and interest you and pursuing which you feel excited and enjoy the process of seeking the goals.

S – Step out of your comfort zone. Comfort zone is most uncomfortable for those who dream. Set such goals as may push you and make you get out of your comfort zone. Push yourself hard, push the limits.

T – Set goals which **transform** you over a period of time and take you to the next level. Set goals which improve you professionally as well as personally. Seek professional growth as well as self-growth. Try to be and become a better human being.

Be flexible with your goals; have other options; have alternative ways of getting to the same goals. Try out other options also if something does not work.

‘If you start missing your target it means that you are on the right path, because most people have no target to aim at’.

It is not such a bad thing if you miss the target, but it is bad when you have none. Most people do not have a target or an aim. But when you have a target it means you are on the right track. More often than not, people do not set goals, but once you miss your goals you get the feedback and you can make amends. Goals should provide you the plan of action for your life.

‘Goals are the means to achieve your purpose in life.’

In archery, before the archer releases the arrow, he takes the aim to hit the target and then the arrow is released. Without having the target, the whole exercise would be futile. Similarly, without targets life would be aimless. Thus in order to guide yourself along the purpose of your life have goals or targets, the targets, which act as the catalyst in making you fulfil the purpose of your life and also provide you the right motivation. Actions rather than wishes or words will take you closer to your goals.

‘The victory of success is half won when one gains the habit of setting goals and achieving them. Even the most tedious chore will become endurable as you parade through each day, convinced that every task, no matter how menial or boring, brings you closer to fulfilling your dreams.’

—Og Mandino

1. Spare a few minutes and list some long-term goals for yourself that you want to achieve on a piece of paper. List goals that will take 5 years and more to be achieved. They are your long-term goals.
2. Next, list your medium-term goals. List the goals that you want to accomplish in the next 3 years. List your goals for the next 2 to 3 years.
3. List your goals which are for a short term, say, what you would achieve by the end of this week, month, etc. Plan carefully the

schedule, Keep a daily list of short-term goals that you would want to accomplish in a day. List your goals that you want to achieve within a year.

'If your short-term goals do not take you towards your long-term goals, then you might never reach your long-term goals.'

Plan your activities well so that you can reach your ultimate target or achieve the long-term goals that you have set for yourself. Look at the great people like Rabindranath Tagore and Bill Gates; they followed their passion and dream. Bill Gates dropped out of Harvard without even completing graduation and became the richest person in the world. Rabindranath Tagore, the first person from Asia to get a Nobel Prize, set up a school called Viswabharati at Santiniketan, as he did not much like the way in which education was imparted. People who act with passion in the direction of their dreams are the ones who realise them. Always act and chase your dreams; every step counts; it takes you closer to your goal. It is important to do such things, as will take you closer to your goals rather than away from them.

Listed below are the areas to help you in planning your goals.

Self-development: Goals that cater to your overall character development and personal growth.

Physical: Goals relating to physical exercise, appearance, diet and overall well-being.

Recreation: Goals relating to relaxation, hobbies, vacations, and fun activities.

Family: Goals relating to your parents, siblings, and relatives.

Friends: Goals, such as expanding your circle of friends and enriching your relationships.

Social: Goals involving a commitment to serving others through your time, talents, heart, and possessions.

Career: Goals relating to school grades, skill development, and future ambitions relating to professional growth.

Financial: Goals relating to earnings, savings, and understanding the value and purpose of money.

Household: Goals relating to household chores and your contribution to a happy life.

Spiritual: Goals relating to spirit, pursuit and getting one with the innate spirit.

‘The biggest risk in life is not to live your dreams; without dreams you are more dead than alive.’

An engineer named John Roebling was inspired to build a bridge connecting New York with the long island. However, the experts felt that it was impossible to do it. John Roebling was told that his idea was not practicable. But Roebling remained undaunted; he was not the one to surrender. He had visualised the dream of making the bridge and he believed he would be able to make it. He managed to motivate his son, Washington, to join him in making this project a success. Washington was an upcoming young engineer. The task before Roebling and his son was full of perilous difficulties. They were working on a project which had been labelled as impossible by many experts. But with great excitement and expectations they started their project with their private crew. The construction of their dream had begun.

Just a few months after the construction began, an accident occurred. John’s feet were badly injured by a ferry when it crashed into a wharf; his toes were amputated, and within weeks he died of tetanus. His son, Washington, was hit by the Caisson disease, due to working in compressed air in Caisson in 1872. Washington’s illness halted the project. He was not able to walk or talk; all his movements were restricted.

The world never cares for a failure. There is no price for a defeat. People said, ‘It was not possible.’ Everyone thought that the dream would die with the death of Roebling and the disability of Washington. But Washington had other ideas; he developed a communication code with his wife and started giving instructions to the workers. He did not visit the site again but gave instructions with the help of Emily, his wife, who played a significant role and the process continued for several years and, after immense struggle and sacrifice, it was Roebling’s dream which had won; yes, the bridge was constructed almost miraculously—the famous bridge, known as the Brooklyn Bridge. Emily was the first person to cross the bridge after it was opened. It is among the most cherished structures not just because of its beauty but also because of the spirit with which it came into existence.

The dream of Roebling still stands tall as the Brooklyn Bridge; it lives and inspires men to dream. It silently fills people with awe and makes them realise that behind every great creation is a great dreamer. Every masterpiece tells you a story about a dreamer; it tells you the story of painstaking effort and also tells you a story of glorious accomplishment. World would have been a monotonous and stagnating place without the people who dream. The conviction in your dream gives you the power to make it happen.

'More than extraordinary results, it is the extraordinary effort that makes the difference.'

To realise your dreams, it is the extraordinary effort that really makes the difference; toil hard and work as hard as you can. It is only with an extraordinary effort that you can create a difference; sooner rather than later it will make a difference. You cannot expect results with half-hearted efforts; either you have to make full effort or you should back out. Every great accomplishment, everything that is grand and noble, has a story of an extraordinary effort behind it.

Help others realise their dreams

It is a well-known fact that a candle loses none of its light by lighting another candle. Great joy will accompany you, when you begin to help others. You will feel positive vibes, and energy within you. Just try and do it, help others in what they want, help them to get to their dreams. It works like magic; you will also get benefited in the process. Make them fulfil their dreams and some power in the universe will fulfil yours. You can contribute by helping people with effort, energy, money, time and even by patient listening. Rise above yourself, rise above the self-imposed I-me-myself approach, because this is your best opportunity to embrace people. In the Bible (*Ephesians* 6.8, it is said ***'that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.'*** Thus, when you assist people around you it helps you on many fronts.

You automatically rise above yourself.

You develop a positive self-image.

You are energised.

You feel happy.

You become a better and a more responsible human being.

You are trusted more.

You get confidence to pursue your own dreams.

'Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is achieved ... Arise, awake! Awake from the hypnotism of weakness. None is really weak.'

—Swami Vivekananda

Awake to see the limitless opportunities that lie in your grasp,

Awake from the ignorance of ego and see that you are the part of the whole.

Awake from the shackles of mediocrity and go for what you truly love; don't hold yourself back.

Awake from the sleep of cowardice and be brave; do not give in to sluggishness.

Awake from the bondages of pleasures and rejoice every moment of life.

Awake with self belief in yourself and don't give in to limitations.

Awake to make a significant contribution and say that you count, and be a gift to the world.

Awake to realise your dreams and change your world.

Awake with inspiration and conquer your doubts.

Awake, it is never too late, today will never come again, don't let it go without making it count.

Go for your goals, don't underestimate yourself. Do not underestimate the power that lies within you. Everybody has the potential to achieve the impossible, everybody is created for a mission, never forget that. Always remember that it is not money, not education, not your background, but courage and belief in your dreams that make your dreams come true.